

A CONFIRMATION OF THE OCCURRENCE OF OIL SARDINE,  
*SARDINELLA LONGICEPS VALENCIENNES*,  
ALONG THE ORISSA COAST

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ABSTRACT

Occurrence of the oil sardine, *Sardinella longiceps* Valenciennes, along the Orissa coast is confirmed.

According to Whitehead (1973) and Rao (1973) the distribution of the oil sardine, *Sardinella longiceps* Valenciennes, in the east coast of India is along Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, and the species is known to contribute to stray catches there. Antony Raja (1968), however, includes the coast of Orissa for its 'occurrence under verification'. During the course of fishery survey work, stray catches of oil sardine were observed at two landing centres in Ganjam District (Orissa State), namely, Bandar on 18-3-1984 and 6-4-1984 and Sonna Arjipally on 17-5-1985, the two places being separated by a distance of 7 km. The present observation confirms the doubt of Antony Raja as to the occurrence of the oil sardine along the Orissa coast.

A total of about 200 fish of 130-170 mm total length were landed during the three observation days. They were caught in the surface gill net locally known as 'Katlavala' of 2.0-2.5 cm mesh size. The other fish caught in the net on the same days were *Sardinella fimbriata* and *Thryssa* spp. Some details of a specimen of *S. longiceps* collected are given below.

Total length 156 mm; standard length 125 mm. Meristic characters: dorsal 18, pectoral 16, ventral 9, anal 16, lateral line scales 44, transverse scales 13, predorsal 16, ventral scutes 19 + 14, gill rakers 181 (upper) and 208 (lower). Morphometric characters: height at dorsal origin 3.8, head 3.3 — both in standard length; snout 3.5, eye 1.4 — both in head length.

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