

OCCURRENCE OF EGGS OF *STOLEPHORUS BATAVIENSIS*
IN THE FISHING GROUNDS OFF MADRAS

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ABSTRACT

The pelagic egg of *Stolephorus bataviensis* is described. The egg is elliptical in shape, with a knob at one end.

George (1958) and Babu Rao (1966) recognised two types of eggs in the ovaries of different species of *Stolephorus*. In the first type the chorion is with the knob at one end and in the other it is without knob. Pelagic *Stolephorus* eggs having oval or elliptical shape, without knob and with or without oil globules have been described by various workers (Delsman 1931; Bal and Pradhan 1945; Nair 1952; Vijayaraghavan 1957; and Sudarsan and Rajapandian 1967) from the Indian seas. Menon and George (1975) recorded bottle-shaped planktonic *Stolephorus* eggs with knob from the southwest coast of India. Similar knobbed eggs of *Stolephorus* were collected in surface plankton samples off Madras at 40-45 m depth on board Government of India trawlers, during July, August and September 1976. As this is the first report of occurrence of this type of eggs in the offshore waters of Madras, a short description and photograph of the same are given here.

Eggs elliptical in shape, ranging in length from 2.3 mm to 2.6 mm, including knob, and in breadth from 0.53 mm to 0.72 mm. Yolk colourless, segmented, without oil globules (Fig. 1). Chromatophores absent. Embryo formed and yolk not absorbed. Attempts to rear the eggs in the laboratory were not successful.

According to George (1958) and Menon and George (1975), eggs of *Anchoviella (Stolephorus) indica* and *A. commersonii* are with knob and of *A. bataviensis* is bottle-shaped. Among *Stolephorus* spp. *S. bataviensis* forms the major component in the trawl catches off Madras waters. The specimens of *S. bataviensis* examined from the catches during the same period were in mature condition and the intra-ovarian eggs were bottle-shaped like the present pelagic eggs and hence they are identified as *S. bataviensis* eggs.

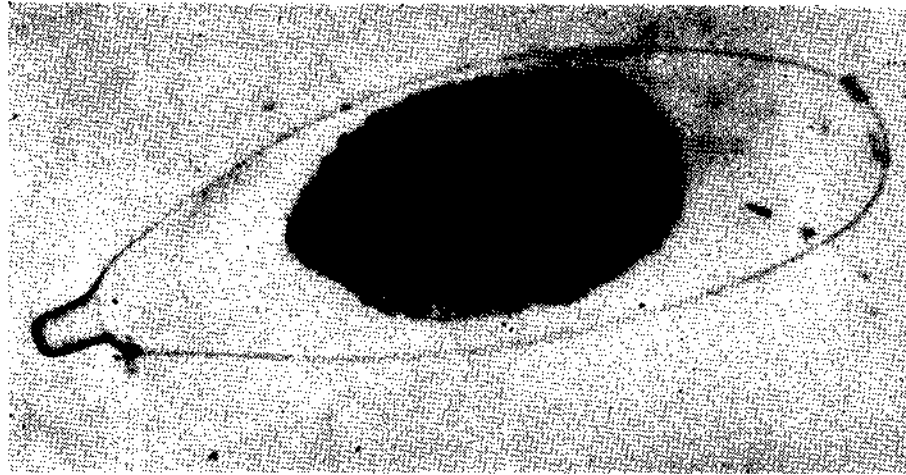


FIG. 1. Egg of *Stolephorus bataviensis* from the fishing ground off Madras.

Sudarsan and Rajapandian (1967) have reported the occurrence of the eggs of *Anchoviella* sp. in the offshore waters of Bombay. The present observation indicates the spawning of *Stolephorus bataviensis* in the offshore areas off Madras.

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