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BUMPER CATCH OF CAT FISH AT PONDICHERRY*

On 25-8-1986 shoals of Giant cat fish (*Arius thalasinus* Day) (Fig. 1) moving northward in the Bay of Bengal at a distance of 1 km from the Pondicherry port were noticed by the fishermen at Vembakeerapalayam at

1330 hrs. Immediately 23 fishermen headed by Shri Allimuthu, rushed their traditional fishing gears, *Edavalai* (Bagnet) to the spot with catamarans. The shoals were encircled quickly, and about 80 per cent of the

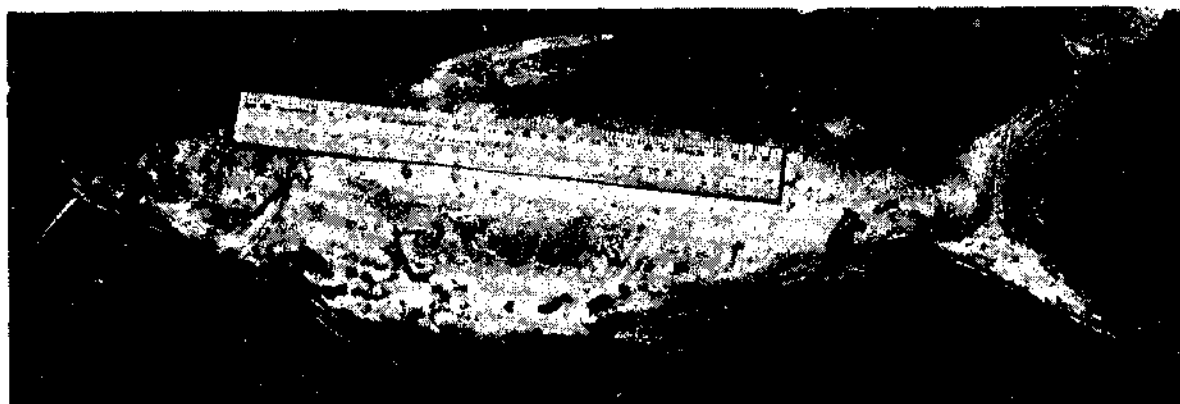


Fig. 1. *Arius thalasinus* the giant cat fish.

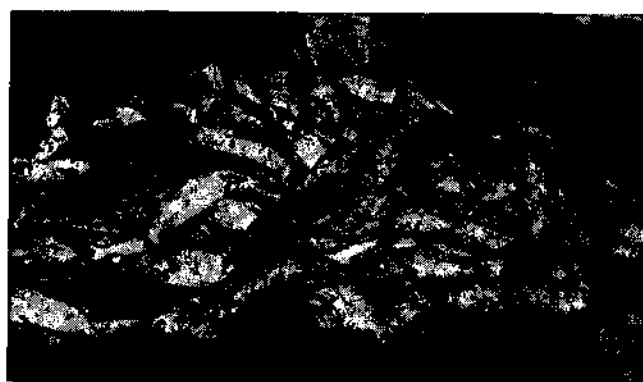


Fig. 2. Part of catch brought to the shore.

*Reported by L. Chidambaram, Pondicherry Field Centre of CMFRI, Pondicherry.

shoals entered into the nets. The captive shoals drifted the nets further one km to the north. In the meanwhile, the fishermen sent signals to the villagers for assistance. Immediately two mechanised trawlers went to the spot and arrested the movements of the shoals. Simultaneously the remaining part (1,250 Nos.) of the shoals was also captured by the Vaithikuppam fishermen who operated their *Edavalai* nearby.

The Vembakeerapalayam fishermen brought the catch in several trips to the shore with the help of two mechanised trawlers from 1600 to 0330 hrs (Fig. 2). Nearly 4,300 fishes were sold to the merchants at the rate of Rs. 14/- per fish. The cat fishes were of uniform size and weight (75 cm length and 5 kg weight).

