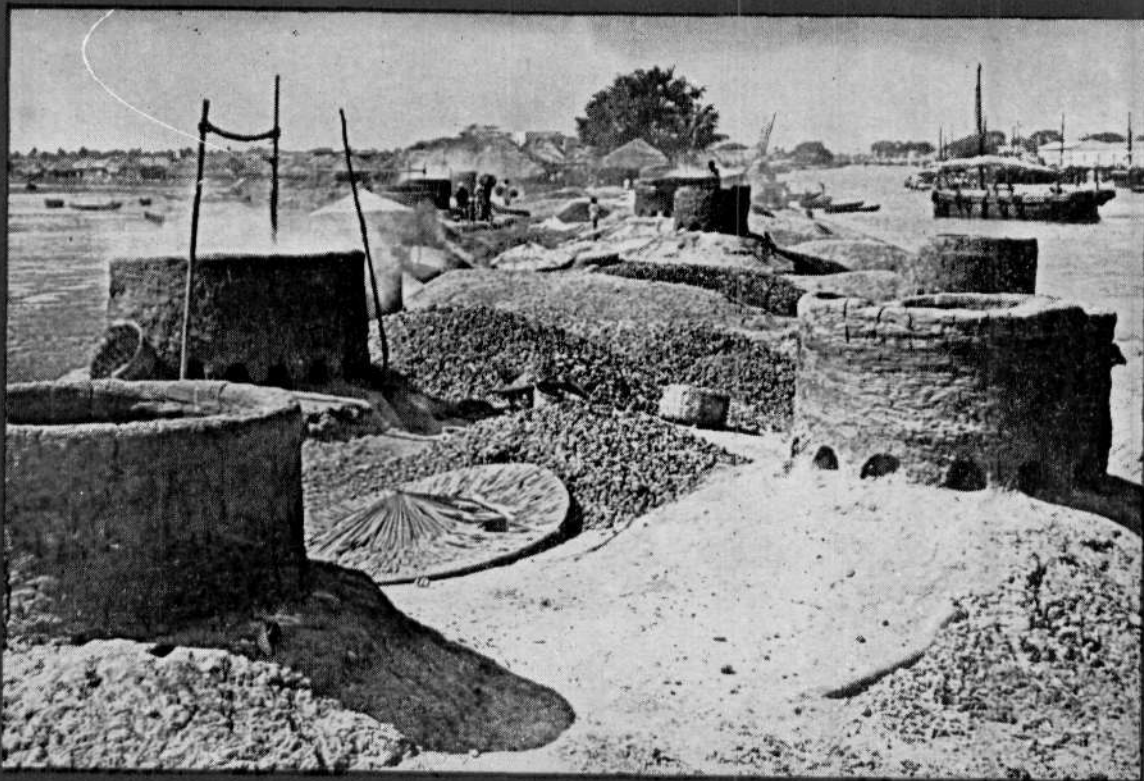




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THE MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE: Technical and Extension Series envisages the rapid dissemination of information on marine and brackish water fishery resources and allied data available with the National Marine Living Resources Data Centre (NMLRDC) 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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BUMPER CATCHES OF PRAWNS, POMFRETS, LITTLE TUNNIES, BLACK SHARKS AND OTHER FISHES AT KARWAR*

Purse seine catches

In 1982, at Karwar, the purse seine boats commenced fishing from 1st of September. A new pattern of fishing was evident from the beginning of the season. Because of lack of oil sardine and mackerel shoals the seiners were forced to scan deeper waters which resulted in exceptionally heavy catches of *Thrissa*, barred longtom (*Ablennis hians*), seer fishes, little tunny (*Euthynnus affinis*) leather skin (*Chorynemus sanctipetri*) and black pomfret hitherto not known for such quantities in this part of coastline. Besides, bumper catches of prawns *Metapenaeus dobsoni* amounting to about 39 t were hauled up. It is said that such quantities of prawns were never recorded in the past by the purse seiners at Karwar even though the seiners were in operation here for more than half a decade. The catch details on weekly basis for September and October are given in Table 1.

