

First record of Indian hand fish *Halieutaea indica* Annandale & Jenkins, 1910 from Gujarat

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A single specimen of Indian hand fish *Halieutaea indica* Annandale & Jenkins, 1910 was collected at Veraval landing centre from a multiday trawler operated off Okha in Gujarat during 10.04.2013 to 20.04.2013. This is the first record of the species along the Gujarat coast. The fish was 8.3 cm long and weighed 14 g caught from a depth of 80-100 m. The detailed morphometric and meristic characters of the specimen has been given in Table 1.

The species belong to the family Ogcocephalidae (batfishes) under the order Lophiiformes. It identified by yellow pectorals with a white band across. The species is distributed in Indo-West Pacific: from off South Africa, Madagascar, Seychelles, Western Australia, Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan, China and Japan. It has a typical flattened head and body like rays. The head is disc shaped with a conspicuous cavity in front (Fig. 1). Tail is slender and tapering. Body is covered with scales shaped like tubercles. The intra orbital space is narrow and is of equal size to the eye diameter.

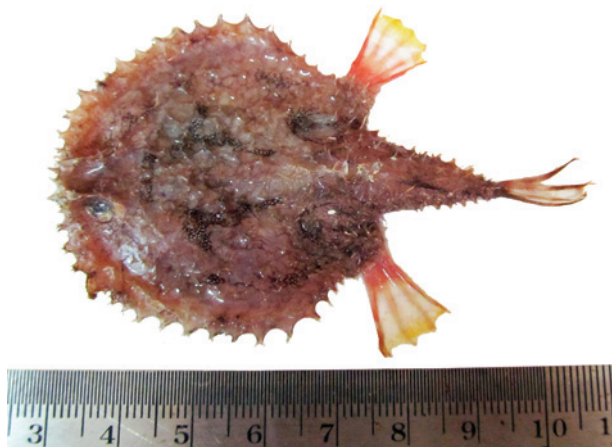


Fig. 1. Dorsal profile of *Halieutaea indica*



Fig. 2. Ventral profile of *Halieutaea indica*

Mouth is inferior and broad. Dorsal and anal fin are smaller, pelvic fin present underside of disc and is with well advanced pectorals. The body is uniform brown in colour with pinkish ventral side.

Table 1. Morphometric and meristic characters of *Halieutaea indica*

Characters	Measurements (mm)
Total length	8.3
Dorsal fin length	0.8
Pectoral fin length	1.6
Pelvic fin length	1.5
Anal fin length	1.2
Caudal fin length	2.0
Inter orbital space	0.5
Eye diameter	0.5
Disc length	4.2
Disc width	5.5
Tail length	4.1
Mouth width	2.3
Dorsal fin spine and rays	0+4
Anal spine and rays	0+4
Pectoral fin spine and rays	0+8
Caudal fin rays	6