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ON A RECORD OF *CALLIONYMUS SCHAAPI* BLEEKER
(CALLIONYMIDAE : PISCES) FROM INDIAN COAST

According to Day (1878) the family Callionymidae is represented in Indian waters by six species viz., *Callionymus longicaudatus*, *C. sagitta*, *C. fluviatilis*, *C. lineolatus*, *C. orientalis* and *C. opercularis*. While examining the fish collected on 9th February, 1965 from a tide pool formed in the low lying area near Mandapam (Palk Bay, 09° 17'N. and 79° 06'E.) as a result of the cyclone and tidal wave in December 1964, the author came across two male specimens of *Callionymus schaapi* Bleeker both measuring 77 mm. which is the first record of this species from Indian coast (Fig. 1). *C. schaapi* has so far been recorded from Singapore, Pulu Weh, Banka, Java, Celebes (Makassar), Sumbawa, Formosa and Philippines (de Beaufort, 1951). The species of *Callionymus* are known to live in sandy areas in shallow water in sea, best sought by sieving the sand.

The specimens agree in most of the details with the description of *C. schaapi* by de Beaufort (1951) except for the following : 1. The area behind eyes is with



FIG. 1. *Callionymus schaapi* Bleeker

distinguishable rugosities instead of being covered by smooth skin. 2. The thorn-like spines on the pre-opercular process increase instead of decreasing in length posteriorly. 3. A genital papilla is present although no mention has been made about it.

Distinguishing characters : Head 5.9, height of body 11.0, and caudal 4.0, all in total length. Eye 3.3 in head, almost equal to snout, separated by narrow interorbital space, about $\frac{1}{4}$ of eye. The pre-opercular process is strong, robust and curved ending in a hook and with four thorn-like spines at its inner side in the first specimen, and in the second one the innermost (4th spine) being rudimentary. First dorsal much higher than second dorsal, the first three spines of the former much prolonged, nearly twice the head length, the last spine being only 0.4 in head length (only males of this species are known to have the three anterior spines with filamentous prolongations). First ray of second dorsal nearly twice the diameter of eye. Lateral line of either side connected by a transverse branch on nape and on back of caudal peduncle.

Colour : In formalin preserved specimens dorsal surface of body brownish and ventral surface white. Dorsal surface of head greyish middorsally just behind eyes, and with numerous dark spots and ocelli of varying size. The back in the second specimen, already referred to, light brown with five blotches containing round white ocelli of varying size ; In the first specimen, the blotches on the back are not distinct while ocelli are present. Five to six dark oblong marks are present along the side just below the lateral line. Pectoral with indistinct rows of dark spots, and with a distinct black blotch anterior to its base. Posterior half of the rays of ventrals tinged grey. First and second dorsals with small dark spots. The membrane of anal with thin dark streaks, rays being white. Caudal dusky, with dark spots on its upper half.

The specimens have been deposited in the Reference Collection Museum of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Mandapam Camp (Reg. No. CMFRI-F 120/495).

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