

**OCCURRENCE OF EGGS OF THE WHITE BAIT *ANCHOVIELLA*
SP. IN OFFSHORE WATERS OF BOMBAY**

During a fishing voyage of M. T. 'Kalyani' III of the Deep Sea Fishing Station, Bombay, in February 1965, in one of the surface plankton hauls made at 71°15'E., 19°35'N. to the West-North-West of Bombay a considerable number of elongated and elliptical eggs with segmented yolk (Fig. 1) were observed. This type of egg is believed to belong to the genus *Anchoviella*. The eggs were found to be in a very early stage of development with the embryo just beginning to take shape. The length of the eggs varied from 1.04 mm. to 1.24 mm. and the breadth from 0.49 mm.

to 0.55 mm, with the averages at 1.14 mm, along the long axis and 0.52 mm, along the short axis. Though the specific identity of the eggs cannot be pinpointed, from

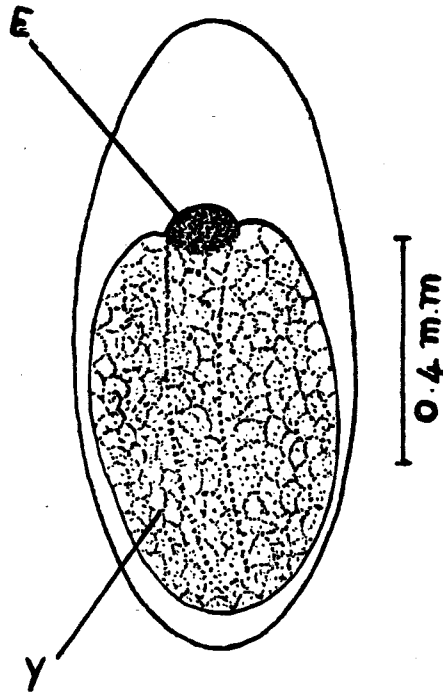


FIG. 1. Preserved egg of *Anchoviella* sp.
E. Embryo. Y. Yolk.

the available published information particularly according to the key for the identification of the eggs of *Anchoviella* given by Delsman (1931) these eggs could be provisionally assigned to *Anchoviella zollingeri* (Blkr.) on account of the absence of a knob and oil globule.

The interesting feature of this observation is that the eggs were found at a place, which is over seventy-five nautical miles from the nearest land point, to the South-East of Veraval and to the West-North-West of Bombay. As *Anchoviella* is known to be and generally accepted as an inhabitant of shallow and inshore waters, the occurrence of the eggs at a place so far away from the coast is of significance and may indicate the probable offshore nature of spawning of this genus in this region. The depth of sea at the point of collection of the eggs is 75 metres.

Delsman (1931) observed that the period of incubation in the different species of *Anchoviella* is never more than 24 hours. The early stage of development of the eggs in the present collection suggests that they are not more than 6-10 hours old and as such it could be surmised that the eggs were spawned at a place not far from the area of collection.

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NOTES

473

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