

Food and feeding habit of fresh water fish *Notopterus notopterus* (Pallas) from Godavari river, Nanded, Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

In order to study food and feeding habits of *Notopterus notopterus* from Godavari river, Nanded region have been reported. The fish is carnivorous inhabits and feeds on various Annelids, Arthropods, Molluscs, small fishes etc. The percentage composition of various items of food and the intensity of feeding during different months of the year in relation to different size group of *Notopterus notopterus* have been described.

Key words: *Notopterus notopterus*, Godavari river, Nanded.

INTRODUCTION

Notopterus notopterus, is a common fresh water fish. It serves as a significant proteinacious and mineral – laden dietary contribution to the rural people of the country. The food and feeding habit of different fishes vary from season to season even within a day (Keast and Webb.1966 : Keast and Welsh, 1969). Different fishes consume different type of food items. Thus, the food and feeding habit of fish have immense ecological volume. By studying the food and feeding habits, the pattern of inter – specific competition of fishes can be assessed. Many workers have researched on the food and feeding habit of different fishes. Hynes (1950), Bhimachar and George (1952), Pillay (1952), Bhatt (1971), have carried out work on food and feeding habit of the fresh water fishes of India.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

For the present study, 226 fish specimens were collected from Godavari river at Nanded (MS)

during July 2003 to June 2004. Just after collection 10% formalin solution was injected in to the guts of all the fishes in order to stop further digestion of food items. The specimens were finally preserved in 10% formalin.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantities of different food items in the stomach of *Notopterus notopterus* are shown in the Table-1. Arthropods and Fishes were found to be most preferred food items throughout the year. Higher percentage of Arthropods and Fishes was observed during July 2003 Arthropods (100%) Fishes (50%), while lower during March 2004 Arthropods (30%) Fishes (20%). Annelids were next popular food items. The higher percentage of Annelids were recorded in the month of May 2004 (6%) while lower in month of February 2004 (1%). During April 2004 (25%) Molluscs were observed in comparison in month of February 2004 (20%). Helminthes were observed only during November to December 2003 with low frequency. The greatest

Table 1 : Percentage of occurrence of food items in the stomach of *Notopterus notopterus* (Pallas)

Month	Helminthes%	Annelids%	Arthropods%	Molluscs%	Fishes%
July 2003	-	-	100	-	50
August	-	-	93	-	40
September	-	-	87.5	-	37.5
October	-	-	66.66	-	33.33
November	03	-	50	-	20
December	02	04	53.33	-	13.33
January 2004	-	03	66.66	-	13.33
February	-	01	70	20	10
March	-	02	30	20	20
April	-	02	41.66	25	16.66
May	03	06	80	-	20
June	-	-	80	13.33	20

percentage of occurrence of animal food viz. Arthropods, Fishes etc. strongly indicated that *Notopterus notopterus* is a Carnivores fish. The fish feed more or less in all months of the year. During

spawning period, it showed a reduced level of feeding November to April, the fish showed its highest feeding activities. From the present study, it can be concluded that the fish changes its food habit with the change of season.

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