

**Short Communication**

**ON THE OCCURRENCE OF RABBIT FISH : *SIGANUS VERMICULATUS* (CUVIER AND VALENCIENNES), (FAMILY : SIGANIDAE) FROM DIGHA COAST, WEST BENGAL**

**INTRODUCTION**

The marine ichthyofauna of West Bengal has been described by Talwar *et al.* (1994). In this account there is no mention of rabbit fish, *Siganus vermiculatus* (Cuvier and Valenciennes) belonging to the family Siganidae from West Bengal. Although the rabbit fish is common along both coasts of India, no report of this fish from West Bengal is available in literature.

Recently, in the course of investigation on faunal diversity, the authors came across one specimen of *Siganus vermiculatus* of 26.5 cm in total length, caught by drag net from Digha coast on 16.07.97. A brief description of the specimen is given below.

***Siganus vermiculatus* (Cuvier and Valenciennes)**

*Amphacanthus vermiculatus* (Kuhl and V. Hasselt) : Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1835, *Hist. Nat. Poiss.*, 10 : 126.

**Material examined** : 1 ex., loc. : Digha Hospital Ghat; dt. 16.7.97. Coll. : J. Sarkar and S. Talukdar; MARC. Regd. No. 1918.

**Description** : D. XIII 10, P. 16, A. VII 9, C. 24, Ll. 192, Ltr. 24. Body oval and compressed; profile of head slightly concave above eye, slightly convex in front of mid region of eyes, ventral surface of head flat and slightly convex. Maxilla reaches about half way to below the front edge of orbit. Dorsal fin spine strong and occupying about 5-7th of the length of the base of entire fin, rayed portion of the fin high and angular. Length of first dorsal fin spine 1.5 cm. Shape of anal fin angular. Caudal slightly emerginate. Scales minute but distinct.

**Colour** : Light brown, running into bluish-green with yellow blitter on the back, and nearly white on the abdomen. the whole of the body, head and lips are lineated with undulating bluish lines. Caudal fin with brown lines.

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**REFERENCE**

Talwar, P.K., Mukherjee, P., Saha, D., Paul, S.N. and Kar, S.; 1992 (1994). Marine and Estuarine fishes, *In : Fauna of West Bengal - State Fauna Series 3. Part - 2 : 243-342.*

*Marine Aquarium and Research Centre,  
Zoological Survey of India,  
Digha, West Bengal*

J. SARKAR\*, S. TALUKDAR,  
RAMAKRISHNA and T.K. CHATTERJEE