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A massive swarm of sergestid shrimp (*Acetes* spp.) appeared close to the shore along Pannaiyurkuppam, 20 km south of Chennai. The swarm existed for 11 days during 20-30 April 2002 and fishing was carried out daily for about six hrs between 0500-1200 hrs.

A local gear called 'Aeru valai' or 'Mosquito-net' operated by two catamarans, was employed for the fishing. The overall catch comprised primarily of *Acetes* spp (80%). The bycatch included silverbellies (10%), juvenile sardines (5%), *Stoliphorus* spp. (3%) and miscellaneous group consisting of juveniles of high value finfish and crustaceans (2%). The most dominant species supporting the fishery was *A.indicus* (90%) and the remaining catch was shared between *A. japonicus* (6%) and *A.erythraeus* (4%).

A total of 337 units operated over 11 days, landed

141 t of *Acetes* spp. at the catch rate of 419 kg/unit. Both appearance and disappearance of the swarm were abrupt. On 20th April, the first day of exploitation of the swarm, the catch and catch-rate were 12125 kg and 379kg/unit respectively which increased to 21120 kg and 603 kg/unit/day on 25th April. After 5 days on 30th April, the catch decreased steeply to 5250 kg at a catch rate of 210 kg/unit/day and thereafter the fishery ceased. The catch was sold, at the landing site at the rate of Rs. 30-60/kg. At an average rate of Rs. 45/kg, the entire catch of 141t fetched about Rs. 63 lakhs. It worked out a daily earning of Rs. 1855/- by each fisherman.

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