

Occurrence of picnic seabream, *Acanthopagrus berda* (Forsskal, 1775) along Visakhapatnam coast, Andhra Pradesh

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The picnic seabream, *Acanthopagrus berda* (Forsskal, 1775) is a sparid bream, common in Western Indian Ocean, South Africa, Mozambique, the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, India, Phuket and Malaysia. There are about 139 species belonging to family sparidae distributed in World Oceans and about 10 species has been reported from Indian waters. The genus *Acanthopagrus*, now widely recognized as a valid Indo-West Pacific genus was first proposed as a subgenus of *Chrysophrys* by Peters (1855). The type-species

of the genus is *Chrysophrys vagus* Peters (1852) was later synonymized with *A. berda* by Smith & Smith (1986). There are 16 currently recognized species of *Acanthopagrus* of which *A. berda* is the most widespread. From Indian waters, three species of *Acanthopagrus* viz. *A. berda*, *A. latus* and *A. bifasciatus* have been reported so far. The species feeds on invertebrates, including worms, molluscs, crustaceans and echinoderms and small fish. It is a protandrous hermaphrodite species.

On 27th July 2013, a single specimen of the picnic seabream was collected from trawl sample at Visakhapatnam Fishing Harbour. The specimen was identified as *A. berda* (Fig.1) and deposited at the Marine Fish Museum of VRC of CMFRI, Visakhapatnam. This is the first report on the occurrence of *A. berda* along Visakhapatnam, east coast of India.



Fig. 1. *Acanthopagrus berda*, 235 mm (Total length)

The species is distinguished by fairly deep compressed body, its depth more than twice in standard length. Upper profile of head straight; snout pointed; eye moderate in size; ventral profile almost straight to anus; in both jaws, 4 large, more or less compressed teeth in front, followed by 3 rows of molar-like teeth in lower jaw and 4 rows of molar like teeth in upper jaw; absence of single enlarged molar posteriorly in jaws as observed in the genus *Rhabdosargus*; scale rows between fifth dorsal-fin spine base and lateral line 3.5; front edge of dorsal scaly area on head slightly convex; lateral-line scales 46; second anal-fin spine (2AS) longer than third anal-fin spine (3AS), 2AS/3AS ratio 1.46; anal-fin membrane dark; caudal fin slightly forked, with rounded lobes. Silvery gray colour on head, body and fins; upper part of body and base of scales darkest, lower part of head and body paler, a dark edge along opercle. Spinous dorsal fin with a dark edge and spines often silvery; pectoral fins dusky with a yellow tinge, soft dorsal, anal and pelvic fins blackish; Meristic and morphometric characters

recorded are as follows Meristic characters: D XI+12, A III+10, P 15, V I+5, C 17, LI 46, Gr 14

Table 1. Morphometric measurements of *Acanthopagrus berda*

Characters	Measurements (mm)
Total length	235
Standard length	187
Fork length	214
Snout length	12
Body depth	81
Post-orbital length	29
Length of dorsal fin base	107
Spinous dorsal fin base length	75
Soft dorsal fin base length	37
Length of 1 st dorsal fin spine	11
Length of 2 nd dorsal fin spine	21
Length of 3 rd dorsal fin spine	27
Length of 4 th dorsal fin spine	30
Length of 5 th dorsal fin spine	28
Length of 6 th dorsal fin spine	28
Length of pectoral fin	71
Length of pelvic fin	47
Length of first pelvic fin ray	46
Length of pelvic fin spine	32
Length of anal fin base	35
Length of 1 st anal fin spine	12
Length of 2 nd second anal fin spine	41
Length of 3 rd anal fin spine	28
Head length	53
Eye diameter	14
Caudal peduncle length	26
Peduncle height	33
Caudal fin height	56
Inter orbital width	21
Pre dorsal length	51
Pre anal length	131
Pre pelvic length	66
Pre orbital length	19
Upper jaw length	17
Total weight	500 g