

tenellus are remarkable species among Penaeinae in that they lack the isolated epigastric tooth.

I am thankful to Shri M. Krishna Menon, Research Officer (Prawns), Central Marine Fisheries Research Substation, Ernakulam for helpful criticism.

Central Marine Fisheries Research Substation,
Bombay-1.

M. M. KUNJU

REFERENCES

- ALCOCK, A. 1905. *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, (7) 16 : 508-32.
- . 1906. *Catalogue of the Indian Decapod Crustacea. Part III. Macrura. Fasciculus 1. The prawns of the Penaeus Group.* (Indian Museum : Calcutta).
- DALL, W. 1957. *Austr. J. Mar. Freshw. Res.*, 8 : 136-230.
- KUBO, I. 1949. *J. Tokyo Coll. Fish.*, 36 : 1-467.

ON THE SPECIFIC IDENTITY OF A RIBBONFISH (FAMILY TRICHIURIDAE) DESCRIBED BY HAMILTON (1822) FROM THE RIVER GANGES

In the course of codifying the nomenclature of the species described by Hamilton in his 'Gangetic Fishes' (1822), it was found that the description of one of the forms he had tentatively assigned to *Trichiurus lepturus* called for clarification as to its position in the System. It is evident that Hamilton, while recognising the similarities his specimens evinced to *T. lepturus*, was also aware of the many points of differences from its then known descriptions and drawings, for he remarked that '... I think it unnecessary to multiply distinctions, and shall only add a full description, so that those who have an opportunity may judge how far any differences to be observed in different places may be adequate to distinguish these kindred fishes into different species'. This description which appeared under his second Order Apodes which contained 'Fishes having the dorsal spine or bone and wanting ventral fins' was not accompanied by a figure but the salient characters mentioned therein are as follows :

1. Elongate, with head and body considerably compressed, the latter resembling 'the blade of a very sharp sword'.
2. Colour, bright silvery throughout the body.
3. Head and body devoid of scales.
4. Lower jaw ending bluntly, but longer than the upper ; jaws with long distant teeth, and tips of each jaw with two teeth longer than the others.
5. Vent situated before mid-length of body ; tail having both edges sharp and mid-ventrally 'indented with almost seventy-four small prickles, and terminate in a very long slender point, which towards its end resembles a bristle'.

6. Eyes are placed high.
7. Gill-covers large and finely cut at edges ; gill-openings also large.
8. Lateral line decurved from nape and running along lower half of body.
9. Dorsal fin long with 114 rays.
10. Pectorals short, sharp above, each with 11 rays.

While several of the later ichthyologists have not remarked on Hamilton's description of this trichiurid, Day (1878) relegated it to the synonymy of *Trichiurus haumela* (Forsk.) with no comments. Recently, Tucker (1956) had adduced reasons to show that *Trichiurus lepturus* Linnaeus and *T. haumela* (Forsk.) are conspecific, the former name having priority over the latter, with which view we also agree.

