

A NOTE ON THE CATCHES OBTAINED IN GILL NETS BY
MECHANISED VESSELS FROM SASSOON DOCK, BOMBAY

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ABSTRACT

The species composition of the catches obtained in gill nets by mechanised vessels at Sassoon dock, Bombay, during 1971 has been recorded. Maximum catch was obtained during the last quarter and lowest in the second quarter. Pomfrets (29%) and *Ilisha* sp. (23.3%) were the major components of the catch, followed by *Scomberomorus* spp. (13.1%), *Euthynnus* spp. (10.3%), *Chirocentrus* spp. (9.4%), *Scoliodon* spp. (6.8%), catfish (3.8%) and *Megalaspis cordyla*, (3.3%).

As a part of the survey programme of the Fishery Resources Assessment Division data were collected on gill net catches at Sassoon dock, Bombay, an important gill net landing centre, which formed the material for this study. The catches were analysed to study the catch composition in different seasons. Estimation procedure was the same as described earlier (Krishna Pillai, MS).

Even though the number of boats in operation varied in different months during the period of investigation, a total of 778 boats operating gill nets were examined for the estimation of catch composition. The estimated catch from these vessels was 1483.578 t, forming 6.2% of the total catch of the year. The catch in other units, comprising trawl net, dol net and hook and lines, amounted to 22445.04 tonnes forming 93.8%.

The estimated monthly landings by gill net in Sassoon dock fluctuated between 16.88 t (July) and 365.53 t (October), with an average landings of 123.63 t per month (Fig. 1). Good catches were obtained during October-February period. The catch was poor during the monsoon months June to September (16.68 t to 89.57 t) when less number of units were in operation due to inclement weather. The total quantity of fish landed during each quarter was recorded separately.

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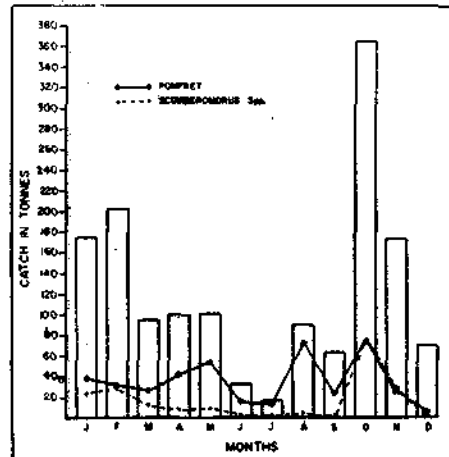


FIG. 1. Monthly fluctuation of total gill net catch, Pomfret and *Scomberomorus* of Sassoon dock, Boday during 1971.

Pomfrets and *Ilisha filigera* formed the major components of the catch. The total catch of pomfrets fluctuated between 6.84 t (December) to 76.60 t (October). Pomfrets were caught in good quantities in all the months except in December and monsoon months of June and July. The best catches were observed in August and October. Pomfrets took the first place (29.0%) not only in the annual catch composition but also in all quarters except the first. *Formio niger* dominated in the catch.

The catch of *Ilisha filigera* fluctuated between 182 kg (June) to 75.24 t (January). Good catches were observed in October, January and February, the maximum being in January. June and July were lean months. *Ilisha filigera* occupied second place (23.3%) in the annual catch composition, which maintained the same position from second to fourth quarters. It occupied first place in the first quarter (35.8%).

Scomberomorus spp., which consisted of *S. commerson* and *S. guttatus*, occupied the third place (13.1%) not only for the whole year but also in second and fourth quarters. *Euthyannus* sp. ranked fourth (10.3%), the species being *E. affinis*. Of the two species of *Chirocentrus* observed in the fishery, *C. dorak* and *C. nudus*, the former was most common in the catch (9.4%). *Scoliodon* spp. occupied sixth place, the dominant species being *S. sorrakowa*. Catfish represented mostly by *Tachysurus thalassinus*—occupied seventh place. Their season of occurrence was for a short period. October to December. *Megalaspis cordyla* contributed 3.3% of the total catch. *Lurianus* spp. and Rays were caught in smaller quantities contributing less than 1.0%.