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RECORD-SIZED MACKEREL, *RASTRELLIGER KANAGURTA* CAUGHT FROM KARWAR WATERS ON THE WEST COAST OF INDIA

THE LARGEST MACKEREL ever caught from Karwar waters or for that matter the largest mackerel so far caught from the Indian waters measured 421 mm in total length and weighed 859 g in fresh condition (Photograph 1). This female specimen was caught in purse seine from a depth of 70 meters off Karwar (west of the light house) on 19th August 1999. Two days earlier, on 17th August 1999, another comparatively smaller specimen, measuring

347mm in total length and weighing 524 g. was landed by another purseiner. Thus the present specimen has broken all the earlier records (Table 1) in total length and weight. The fully grown female specimens had turgid ovaries. The well developed ovaries with fully packed ova indicate that even at such size mackerel spawns in the nature. Every year at the beginning of the "mackerel season" it is customary to observe larger adults in the catches

TABLE 1. Record sized mackerel *Rastrelliger kanagurta* so far caught in India.

Locality	Depth	Net/Boat	Year	Size	Sex	Weight	Authors
Goa	30 m.	Purse seine	15.1.1976	348 mm	Not known	520 g	Dhawan R.M. 1976
Karwar		Purse seine	1983	360 mm	Male	560 g	Dhulkhed, M.H. & G.G. Annigeri. 1983.
Chendia Binagar, Karwar	30 m	Purse seine	11.9.1984	366 mm	Not known	592 g	N.C. Gowda & G.G. Annigeri
Karwar	70 m	Purse seine	17.8.1999	347 mm	Female	524 g	V.S. Kakati & N.C. Gowda (Present specimen)
Karwar	70 m	Purse seine	19.8.1999	421 mm	Female with full ovaries	859 g	V.S. Kakati & N.C. Gowda (Present specimen)

of purseines. This fish measuring 421 mm was a single specimen among a huge catch of Carangid fishes in the gear. At the same time, the fishery during the period was also witnessing smaller mackerel specimens in the catches. The present occurrence of large sized mackerel

The details of the present specimen/s are as follows:

Morphometric characters:

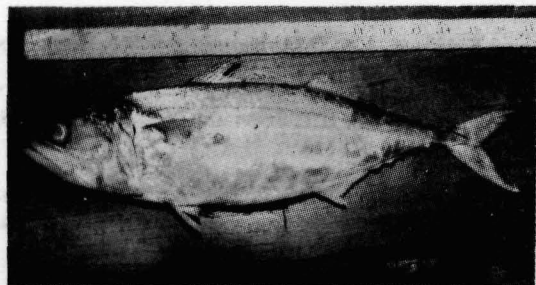


PLATE I R. Kanagurta (TL 421/mm) from Karwar

strengthens the title to Karwar as the "Mackerel Coast" of India.

The estimated L_{α} for Indian Mackerel *Rastrelliger kanagurta* is 316 mm (Ramamohan Rao et. al., 1962). Nevertheless the maximum sizes noticed earlier were as shown in the table and the present bigger specimen is the largest among those caught along the west coast of India.

	Specimens caught	
	19.8.1999	17.8.1999
Total weight	859 g.	524 g
Total length	421 mm	347 mm
Standard length	356 mm	282 mm
Pre-dorsal distance	128 mm	102 mm
Head length	99 mm	82 mm
Pre-orbital length	28 mm	28 mm
Post-orbital length	49 mm	38 mm
Eye diameter	21 mm	19 mm
Depth of the body (Height)	96 mm	83 mm
First dorsal fin length	55 mm	41 mm
Second dorsal fin length	48 mm	47 mm
Intra-dorsal distance	42 mm	35 mm
Length of caudal fin	77 mm	67 mm
Length of pectoral fin	47 mm	39 mm
Length of anal fin	42 mm	32 mm
Pelvic fin base length	43 mm	40 mm
Fork length	373 mm	300 mm
Sex	Female	Female
Maturity stage	VI	VI

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