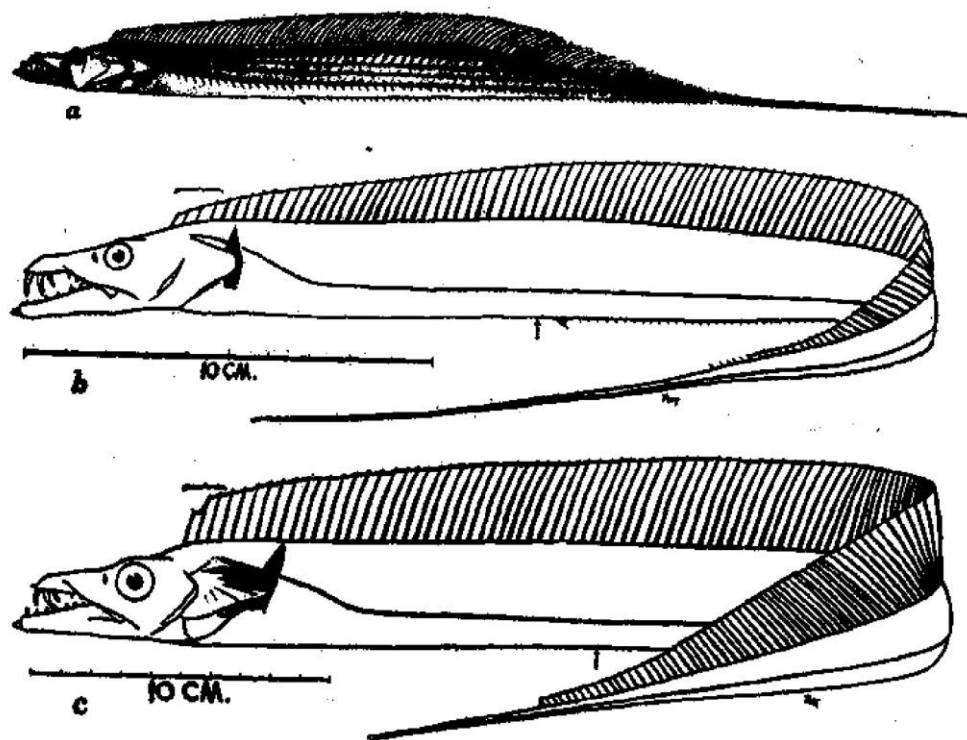


Figure 1. a. Hamilton's original figure of *Trichiurus lepturus* Lacépède (after Hora, 1929); b. *Lepturacanthus savala* (Cuvier) and c. *Trichiurus lepturus* Linnaeus (b and c after Tucker, 1956).

Hora (1929) found that original drawings of this trichiurid labelled as *Trichiurus lepturus* Lacépède, and those of some other species described by Hamilton, but not published by him during his time or subsequently by other workers did exist in the Asiatic Society Collections as well as at the British Museum (Natural History). The published figure of Hamilton's *T. lepturus* (Hora, *op. cit.*, pl. xviii, fig. 1) shows that it is in conformity with the description except that the dorsal fin is shown as

having 118 rays and the anal with 83 indented spinules instead of 114 and 74 respectively.

In the light of recent researches on the trichiurids in general (Tucker, 1956), and certain species of these fishes occurring in Indian waters (James, 1959), it is now clear that Hamilton's description and drawing of *Trichiurus lepturus*, does not represent *Trichiurus lepturus* Linnaeus as redefined by Tucker (*op. cit.*), but definitely depicts an allied species, *Lepturacanthus savala* (Cuvier) (= *Trichiurus savala* Cuvier, of Day and several other workers). The characters such as the dagger-like enlarged second anal spine (as shown in the drawing); the anal spinules breaking the ventral profile throughout the length of the fin and the spinules directed backwards; the relatively smaller eyes (about 7.0 times in head length in the figure); the fin ray counts, and the bristle-like terminal part of the tail help in fixing the specific identity of this species as *L. savala*, at the same time distinguishing it from *T. lepturus* in which the corresponding anal spine is rudimentary; the anal spinules absent or if present not breaking through the skin; eyes large (5.0 to less than 7.0 in head length) and the terminal part of the tail relatively shorter and tapering gradually. However, as seen from Fisheries Reports, it is evident that *T. haumela* (= *T. lepturus*), also occurs in the Hooghly and Matla estuaries. In addition to these, two other lesser known ribbonfishes, namely *Eupleurogrammus intermedius* (Gray), and *E. muticus* (Gray) also occur in the Gangetic estuary as collections obtained by one of us from the Matla and Hooghly estuaries indicate. Both *L. savala* and *T. lepturus* are easily distinguishable from the genus *Eupleurogrammus* Gill in several characters including the decurved lateral line and the total absence of the pelvic fins. The diagnostic characters of these four Indian species and a synopsis to their identification have been given elsewhere (James, 1959).

Incidentally it may be mentioned here that all these four species have also been obtained from fish catches landed at Sassoon Docks, Bombay, on a single day. It has been interesting to find that at many places where they are fished or form part of regular catches along the Indian coast, more than one or all these four species of trichiurids occur even in a single haul which has often presented difficulties to the untrained eye in distinguishing them.

