

Occurrence of grooved razor fish *Centriscus scutatus* Linnaeus, 1758 from Kasimedu Fishing Harbour, Chennai

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On regular weekly observation at Chennai Fishing Harbour, during the month of July 2013, occurrence of grooved razor fish, *Centriscus scutatus* (50 kg) locally called as “Razar meen” belonging to Centricidae family of the order Syngnathiformes landed by trawl was recorded. This

species is widely distributed in coral reefs and inshore habitats throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific. The species has been first reported in India from the Gulf of Mannar, during 1975 and from Lakshadweep Islands, Kerala and Visakhapatnam during 2012. It inhabits sandy or muddy floors of

shallow inlet waters. Usually they are observed in large schools among branching corals, seawhip gardens and black coral bushes to about 15-20 m depth.

Description: This species is characterized by a sharp-edged belly and shrimp-like appearance. It has a straight, sleek, razor-like body with three dorsal spines, one long sharp spine displaced at the rear end of the body and two shorter spines, rest of the dorsal fin and the caudal fin present at the ventral side of the fish. The snout is long and narrow, and the small mouth at the end has no teeth. Lateral line is dusky, continuous and has no interruption. Eight silvery crossbars were observed on the ventral plates (Fig.1).



Fig. 1. Grooved razor fish, *C. scutatus* from Kasimedu Fishing Harbour, Chennai

This fish is remarkable for its strange body shape and swimming habits. Unlike other fishes, they swim vertically and in a synchronized manner with snout pointing downwards. Razor fishes are not used as table fish but usually processed for fishmeal production and also live fishes are collected by aquarium hobbyists.