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THE MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE: Technical and Extension Series envisages the rapid dissemination of Information on marine and brackish water fishery resources and allied data available with the Fishery Data Centre and the Research Divisions of the Institute, results of proven researches for transfer of technology to the fish farmers and industry and of other relevant information needed for Research and Development efforts in the marine fisheries sector.

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ACETES SHRIMP RESOURCE OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS*

Acetes indicus, locally known as 'Bushy Jhinga', occurs in the creeks, low lying areas and mangrove swamps of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in large quantities. The genus *Acetes* Milne Edwards is represented in the mainland of India by five species, of which *A. indicus* is the most common and forms a fishery in the estuaries of Bengal, Maharashtra, Gulf of Kutch and Tamilnadu. This species is reported to have a distribution from the Indian Seas through Mergui Archipelago and Gulf of Siam to the East Indies. The information collected on *Acetes* resources in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands during a survey conducted there in February-April 1978 is presented here.

Areas of abundance

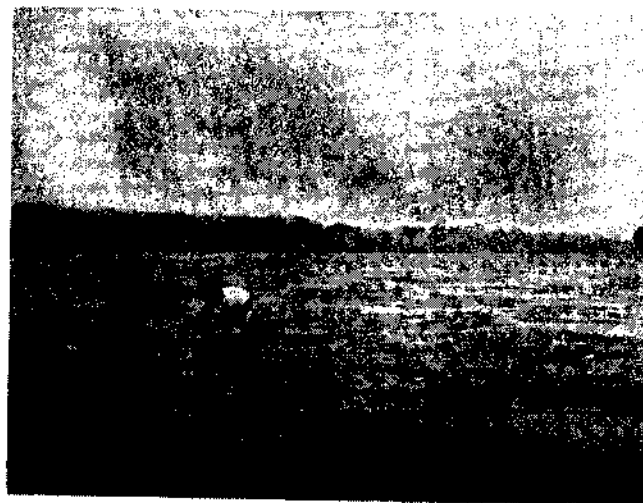
Acetes indicus is found to occur in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in large swarms in the following areas: Landfall Island, Ariel Bay, Kalpong creek, Austin creek, Ray hill area, Bacon Bay, (Fig. 1 & 2), Kala-

pathar river, Parangara river, Balmi creek, Aves Island, Stewart Island, Rangat Bay, Long Island, Yerratila Jig, North of Baratang Island, Kyd Island, James Island, Mayo Island, creeks around Port Blair, Burmannalla, Chiriyatapu, swamps of Rutland Island; in Dugong creek, Mommunulla, Jackson creek, and South Bay, in Little Andaman. It is also found to occur in the marshy areas of Trinkat Island, Nancowry Island, Katchall Island and in the estuaries of the Calathea river and Alexandria river of Great Nicobar.

Fishing gears

Fishing is mainly carried out by one or two persons with or without a canoe. The net is made of mosquito netting with a wing portion and a bag-like cod end measuring 2 m in length. Two bamboo poles 2 m long, are used to make a triangular opening at the anterior and to give support to the sides of the net. (Fig. 3). The posterior ends of the poles which overlap each other

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Figs. 1 & 2. *Acetes* fishing areas in Bacon Bay with two Karens, the Burmese Settlers.



Fig. 3. Bushy jhinga net with two Karens of Mayabunder.

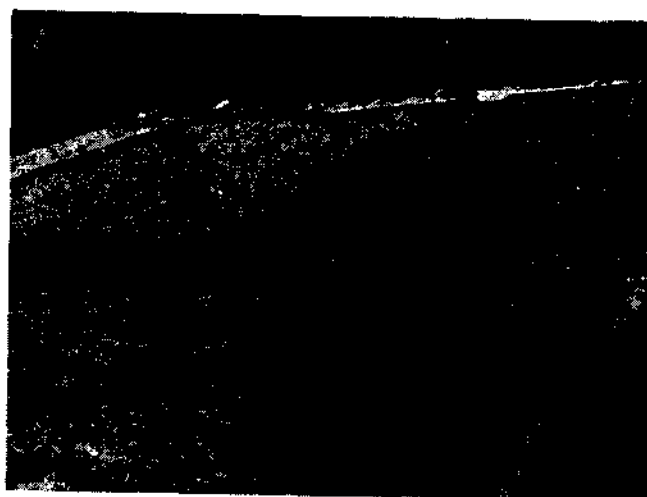


Fig. 4. Bushy jhinga kept for drying in Kyd Island, Middle Andaman.

serve as a handle to push the net from behind by a person wading in the water. The net is quite similar to the 'Dhobbu Vala' used in Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh) to catch prawns in the creek, reported by Ramamurthy and Muthu (CMFRI Bulletin No. 14: 1969). In Baratang area and in Middle and South Andaman Islands stationary bag nets and stake nets with mesh size 2 mm are also used by the fishermen.

Fishing season

It is gathered that *Acetes* forms a fishery from May to July and October to February, appearing in large swarms.

Species association

In a sample collection made from Bacon Bay, although it was during the off season for the shrimps,

Acetes indicus contributed 46.2%, followed by *Metapenaeus monoceros* (47.0%), *Penaeus merguensis* (4.5%), *Mugil* spp. (1.6%) and *Ambassis* spp. (0.7%). In Kyd Island about 80% of the catch was that of *Acetes indicus* and *P. merguensis* and 2% *Mugil* spp. When compared to areas where *Acetes indicus* forms a major fishery this is quite significant. Along Maharashtra coast on the mainland where *Acetes indicus* contributes to a good fishery the percentage representation of the species in the prawn landings is 20 to 30.

Utilisation

Based on enquiries it has been estimated that about 25 tonnes of 'Nappi' a preparation made from *Acetes*, is sent annually from Andamans to Nicobar. The Karens and Nicobaris living in Andamans use this pre-

paration with rice. The 'Nappi' has the following composition: Moisture-40.4%, Protein-35.0%, Ash-22.0%, Acid insoluble-2.4% and Liquid-0.2%. A good quantity of *A. indicus* is consumed fresh and also after sundrying (Fig. 4).

Remarks

Although 'Bushy Jingha' is exploited to a certain extent by the local fishermen with their traditional gear, it is quite evident that there is no organised effort for the harvesting of this rich resource. The level of production can be increased considerably with an organised exploitation by using proper craft and gear and at the right time. Side by side proper utilisation also has to be thought of by improving the marketing facilities for 'nappi' and other products.

