Observations on the Colouration of Mystacoleucus Ogilbii (Sykes) during Growth

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(With Text-figures 1-7)

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DURING the fish-survey of the rivers and reservoirs of the Dominions many young stages of Mystacoleucus ogilbii (Sykes) were collected. Most of the specimens were caught in the River Kistna near Gadwal in the month of May 1943, since then other specimens were available from the Rivers Manjra and Godavari, and some other reservoirs. The young ones ranged from 43 mm. to 97.5 mm. The colouration during growth was as follows:

1. The smallest specimen (Fig. 1) was 39 mm. long; the ground colour in the freshly-caught specimens was yellowish-white or in some specimens brownish. Six vertical black bands were visible; 1st above the opercle, 2nd a little behind it, 3rd descending from the fore-part of the dorsal fin, 4th from the posterior part of the base of the dorsal, 5th above the middle of the anal, and the 6th near the base of the caudal fin. All the bands, excepting the first two reached the ventral profile.

2. Specimens measuring 43 mm. (Fig. 2). Bands do not reach the ventral profile and the ground colour becomes a little lighter.
3. Specimens measuring 51 mm. (Fig. 3). Bands assume greyish-black colour and hardly distinct below the lateral line excepting the 2nd one. The last one assuming the form of a blotch.

4. Specimens 77.5 mm. long (Fig. 4). Bands become still lighter in colour and some of them split up in the middle, the lower portions assume the form of blotches. The colour of the bands becomes still lighter and the ground colour becomes silver-grey.

5. Specimens 86 mm. in length (Fig. 5). Most of the bands scatter and assume the form of irregular blotches and streaks. Caudal spot still distinct.

6. Specimens 97.5 mm. in length (Fig. 6). Streaks irregular and found mostly on the lateral line. This stage corresponds to the specimen
described by Dr. Hora, in the *Rec. Ind. Mus.*, Vol. XXXIX, Part IV, 1937, from River Tungabhadra near Kurnool.

7. Fig. 7 has been reproduced from Day's *Fishes of India* (Plates). He has described the colouration of the adult fish "Purplish-silvery along the back, becoming silvery-white from about four rows of scales above the lateral line. The young sometimes have a dark spot at the base of the caudal fin, and four or five narrow black bands descending from the back to the middle of the side." I have no specimens in my collection which corresponds to the adult one described by Day. For confirmation, I got some specimens from Dr. Suter, Poona, but could not find any in those also which were without any blotches and streaks.
Mystacoleucus was included in the genus Rohtee by Day, but has since then been established as a separate genus, owing to the presence of "Procumbent Pre-dorsal spine" in the dorsal fin which is absent in the genus Rohtee. It has been fully dealt with by Mukerjee, Rec. Ind. Mus., Vol. XXXIV, 1932, and later by Dr. Hora in the same Journal, Vol. XXXIX, 1937.

REFERENCES

Day, F. .. Fauna of British India, 1889, I, 342.