The catch of *Thrissa* amounted to 75.4 t whereas barred longtom was about 8 t. Bumper catches of little tunny in mature condition mostly caught in north-west region of Karwar in depth of 40-75 m (Cancona area) were landed between 26th September and 23rd

October. As high as 42.6 t of this species was landed on 8th October alone. Weight of each fish ranged from 1 to 3.15 kg.

The estimated catch of *Scomberomorous commersoni* and *S. guttatus* amounted to 21.8 t of which 20 t alone were landed on 21st and 22nd September. The former species accounted for more than 75% of the catches.

Unprecedented catches of black pomfret (*Parastromateus niger*) were made between 22nd and 31st October, mostly from the region between Karwar and Belekeri in the south, in the depth range of 40-60 m. On 29th October, the catch of this fish amounted to as high as 109.5 t an all time record in the annals of Karwar. Similarly dolphin fish weighing 28.5 t were landed on 26th October; of course, a rare sight by itself.

The local as well as neighbouring markets could not consume all these huge catches which naturally caused glut conditions on most of these days. Nevertheless, the distress sales were avoided because of heavy demand from the southern regions. The Karnataka Fisheries Development Corporation purchased most of the catches of seer fishes and black pomfret which in fact rescued fishermen from financial loss.

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Important purse-seine catches



Metapenaeus dobsoni



Barred longtom (*Ablennis hians*)



Black pomfrets (*Parastromateus niger*)



Black shark (*Carcharinus melanopterus*)



Little tunny (*Euthynnus affinis*)



Dolphin fish

Table 1. Catch details of prawns, pomfrets, little tunnies and others (in kg) in purse seiners at Karwar

Date	Prawns (M.d.)	<i>Thrissa</i>	<i>Ablennis hians</i>	Tunny	Seer fishes	Black pomfret	<i>Chorine- mus</i>	<i>Coryphaena</i>
1st-4th Sept.	8,400							
5th-11th „	20,225	14,060						
12th-18th „	10,185	44,100						
19th-25th „	22	15,500	1,000		20,030			
26th-30th „		35	375	12,000			15,020	
1st-2nd Oct.				12,900				
3rd- 9th „			6,600	1,11,950	170	300	490	
10th-16th „		700		24,700	1,600	1,230	420	
17th-23rd „		1,000		90		48,500		33,600
24th-31st „						4,00,660		
Total	38,832	75,395	7,975	1,61,640	21,800	4,50,690	15,930	33,600
R	71-125	110-169	825-1,272	400-680	400-610	100-450	220-370	210-460
					(S.g.) 410-770 (S.c.)			
M	93, 103	120, 150	—	410, 490, 510, 640 & 680	460, 510 (S.g.) 720(S.c.)	110, 200 & 290	320, 340	330, 380 & 430
Price	Rs. 13/kg	Rs. 20-30/ 40 kg	Rs. 200- 300/100 Nos.	Rs. 0.50- 5/fish	Rs. 3/kg	Rs. 1.25- 6/kg	Rs. 150- 200/100 Nos.	Rs. 250/ 100 Nos.

R: Range in mm, M: Mode in mm, S. g.: *Scomberomorus guttatus*, S. c.: *Scomberomorus commersoni*,
M.d.: *Metapenaeus dobsoni*.

As there is practically no market for tuna, they were packed in ice and transported to different parts of Kerala. Even then some catches could not be disposed off. For the first time at Karwar little tunny were to be diverted for salt curing.

Leather skin and dolphin fish were purchased by merchants to be taken to southern states where they command better prices.

Hooks and lines catches

The few fishermen who practiced hooks and line fishing in the Karwar area had to leave this profession with the advent of purse seines. Dug-out canoes fitted with inboard/outboard engines which operate drift

nets added to their agony still more. However, a few enterprising fishermen have started going for hooks and lines fishing in the mechanised boats (10 m) from September onwards. On 25th of September three units landed five tonnes of black sharks (*Carcharinus melano- pterus*). Never before such a quantity of sharks was landed at Karwar. Their size ranged from 60 to 250 cm. Majority of them were males. The fishermen realised Rs. 6,500/-. The sharks were taken to Mangalore for extraction of oil and curing.

Due to inclement weather these units did not go out for fishing subsequently. Nevertheless, it appears that in coming months the hooks and lines fishing may revive in this area.