SUMMARY

Trichiurus lepturus Hamilton (*nec* Linnaeus) is relegated here to the synonymy of *Lepturacanthus savala* (Cuvier). Attention is also drawn to the occurrence of the four Indian species *Trichiurus lepturus* (of which *T. haumela* (Forsk.) is a synonym), *Lepturacanthus savala*, *Eupleurogrammus intermedius*, and *E. muticus* in the Gangetic estuary and along the Bombay Coast.

Central Marine Fisheries Research Station,
Marine Fisheries P.O.
Mandapam Camp.

E. G. SILAS
P. S. B. R. JAMES

REFERENCES

- DAY, F. 1878. *Fishes of India*, etc. p. 201.
HAMILTON, F. (Formerly Buchanan). 1822. *An Account of the Fishes found in the river Ganges and its branches*. Edinburgh. pp. 31, 364.

- HORA, S. L. 1929. An Aid to the Study of Hamilton Buchanan's 'Gangetic Fishes.' *Mem. Indian Mus.*, 9 : 169-192 (p. 185, pl. xviii, fig. 1).
- JAMES, P. S. B. R. 1959. *Eupleurogrammus intermedius* (Gray) (Trichiuridae: Pisces), A New Record from Indian waters. *Journ. Mar. Biol. Ass. India*, 1 : 139-142.
- TUCKER, D. W. 1956. Studies on the Trichiuroid Fishes-3. A preliminary Revision of the Family Trichiuridae. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (nat. Hist.)*, Zool., 4 : 73-130.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE WAHOO, *ACANTHOCYBIUM SOLANDRI* (CUVIER & VALENCIENNES)

RECENTLY it has been possible to collect a few specimens of *Acanthocybium solandri* from Vizhingam (Lat. 08° 22' N., Long. 76° 59' E.), South-West Coast of India; and a description of the species is given below, as no account of it is available from Indian waters, except for a mention of its occurrence around Minicoy Island by Jones and Kumaran (1959) and in the Wadge Bank area off Cape Comorin by John (1959).

A. solandri is widely distributed, and is recorded from the circum-tropical parts of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The first record of this species from the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea) is that of Boulenger (1879) who gives a detailed description of a specimen collected and sent to the British Museum by Surgeon-Lieut.—Col. Jayakar from Muscat. Other records of this fish from the Indian Ocean are from the Delagoa Bay and Durban coasts in South Africa (Smith, 1949); Ceylon coast (Deraniyagala, 1952; Munro, 1955); and from Minicoy Island (Jones and Kumaran, 1959); the Wadge Bank area in India* (John, 1959); and subsequently from Andamans and Tuticorin (Jones, Silas and Dawson, 1960).

DESCRIPTION

Acanthocybium solandri (C. & V.)

Cybtum solandri Cuvier & Valenciennes 1841, *Hist. Nat. Poissons*, 8, 192.

Acanthocybium solandri. Boulenger, 1879, *Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, 272; Hardenberg, 1934, *Treubia*, 14(3) 292; Smith, 1949, *Sea fishes of South Africa*, 301, PL. LXIV, fig. 843; Fraser-Brunner, 1950, *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, (12) 3 : 162, fig. 35; de Beaufort, 1951, *Fishes of the Indo-Australian Archipelago*, 9: 228; Deraniyagala, 1952, *Coloured Atl. Some. Vert. Ceylon, I, Fishes*, 100-101, figs. 47, 48; Munro, 1955, *Marine and Fresh water Fishes of Ceylon*, 220, pl. XLIII, fig. 649; Jones and Kumaran, 1959, *Indian J. Fish.* 6(1) : 49; John, 1959, *Bull. Centr. Res. Inst., Univ. Kerala*, 7(1) : 133; Jones, Silas & Dawson, 1960. *J. Mar. Biol. Assoc. India*, 2(1). 134

Dl. XXIII-XXVII; D2. III, 9-10+8-10; A. III, 9-10+7-9; P. ii.21; V. I, 5; Vert. 62-64.

Body, elongated and cigar-shaped, covered with small, narrow, rhomboidal scales; those at the base of vertical fins elongated and lanceolate. Head, very long

* Dr. S. Jones, Chief Research Officer, in a personal communication informs me that he has seen a specimen of *A. solandri* on 16-3-1956 at Colachel (South of Vizhingam).