

Kaleidoscope

Stray occurrences of Bombay duck from the Malabar Coast of Kerala

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The Bombay duck, *Harpadon nehereus* (Hamilton, 1822) form a major single species fishery along the Northwest coast from Ratnagiri in Maharashtra to the Gulf of Kutch in Saurashtra coast. They also form a seasonal fishery along Northeast coast (West Bengal & Odisha) and the northern part of Andhra Pradesh. The fishery is usually concentrated in a comparatively narrow depth zone up to 70 m and are mainly exploited by stationary bag net known as 'Dol' which are operated entirely by tidal force. Bombay duck is insignificant or completely absent in the Southwest and Southeast coasts. In contrast, frequent/regular incidents of stray numbers of *H. nehereus* landings at Puthiyappa fishing harbour, Kozhikode were observed during October to December 2019. A few numbers were reported in December 2019 from Kannur also. All of these were landed by single day trawlers operated off the Malabar coast. The other fishes in the landings were croakers, *Ilisha* sp., shrimps, *O. tardoore*, horse mackerel, *Lactarius*

lactarius, flounders, *Thryssa* spp., sardines and golden anchovy. Unusual and comparatively high landings of Silver pomfrets were also observed during October-December 2019. The three specimens collected on 16.10.2019, 03.12.2019 and 10.12.2019 measured 24.1 to 28.7 cm in total length (TL). All specimens were females having gonads in spent and spent recovery stages. Stomachs were either empty or almost full with fish remains and semi-digested matter. The earliest report of Bombay duck from Malabar region was in 1999 in which a single specimen measuring 21.5 cm TL with a standard length of 17.7 cm was caught along with carangids and crabs in a gillnet (*Chalavala*) operated off Quilandy coast using a dugout canoe (Krishnan, 2000).

Reference

Krishnan, C. K. 2000. *Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv., T & E Ser.*, 166:19



Fig. 1. *H. nehereus* of 28.7 cm TL landed