***Short communication***

**Identification notes of *Johnius* fishes from Bay of Bengal Coast, Andhra Pradesh.**

**Abstract**

Fishes are commercially valuable vertebrates, easily accessible protein sources for all human populations despite their financial status. Andhra Pradesh has one of the longest coastal lines in the country, and largely partaking in the production of marine products and influencing the state as well as the country’s exporting capacity. *Johnius of family Sciaenidae is* one of the highly preferred consumable fish species. Our recent studies revealed five species of *johnius* occurrence in coastal waters of Andhra Pradesh and discussed here as identification notes*.*

**Introduction**

The croaker family, Sciaenidae, includes ray-finned fishes of the genus *Johnius.* They are accustomed to making knocking, croaking, and purring noises (Lin *et al*. 2007). Usually measuring less than 30 cm, *Johnius* croakers are comparatively small Sciaenids in general are found in Indo-West Pacific waters (Chao *et al*. 2019). Between 12 and 20 pairs of dendritic appendages line the sides of their distinctive hammer-shaped swim bladder (Kunio 2022). The first lateral appendage reaches the dorsal corner of the gill opening.. They have large paired sagittal otoliths that are triangular. Usually found sub-terminally to inferiorly, these fishes have a tiny mouth. The majority of species lack a barbel on their chin, however, a few have a short one (Chao et al. 2019). The biggest species, include as *J. dussumieri* and *J. dorsalis.* In the recent past several workers working on fish and fishery resources of Andhra Pradesh coastal waters(Sujatha, 1995*;* Chatla and Padmavathi,2021). Present identification notes based on collected specimens from Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, and Veta Palem landing centers of the Andhra Pradesh coast during our study period.

**Methodology**

The present work results of several fish investigatory surveys conducted in Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, and Veta Palem landing centers of the Andhra Pradesh coastal waters during the period of 2020-2022. Collected specimens were preserved in 10% formalin and labelled with all necessary details and transformed to the laboratory for further studies.

**Results and discussion**

***Johnius glaucus* (Day, 1876)**

**Genus: *Johnius fig1 : Johnius glaucus***

**Species: *glaucus***

**Description**: Body elongated, greyish green along the back. Silvery below. The greatest width of the head equals half its length. Snout rounded, slightly overhanging the jaws. The upper jaw overlaps the lower jaw. Pre-opercle with distinct and widely separated denticulation, most developed at the angle. Opercle with 2 spines. Snout with three pores across its base and five along its free border. A diffused bluish blotch on the opercle. Teeth are villiform in both jaws with an outer enlarged row of somewhat conical ones in the pre-maxillaries. Dorsal spines moderately strong. Pectoral falciform, as long as the head excluding the snout. Ventrals reach halfway to the anal; the second anal spine is strong. The caudal is rounded slightly wedge-shaped.

**Common name:** Pale spot fin croaker

**Habit and habitat:** Marine, brackish, demersal.

**Economic importance**: Commercial

**Distribution: Western** –Indian Oceans. North west coast of India.

**Synonyms: *Johnius borneensis* (Bleeker, 1851) *Sciaena vogleri* (Bleeker, 1853)**

***Otolithus vogleri* (Bleeker, 1853)**

****Genus: *Johnius fig2 : Johnius borneensis***

**Species: *borneensis***

**Description:** Body elongated and perch-like. The dorsal profile is more convex than the abdomen. Body silvery in colour. Snout rounded but not swollen or projecting, mouth large, oblique, upper jaw extending backward below posterior half of eye. No barbells on chin. Teeth in narrow bands well differentiated into large and small in both jaws but non-canine-like. Preopercle distinctly but finely serrated. The shoulder scale serrated. Dorsal spines of moderate strength. The second to the fifth sub-equal in length. The pectoral as long as the head is behind the first fourth of the eye.Ventrals reach half way to the anal. 2nd anal spine weak and long. The caudal wedge-shaped.

**Common name:** Sharp nose hammer croaker

**Habit and habitat:** Marine, brackish, benthopelagic and freshwater.

**Economic importance:** Commercial

**Distribution:** Indo–West Pacific.

 **Fig 3: *Johnius trachycephalus***

***Johnius trachycephalus* (Bleeker, 1851)**

Synonyms: ***Corvina trachycephalus* (Bleeker, 1851);  *Otolithoides siamensis* (Fowler, 1934)**

**Genus*: Johnius***

**Species: *trachycephalus***

**Description:** Body elongated fusiform, golden in colour. Head is longer than broad. The snout is blunt. Eyes large. Lower region of the head spotted with black dots. Dorsal fin edged with black. The pectoral fin is also black in colour. The lateral line is curved. Caudal peduncle is long. Caudal fin smooth and leaf-like. The pelvic fin outer rays are filamentous. No barbels on chin. Scale rows above lateral line 12, below lateral line 17. Gill rackers 12.

**Common name:** Leaf tail croaker.

**Habit and habitat:** Marine, freshwater, brackish water, benthopelagic.

**Economic importance:** Commercial

**Distribution:** Indo–Pacific; India, Thailand, Sumatra and Borneo.

***Johnius dussumieri* (Cuvier, 1830)**

**Synonyms: *Sciana dussumieri* (Cuvier, 1830); *Sciana sina* (Cuvier, 1830)**

****Genus: *Johnius***

**Species: *dussumieri***

 **fig 4 : *Johnius dussumieri***

**Description:** Body elongated and perch-like. The height of the head equals in its length excluding snout. Snout rather inflated, scarcely overhanging the jaws. Pre-opercle rounded. Some distinct spinate teeth at its angle. Five pores under the symphysis of marbel. Snout with three pores across its base. Teeth villiform. Dorsal fin spines weak. The third and fourth spine longest. Pectoral as long as the head without snout. The ventral reaches nearly halfway to the anal. Caudal wedge-shaped.

**Common name:** Sin croaker**.**

**Habit and habitat:** Marine, freshwater, brackish**.**

**Economic importance:** Commercial

**Distribution:** Indian Ocean from Pakistan to the Andaman Islands**.**

***Johnius carutta* (Bloch, 1793)**

**Synonyms**

***Sciaena carutta* (Bloch, 1793)**

***Johnius carutta* (Bloch, 1793)**

**Genus: *Johnius***

**Species: *carutta***

**Description:** Body elongated, purplish brown. The greatest width of the head equals 2/3 of its length; its height equals its length excluding the snout. Snout inflated overhanging the upper jaw, which slightly overlaps the lower. The maxilla reaches below the middle of the eye. Preopercle crenulated,

opercle with two weak spines. A row of pores across the snout. A central pore beneath the symphysis of the mandible having two more on either side of it. Teeth villiform in both jaws. Some teeth on the outer row and in the anterior portion of the premaxillaries are enlarged. Somewhat conical. Dorsal spines weak. 2nd and 3rd the longest, with the pectoral as long as the head, excluding the snout. 2nd anal spine weak. Lateral line curved.

**Common name:** Karut croaker.

**Habit and habitat:** Marine, freshwater, brackish water, demersal.

**Economic importance: Minor commercial**

**Distribution:** Indian Ocean, from Pakistan to the west coast of Mala Peninsula

**Discussion is missing**

**Conclusions**

Present identification notes of *johnius* fishes of the family Sciaenidae would be helpful for future fish biologist’s investigations and give some basic knowledge to access the available fish species characters of genus *johnius* in coastal waters of Andhra Pradesh.

**Ethical statement**

The fish species studied in the present study are not protected under The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (Last amended in 2013), Government of India, All the guidelines on animal use and care were followed accordingly.

**References**

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