

**A note on the record of juveniles of *Rastrelliger kanagurta* (cuvier) in the distant waters off
Ratnagiri**

Mackerel fishery of India is constituted mainly by *Rastrelliger kanagurta*. Young stages of it are reported to be caught only occasionally from the east and west coast of our country¹. Recently larval and post larval stages of the mackerel have, however, been

identified in the plankton²⁻³. The spawning ground of the species is not yet clearly known.

Small mackerel of 62-122 mm size were reported to occur off Ratnagiri in September, 1959 by George and Annigeri⁴. Narasimham (Personal communication) also reports occurrence of mackerel of 108-151 mm sizes there in October, 1961 in Rampan catches. Young mackerel of 10-130 mm sizes were reported from March to May in the areas along 10° to 30° N by PFP⁵. It also mentions about the occurrence of three mackerel larvae (3.7, 9.0 and 10.0 mm size) in the plankton samples collected in August, 1972 off Ratnagiri. Young mackerel were reported to occur in the shelf area extending from Tuticorin on the east coast to Ratnagiri on the West coast by PFP⁶ during March-August of 1972, 1973 and 1974.

Thirty one juvenile mackerel of size 73-87 and weight 3-5 g were collected from the trawl catches of M. T. 'Matsya Vigyani' operated at 30-35 m depth in Lat. 17°-20'N and Long. 72°-10'E on 4-11-77 at about 70 nautical miles in the distant waters off Ratnagiri. The dominant size contributing to 49% of it was 80 mm group.

The available record of young mackerel from Ratnagiri area indicates that they occur in shelf waters in March-August, PFP⁶. September, George and Annigeri⁴ and October (Narasimham, Per. Com.). Presently it is recorded north of Ratnagiri in distant waters in November. The spawning of mackerel is said to extend up to November by Noble⁷.

Peter⁸ has reported the occurrence of mackerel larvae from deeper waters. Spawners also recorded in distant waters off Bombay⁹ Juveniles also now reported in distant waters off Ratnagiri.

The stomach contents of 31 specimens consisted of mainly *Coscinodiscus* spp., copepods and young ones of *Acetes indicus*.

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¹K. V. Rao, Pro. Symposium on Scombroid fishes, Marine biological Association of India, Part I, 1962, p. 469-482.

²E. G. Silas, *Indian J. Fish.*, **21**, 233-253, 1974.

³PFP, UNDP/FAO Pelagic Fishery Project Progress Report No. 7, Fish eggs and larvae studies, 1974.

⁴P. C. George and G. G. Annigeri, *Curr. Sci.*, **29**, 319-320, 1960.

⁵PFP, UNDP/FAO Pelagic Fishery Project Progress Report No. 6, Survey Results, 1974.

⁶PFP, UNDP/FAO Pelagic Fishery Project Progress Report No. 10, young fish studies, 1975.

⁷A. Noble, *J. mar. biol. Ass. India*, **16**, 826-829, 1974.

⁸K. J. Peter, *Nat. Inst. Sci. India*, Part II, **38**, 771-777, 1969.

⁹S. Krishna Pillai, *Indian J. Fish.*, **26**, 237-238, 1979.