



RARE CASE OF A FISH *CHITALA CHITALA* FOUND IN BHIMA RIVER NEAR WATLUJ, TAHSIL DAUND, DIST. PUNE, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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Abstract

A single specimen of *Chitala chitala* was captured on September, 10th 2022 in a gill net during the fishing activity in a Bhima river near Watluj village, taluka Daund, district Pune, Maharashtra, India (Latitude 18.4080370⁰ N, Longitude 74.7746196⁰ E). The fish was found having length 127 cm and weighed 6 kg and 120 gm. Previously *Chitala chitala* of this length and weight was not recorded from Bhima river of Ujani reservoir.

Keywords: *Chitala*, Bhima, Ujani, length, weight, fish, rare

Introduction:

Ujjani Dam, also known as Bhima Dam or Bhima Irrigation Project, on the [Bhima River](#), a tributary of the Krishna River, is an [earthfill](#) cum [Masonry gravity dam](#) located near Ujjani village of Madha Taluk in [Solapur district](#) of the state of [Maharashtra](#) in [India](#). The Bhima River, which originates in [Bhimashankar](#) of the [Western Ghats](#), and forms the Bhima Valley with its tributary rivers and streams, has twenty-two dams built on it of which the Ujjani Dam is the terminal dam on the river and is the largest in the valley that intercepts a catchment area of 14,858 km² (5,737 sq mi). Total catchment lengthwise area is 48 km from Ujani village upto Daund (National register of large dams, 2011).

The name of *Notopterus chitala* has been modified as *Chitala chitala* (Hamilton, 1822) which comes under family Notopteridae, also known as Indian feather or Indian knifefish found in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, India. In India it is inhabitant of Brahmaputra, Indus, Ganges, Mahanadi river basin (Froese *et al.*, 2014). Menon (1999) stated that adults inhabit freshwater reservoirs, canals and ponds. Rahman (1989) quoted that this fish feeds on aquatic insects, shrimps, molluscs and small fishes.

Materials and methods:

A single specimen of *Chitala chitala* (Plate: 1) was captured on September, 10th 2022 in a gill net during the fishing activity in a Bhima river near Watluj village, taluka Daund, district

Pune, Maharashtra, India (Latitude 18.4080370⁰ N, Longitude 74.7746196⁰ E). The fish was measured as total length, weight and fin formula.

Results:

Body elongated; head and body strongly compressed laterally. Dorsal profile is highly convex. The body is overall silvery in color. It usually has a series of golden-silvery bars along the back, resulting in a faint striped appearance. Scales are very minute with short dorsal fin. Anal fin is long and continuous with caudal fin. Pectoral fins are reduced. Dorsal portion is coppery green colored and silvery at both sides and below. 15 silvery bars present on each side of dorsal ridge. One small black spot near the end of the caudal (tail) fin. Lateral line is complete. The fish is obligate air breather. The length fish measured was 127 cm and weighed 6 kg and 120 gm.

Fin formula observed as: D. 9; P₁. 15; P₂. 6; A. 118



Plate 1: *Chitala chitala* fish photos at landing site and news in the renowned news paper

Discussion:

The maximum length of *Chitala chitala* reported was 120 cm (Day, 1878). In Bangladesh, 103 cm (10 kg) was recorded from Gacher Dahar Beel of Sylhet district (Rahman, 1989). According to Froese *et al.* (2014) the common length of *Chitala chitala* is 75 cm and was found maximum upto 122 cm. But in Bhima river near Watluj village, the fish was found having length 127 cm with the weight 6 kg and 120 gm. Previously *Chitala chitala* of this length and weight was not recorded from Bhima river of Ujani reservoir. *Chitala chitala* is Near Threatened species (Chaudhry, S., 2010). In Bhima river sometimes during fishing activity the *Chitala chitala* fish have been caught of length 25 cm and weight 250 gm. First time from Bhima river such a maximum lengthened with more weight, the *Chitala chitala* fish was found in a gill net during fishing activity. It was rare occurrence of over-sized *Chitala chitala* in Bhima river.

Conclusion:

In Bhima river sometimes during fishing activity the *Chitala chitala* fish have been caught of length 25 cm and weight 250 gm. First time from Bhima river such a maximum lengthened with more weight, the *Chitala chitala* fish was found in a gill net during fishing activity. It was rare occurrence of over-sized *Chitala chitala* in Bhima river.

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