

**ON THE OCCURRENCE OF A GIANT ROCK-COD,
EPINEPHELUS MALABARICUS (BLOCH AND SCHNEIDER)
IN TRAWL NET**

ON 21st March, 1968, the Goa Fisheries 36' trawler while operating with 60' otter trawl off Marmagoa harbour (lat. 15°-25'N. long. 73°-48'E.) in 18 metres depth caught at 10.30 a.m. a giant perch locally called *Gobro*. The specimen was later identified as *Epinephelus malabaricus* (Fig. 1). The vessel was trawling on a northerly course off harbour parallel to coast. There was moderate easterly wind and strong current (N). The fish on being hauled into the vessel struggled for nearly 2 hours. The following measurement of the fish were taken :

Total length	..	..	..	230 cms.
Head length	..	..	..	75 "
Eye diameter	..	..	..	5 "
Snout to anterior edge of eye	..	..	..	16 "
Posterior border of eye to end of head	..	..	..	54 "
Snout to base of Pectoral fin	..	..	..	68 "
Snout to 1st dorsal spine	..	..	..	92 "
Maximum body height at 3rd dorsal spine	..	..	..	60 "
Girth at end of head	..	..	..	150 "
Girth at 3rd dorsal spine	..	..	..	180 "
Girth at anus	..	..	..	155 "
Girth at caudal peduncle	..	..	..	54 "
Total weight	—197 kilograms			

It was a female specimen in stage III of maturity. From the stomach which was gorged, one specimen of *Lates calcarifer* weighing 14 kg., with its tail visible from the gape of the mouth, was recovered. The fish was in slightly digested condition indicating that it was eaten only a few hours before being caught.



FIG. 1. Giant Rock-Cod *Epinephelus malabaricus*
Caught in Trawl Net off Marmagoa Harbour.

One specimen caught at Vizagapatnam in January, 1786 measured 7' in length and body girth was 5' (Day 1878). It weighed more than 300 lbs. The present specimen was 7' 8" in total length and 6' in body girth and weighed 434.38 pounds.

It is of interest to note that this is the first positive record of the occurrence of such big sized *Epinephelus malabaricus* from Goa coast.

In view of the occurrence of such giant specimen in the inshore waters, there is a possibility that there may be rich fishing grounds of rock-cods in the deeper waters.

The authors are extremely thankful to Dr. M. S. Prabhu, Director of Fisheries for his able guidance in the preparation of this note.

Research Laboratory,
Directorate of Fisheries,
Panjim-Goa.

RAJENDRA M. DHAWAN
V. G. GOPINATHAN

REFERENCE

Day, F. 1878. *Fishes of India*, Vol. I.

*Published with permission of the Director of Fisheries, Panjim.