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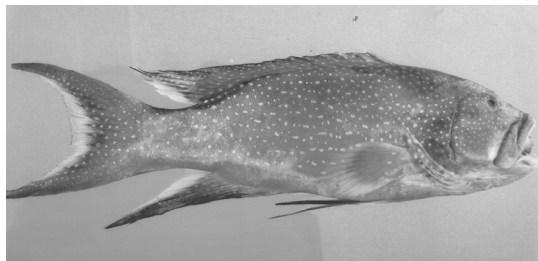
**CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

**COCHIN, INDIA**

**(INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH)**

## 1117 First report of moontail seabass, *Variola louti* along Mangalore coast

The multi-night gillnetters of Mangalore area stay out at sea for 3-4 nights for fishing. One such multi-night gillnetter landed a single specimen of the moontail seabass, *Variola louti* (Family: Seranidae) on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2004 along with sharks, billfishes, tunas and rays, while fishing off Karwar at a depth of 5m.



*Variola louti*

The distinguishing characteristics of the fish are its bright red colour with numerous small irregular yellow spots and streaks of pale blue, lavender, violet and pink on the head, body and median fins. Other identifying characters are the presence of a single dorsal fin with spines and rays, serrated edge of preopercle, presence of spines on the opercle and lunate caudal fin. The specimen has been preserved in the museum of Mangalore Research Centre of CMFRI. This rare coastal and coral reef fish is the first record of its occurrence from the Mangalore region.

Meristic counts and morphometric characters(mm) of *Variola louti* recorded at Mangalore

### Meristic counts

First dorsal fin spines	9
First dorsal fin rays	14
Pectoral fin rays	16
Pelvic fin spines	1
Pelvic fin rays	5
Anal fin spines	III
Anal fin rays	9
Caudal fin	16

### Morphometric characters

Total length (TL)	438
Fork length (FL)	376
Standard length (SL)	333
Depth of body at origin of first dorsal fin	106.4
Depth of body at origin of anal fin	86.1
Maximum body depth	106.4

Caudal peduncle depth	44
Head length	112
Snout length	34.2
Eye diameter	14.6
Inter-orbital width	16.2
Upper jaw length	44.2
Tip of snout to origin of first dorsal	111.4
Tip of snout to origin pectoral fin	107.1
Tip of snout to origin of pelvic fin	121.8
Tip of snout to origin of anal fin/first anal spine	227
Length of first dorsal fin base	148.6
Pectoral fin length (longest fin ray/spine)	72.6
Pelvic fin length (longest fin ray/spine)	99.3
Length of anal fin base	48.1
Distance between pelvic fin and anal fin bases	80.6

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