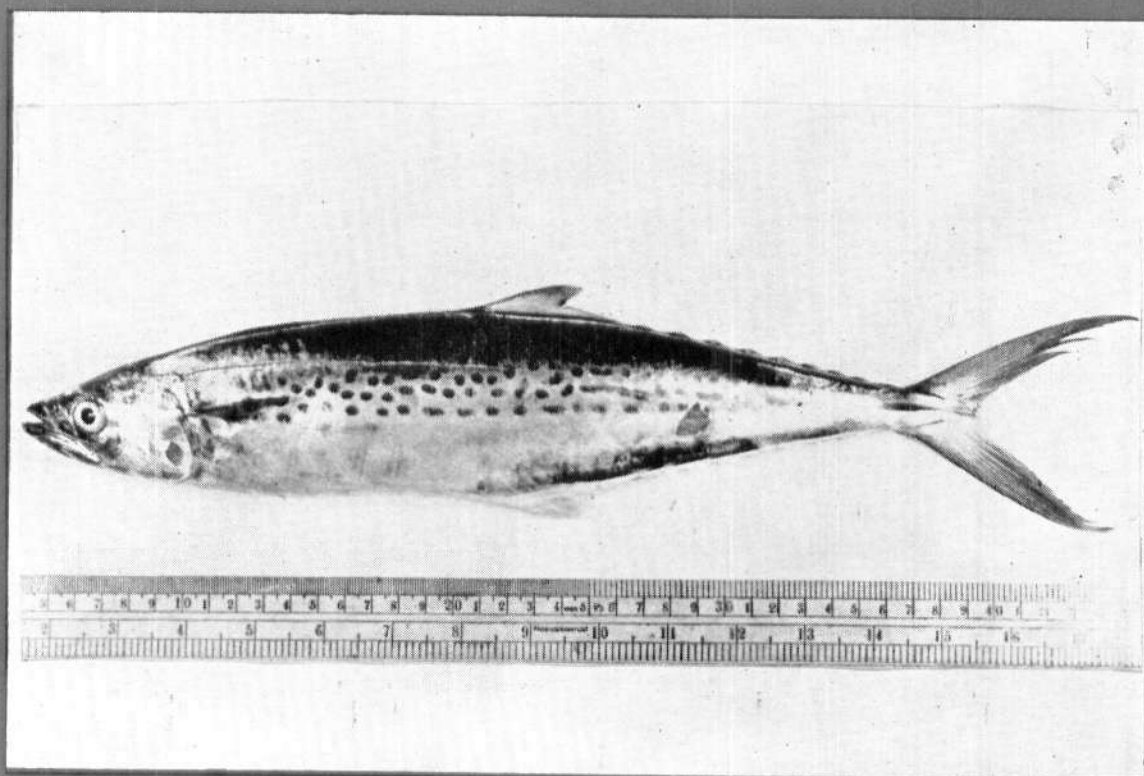




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**ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *MESOPODOPSIS ORIENTALIS* TATTERSALL,
A MYSID OFF MAHARASHTRA COAST, WITH A NOTE ON ITS FISHERY***

Mysids or 'Opposum shrimps' as they are popularly called have not been reported to have any fishery value in Maharashtra State. But at Satpati, an important fishing village of Maharashtra a fishery for a species (*Mesopodopsis orientalis*) was noticed to be in existence. It is locally known as 'Kolim' and the net used for its capture as 'Kolim bokshi'. The details of the catch during different years are presented below:

Year	Month	Unit	Gear	Catch (kg)	C.P.U. (kg)
1984	Apr.-May	1,360	Kolim bokshi	14,000	10.3
1985	" "	1,450	"	14,500	10.0
1986	" "	1,500	"	15,005	10.1

Craft and gear: Dugout canoes locally called *Tony* are engaged for fishing with a crew of two fishermen. The gear used is a stationary bag net locally known as 'Kolim bokshi' operated in the creek at Satpati in about 3-5 m depth. The length of the net is approximately 6-7 m and the mouth is about 2.5 to 3 m. The net is made out of fine meshed nylon cloth with a mesh size of 0.1 mm. The entire cost of the net ranges from Rs. 250-300. The net is tied to the

stakes fixed in the creek and is generally operated during the spring tide or *Udhan* period.

M-ORIENTALIS



TELSON



**4th PLEOPOD LIP
(MALE)**

(X·CA·100)

Fig. 1. Chief identification characters of *M. orientalis*.

*Prepared by M. Aravindakshan, J. P. Karbhari, C. J. Josekutty and J. R. Dias, Bombay Research Centre of CMFRI, Bombay.

The mysid *M. orientalis* comprised 90% of the landings. The other items were fish larvae and larvae of decapod crustaceans.

The chief characters that help in the identification of the species *M. orientalis* are the structure and the shape of telson and the fourth pleopod of males. The lateral spines on telson stated to be four for this species (Pillai, 1965, *Proc. Symp. Crustacea*, MBI, Part V: 1680-1727) was found to vary from 3-5 (Fig. 1). But majority had only four spines on each side of the telson. No change in the number and nature of the spines on the third exopod segment of the fourth pleopod was noticed.

Remarks: The fishery for *M. orientalis* (Fig. 2) is seasonal. It starts from April and closes just after the first rain in June. The reason for closure is the lack of drying facility for the mysids. The catch is salted and sun-dried. It can fetch a price of Rs. 7-8/kg. It is highly relished by the local people. The size range of the specimens is very small varying from 5-7 mm and the sex ratio was observed to be 1:2 with females in domination. *M. orientalis* is abundantly available

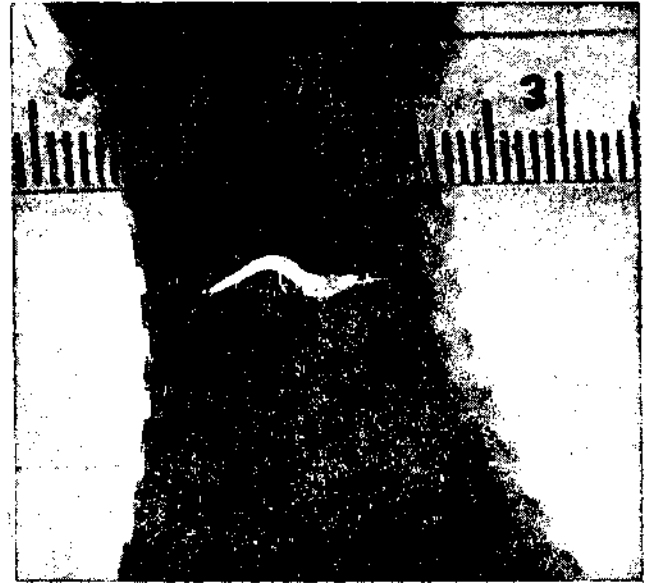


Fig. 2. *Mesopodopsis orientalis*

during April and May and so the fishermen who cannot go onboard the mechanised country craft/trawlers are engaged in this fishery.

