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Short Communication

**ON A REPORT OF *REDIGOBIUS BIKOLANUS* (HERRE)
(PISCES : GOBIIIDAE) FROM INDIA**

INTRODUCTION

In a recent survey of the Andamans by the third author, an interesting gobiid fish was collected. This on detailed study turned out to belong to the species *bikolanus* hitherto unknown to India. The species is hence reported here.

Material examined : 1 ex., 26 mm SL., F.7391 ZSI/SRS, Middle Andaman, 26.4.2002, Coll. M. K. Das.

Order PERCIFORMES

Suborder GOBIOIDEI

Family GOBIIIDAE

***Redigobius bikolanus* (Herre)**

(Fig. 1)

1927. *Vaimosa bikolana* Herre, Monogr. 23, *Bur. Sci. Manila*, P. 151, pl. 11, fig. 2.

1984. *Redigobius bikolanus* (Herre), Masuda *et al.*, *The Fishes of the Japanese Archipelago*, p. 269.

Description : D.1.VI; D.2.I/7; A.I/6 : P.17; C.7/13/7; L.1.26; L.tr.7½; Predorsal scales 7.

Body slightly elongate, compressed, height 3.81 in standard length (SL) and 4.84 in total length (TL): Head compressed, 3.17 in SL, 4.02 in TL; its depth 1.41 and width 1.56 in its length. Profile almost straight. Eyes large, 3.39 in length of head; interorbital width narrow, 2.52 in eye diameter. Snout obtuse 1.22 in eye. Mouth large, subequal, tip before lower margin of eye, maxillary curves down abruptly and extends to below posterior margin of eye. Teeth in several rows in both jaws, no prominent canines. Tongue emarginate. Two longitudinal incomplete rows of mucous canals on cheek and sensory pores as in Masuda *et al.*, 1984, (fig. 150). Head scaled above from behind the eyes, the first median scale scarcely larger than the following predorsal scales. Preopercle

naked, opercle with some large cycloid scales, scales of body faintly ctenoid; on head and behind eyes cycloid. Pectoral base scaled with large scales. Gill openings extend to below base of pectoral fin. Dorsal fins separate by a distance of two scales. First dorsal fin 1.39 in body depth, second dorsal 1.36 in depth of body. Pectoral elongate extending beyond pelvic tip, reaching 3rd anal ray, its length 1.13 in head length, 3.58 in SL; pelvic fin shorter, reaching beyond auns, 1.24 in head length; caudal fin rounded, 1.17 in head length.



Fig. 1. : Lateral view of *Redigobius bikolanus* (Herre)

Each scale with small dots, darker along the edges. Head and body mottled, alternating rows of blotches on sides; an oblique bar behind opercle and a vertical bar before anal on the sides, extending to the ventral side, the latter meeting its counter part from the other side. Also four spots on median ventral side on the anal base and caudal peduncle. Three dark stripes radiating from below the eye, one to the upper jaw, one near corner of mouth and an oblique one across opercle forming a 'γ' shaped marking on cheek. First dorsal fin dark at its posterior base and tip, enclosing a paler area, edges black with a white rim; three rows of dark spots on second dorsal fin and about 6 rows of spots restricted to the upper two thirds in caudal fin. Membranes between rays of pelvic and anal fins black.

Distribution : Borneo N., Sulawesi, Philippines and India.

DISCUSSION

Koumans (1953) in his revisionary work included the species *Vaimosa bikolana* Herre under the species *Redigobius chrysosoma* (Bleeker). However, Masuda *et al.*, (1984) and Kottelat *et al.*, (1993) have treated *bikolanus* and *chrysosoma* as separate species, the former author provides a description of the species along with an illustration of the cephalic sensory pore system & the latter provides differentiating biometric characters and colour photographs. It is observed that *bikolanus* is distinguished from *chrysosoma* by an additional branched second dorsal ray 1.7 (vs.1.6), more L.1.scales 26–27 (vs.25), three radiating black bars below eyes vs. one vertical bar below eye : difference in the position and extent of dark colour in the first dorsal and a bright yellow patch in *chrysosoma* in live specimens.

Based on the study of the various morphometric and meristic characters and from the colour pattern the present specimen collected from Middle Andaman has been identified as *bikolanus*. Since this species has not so far been described from Indian waters by earlier workers *viz.* Herre 1941; Koumans, 1941, 1953; Talwar and Jhingran, 1991 and Rao *et al.*, 2000, it is reported here as new to India.

SUMMARY

The gobiid fish *Redigobius bikolanus* (Herre) is reported here for the first time from India. This species known so far from Borneo N., Sulawesi and Philippines has recently been collected from the Middle Andamans, India.

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