

A note on the rare landing of the Japanese rubyfish in Gujarat

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On 3rd December, 2013, the rare landing of Japanese rubyfish *Erythrocles schlegelii* (Richardson, 1846) was observed in the trawl catches at Veraval Fisheries Harbour. Around 40 kg of *E. schlegelii*, along with *Epinephelus diacanthus* and *Pricanthus hamrur* was landed. The length range was 250 to 520 mm and weighed between 400 gms to 1.5 kg each. The landed catch was sold along with *P. hamrur* at a price ₹ 40 per kg.

From the bulk catch a single specimen of length 50.5 cm and weighing 1.102 kg (Fig. 1) was collected and the species identification was confirmed following Heemstra (1986). After detailed morphometric and meristic measurements were recorded, the specimen was preserved and kept in the museum at Veraval Regional Centre of CMFRI. Body is fusiform with a distinct morphology of the upper jaw which differentiates it from other fishes



Fig. 1. Japanese ruby fish

belonging to Perciformes. The supramaxilla is well developed, the premaxilla has a broad median ascending process joined to a large rostral cartilage, and there is a prominent midlateral process. There were no teeth in the jaw. Colouration was reddish brown dorsally and silvery white with pinkish tinge below while caudal and pectoral fins were reddish orange. The details of morphometrics and meristics is given in Table 1. The specimen was a mature male with its gut full of *Acetes* sp. The fish is known to feed on shrimp belonging to the family Sergistidae and also on small mesopelagic fishes of the family Myctophidae, Astronesthidae and Paralepididae.

Table 1. Morphometric and meristic data of *E. schlegelli*

Characters	Measurements (cm)	Percentage (%) of Total Length
Total length	50.5	
Standard length	42	84.1
Fork length	45	89.1

Head length	12.8	25.3
Snout length	3.5	6.9
Body depth	13.5	26.7
First Dorsal fin height	5.2	10.2
First dorsal fin base length	9.5	18.8
Second dorsal fin height	4.2	8.3
Second Dorsal fin base length	7	13.8
Pectoral fin height	7.9	15.6
Pectoral fin base length	2	3.9
Pelvic fin height	6	11.8
Pelvic fin base length	2.4	4.7
Anal fin height	3.6	7.1
Anal fin base length	5	9.9
Caudal fin length	9	17.8
Pre pectoral fin length	14.5	28.7
Pre caudal fin length	40	79.2
Pre anal fin length	30	59.4
Pre dorsal fin length	16.5	32.6
Eye diameter	3	23.4

% of Head Length

Inter orbital space	4.3	8.5
Maxillary length	4.5	8.9
Mandibular length	5	9.9

Meristics

Dorsal fin spine	11
Dorsal soft rays	11
Pectoral fin rays	18
Pelvic fin spine	1
Pelvic fin ray	7
Anal fin spine	3
Anal soft rays	9
Gill rakers (Upper limb & Lower limb)	9 & 25
Scales on lateral line	69