

**A REDESCRIPTION OF *CIRRHITICHTHYS APRINUS* (PISCES :
CIRRHITIDAE) FROM TUTICORIN, SOUTH INDIA**

ABSTRACT

The redescription of the little known perch *Cirrhitichthys aprinus* (Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1829) based on fresh material from Tuticorin, South India is given here.

Cirrhitichthys aprinus was originally described by Cuvier and Valenciennes (1829). Day (1875) and Fowler (1931) described *C. aureus* which was synonymised by De Beaufort (1940) under *C. aprinus*. Jordan and Tanaka (1913), Munro (1955) and Smith (1961) described this species subsequently. Recently we obtained 23 specimens of *C. aprinus* (78 mm to 100 mm in total length)

along with other fishes from fish collections made of a trawl net operated at a depth of 60-70 m in the Bay of Bengal off Tuticorin ($8^{\circ} 40' N-79^{\circ} 50' E$).

The description by De Beaufort (1940) and others and in the present study on *C. aprinus* are given in Table 1. A critical study made on specimens of *C. aprinus* collected from Tuticorin showed some distinctive characters not observed by earlier authors; presently a redescription of the species is therefore given.

branous at the base and fringed at the tip (Fig. 1).

Colour of the freshly caught specimens is rosy with four longitudinal ill-defined dell blotches extending half way down the side both from the spiny and soft rays and 3 clear bands fully across the caudal peduncle; Caudal with red spots made into 5 sharply defined bands and tip is dark tinged; elongated dorsal ray is yellowish; upper half of soft dorsal is dark grey; anal base rosy and tip greyish and all other fins rosy.

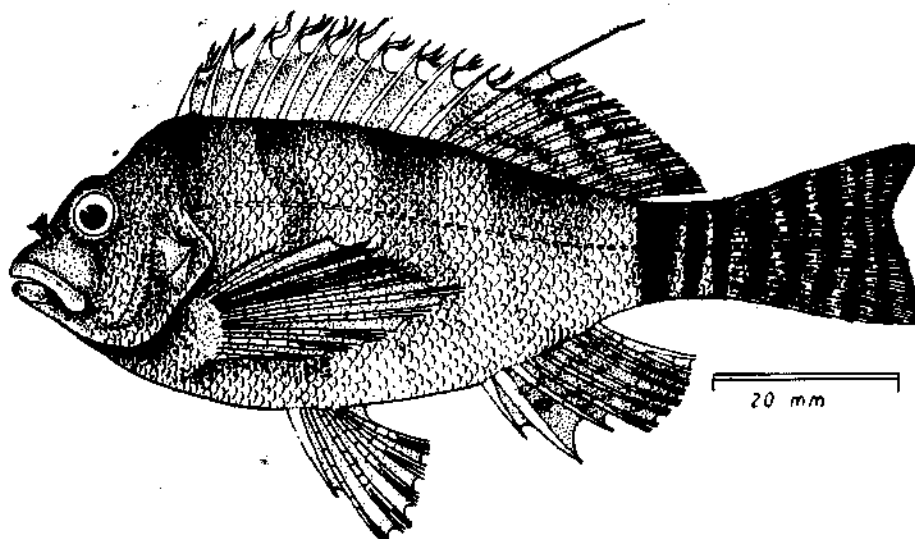


Fig. 1. *Cirrhilichthys aprinus*

Cirrhilichthys aprinus

Dorsal X (12-13), spinous dorsal interspinous membrane very emarginate; anal III (6-7); 39-43 scales in a longitudinal series, those on the opercle small, cheeks with a few small ones and shoulder scale denticulated; pectoral with 7 simple and 6-7 branched rays; caudal truncate; anterior nostril valvular and mem-

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Fisheries College,
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University,
Tuticorin 628 003,
India.

K. VENKATARAMANUJAM.
N. RAMANATHAN
G. SANJEEVIRAJ

TABLE 1.

	Present Study	De Beaufort (1940)	Munro (1955)	Smith (1961)
Dorsal	X; 12. Dorsal interspinous membrane very deeply emarginate	X; 11 (12)	X; 12-13	X; 12
Anal	III; 6-7	III; 6	III; 6-7	III; 6
Pectoral rays	7 simple + 6 branched	1.7 + 6 or 1.8 + 5	7 + 6-7 branched	6
Scales	39. Scales on the opercle small; cheeks with a few, small ones; shoulder scale denticulated.	39-41. Scales on the upper part of head beginning immediately behind eye.	43	40
Caudal	Truncate	Truncate or slightly rounded	Truncate	..
Depth	3.06-3.10	2.3-2.7, 2.7-3.4 in length with caudal	3.3	2.5 interorbital less than eye
Colour	Rosy with four longitudinal ill-defined dull blotches extending halfway down the side both from the spiny and soft rays and 3 clear bands across the caudal peduncle. Caudal with red spots made into 5 sharply defined bands and tip is dark tinged. Elongated dorsal ray yellowish. The upper half of soft dorsal dark grey. Anal base rosy and tip greyish and all other fins rosy.	Colour of preserved specimens yellowish or light brownish. Darker or lighter brown blotches arranged in transverse rows on the body, smaller or more irregularly scattered on head. With age these bands fuse and form more or less distinct broad transverse bands on the sides of the head. Dorsal and anal variegated with brown, sometimes with a dark outer border. Caudal light, with or without dark spots and a dark margin.	Rosy with lighter longitudinal lines and illdefined blotch below soft dorsal and sometimes 2 others under spinous dorsal. Dorsal and caudal lightly banded, the latter with red spots.	..
Nostril	Anterior nostril valvular and membranous at the base and fringed at the tip.

NOTES

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