

ments of the antenna, each having a single spine on the inner margin. Chelipeds covered with red dots. Manus with a lobe on the inner anterior margin. Carpus with a strong tooth on the proximal inner margin and the rest of the margin finely serrated. Propodus longer than broad and with fine long plumose setae on the outer margin. Dactylus of walking legs with a single terminal spine and four accessory spinules on the lateral margin.

Measurements : Length 6.0 mm., width 5.0 mm.

Distribution : Pacific islands.

Remarks : This species is recorded for the first time from the Indian coast.

Our thanks are due to Dr. Janet Haig of California for confirming our identification and to Prof. P. N. Ganapati for kindly giving facilities.

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INSTANCES OF THE PELAGIC FISH *ILISHA INDICA* (SWNS.) FEEDING ON THE SEDENTARY POLYCHAETE, *PRIONOSPIO PINNATA* EHLERS

By far the most detailed studies of the food and stomach contents of the plankton feeding fishes have been made on the European herring. Observations on the food of the clupeids in Indian waters have been reported by a few authors. Generally speaking, the food of clupeids consists mainly of a mixture of diatoms (*Coscinodiscus*, *Chaetoceros*, etc.) dinoflagellates, (*Ceratium*), crustaceans, (*Mysis*, *Acetes*), mollusks, salps, fish eggs and larvae etc. Dulkhed (1962) observed *Sardinella longiceps* to be a plankton feeder, feeding mainly on diatoms such as *Coscinodiscus*, *Biddulphia*, dinoflagellates (*Ceratium furca*, *Ceratium fusus*). Meenakshisundaram and Marathe (1963) observed that *Ilisha filigera* is a carnivore, feeding mainly on crustaceans (*Mysis*, *Acetes*), cephalopods (*Sepia*, *Loligo*), salps, fish eggs and larvae. It will be seen that a fairly wide spectrum of organisms may be found in the stomach of clupeids.

In my study of *Ilisha indica*, I have been examining its stomach contents and found that this species also is a plankton feeder, feeding mainly on copepods, *Acetes*, fish eggs and larvae. However, in four specimens, out of the six fishes captured on the occasion, I came across the remarkable phenomenon of the stomachs being entirely gorged, each with 250 to 400, polychaete worms all of the species *Prionospio pinnata*. In two of the specimens the digestion of the worms had just started and in the other two, the worms had undergone partial digestion.

The worms measured 39 mm. in length and were sexually mature. The genus *Prionospio* is a bottom dweller, and *Ilisha indica* is a plankton feeder, and it is there-

fore puzzling how the stomach of this fish came to be gorged with worms, all of the same bottom dwelling species. It may be suggested that this fish does occasionally eat bottom dwelling worms. But what is more probable, is that the worms which are sexually mature had been swarming in the surface waters, and thus made their way into the stomach of the fish. It may be mentioned that the fish were collected on a new-moon day and from the surface waters within a depth of two fathom, at the ten fathom line in the sea. As Graham (1956) pointed out, the problems of distinguishing between generalised and selective feeding are considerable. It is difficult to decide between selective and indiscriminate feeding. The stomach contents in general may merely be a reflection of a broad tendency to feed on some occasions and not others, depending on what may be available.

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AULACOCEPHALUS TEMMINCKI BLEEKER (PISCES : SERRANIDAE) A NEW RECORD FROM THE ANDAMAN SEA

THE genus *Aulacocephalus* Temminck and Schlegel can easily be recognised from the numerous genera of the family Serranidae by the presence of nine spines and twelve soft rays in the dorsal fin. A perusal of the available literature reveals that this genus has reported from the east coast of South Africa (Barnard, 1927 ; Fowler, 1925, 1934, 1935 ; Gillchrist and Thompson, 1917 ; Smith, 1961), Madagascar and Reunion (Bleeker, 1878), Mauritius (Bleeker, 1879) and Japan (Temminck and Schlegel, 1844, Bleeker, 1879). Absence of any reference to this genus in the works of Day (1878), Munro (1955) and Weber and De Beaufort (1931) shows that it has not yet been recorded in the Indo-Australian Archipelago. The occurrence of *Aulacocephalus temmincki* in the Andaman sea is, therefore, very interesting and the present note gives a brief description of the species with a sketch for the benefit of ichthyologists in India.

The description is based on two specimens obtained from the sea near Port Blair, Andamans (11° 41' N., 92° 46' E) on 1-11-1965 and 9-2-1967 measuring 270 mm. and 250 mm. in total length respectively. One specimen, measuring 250 mm.,