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Ichthyofaunal Resources Of Dhubri District Of Assam, India

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Abstract:

A study was conducted in the Dhubri district which is the western most part of the Lower Brahmaputra Valley of Assam. A study was conducted both by direct and indirect methods. As a direct method, Brahmaputra River and the nearby wetlands were surveyed to get the maximum number of fish species in their natural habitat. In the indirect method, fish markets of Dhubri town were surveyed to get the local fish species caught by the fisherman. A total of 61 Ichthy species has been identified so far from the study areas which were found to be incorporated under 20 families.

Key words: Ichthyofauna, Fish, Brahmaputra River, Lower Brahmaputra Valley, Dhubri, Assam, India

1.Introduction

The Indian fish fauna are divided into two classes, viz., Chondrichthyes and Osteichthyes. The Chondrichthyes are represented by 131 species under 67 genera, 28 families and 10 Orders in the Indian region. The annual average landings of the Indian Chondrichthyes are 33,442 tonnes, of which, 15,537 tonnes come from the east coast and 17,605 tonnes come from the west coast and the rest come from the Andaman and Nicobar, and Lakshadweep Islands (Kar et al., web page).

The Indian Osteichthyes is represented by 2,415 species belonging to 902 genera, 226 families and 30 orders, of which, five families, notably the family Parapsilorhynchidae are endemic to India. These small hillstream fishes include a single genus, viz., Parapsilorhynchus which contains 3 species. They occur in the Western Ghats, Satpura mountains and the Bailadila range in Madhya Pradesh only. Further, the fishes of the family Psilorhynchidae with the only genus Psilorhynchus are also endemic to the Indian region. Other fishes endemic to India include the genus Olytra and the species Horaichthys setnai belonging to the families Olyridae and Horaichthyidae respectively. The latter occur from the Gulf of Kutch to Trivandrum coast. The endemic fish families form 2.21 per cent of the total bony fish families of the Indian region. 223 endemic fish species are found in India, representing 8.75 per cent of the total fish species known from the Indian region and 128 monotypic genera of fishes found in India, representing 13.20 percent of the genera of fishes known from the Indian region (Kar et al., web page).

Looking at the above background, the present study has been made to find out mainly the fish species available in the aquatic ecosystems of Dhubri, the westernmost part of Assam.

2.Study Area

A study was conducted in the Brahmaputra River and its one of the tributaries namely Godadhar River and in the fish market available in and around the Dhubri town of the Dhubri district, the westernmost part of the Lower Brahmaputra Valley of Assam. The geographical location of Dhubri district of Assam is 25 (-27 (North latitude and 89 (-91 (East latitude. The geographical area of the districts is 2838 sq.km.

3.Methodology

A study was conducted both by direct and indirect methods. As a direct method wetlands were surveyed to get the maximum number of fish species in their natural habitat. Identification of aquatic biota adopted the methods of Dutta Munshi and Dutta Munshi (1995), Talwar and Jhingran (1998) and Bishwanath (2002).

In the indirect method, fish markets were surveyed to get the local fish species caught by the fisherman.

4.Results And Discussion

A total of 61 ichthyo species has been identified so far from the study areas which were found to be incorporated under 20 families. All the identified species are listed below--

<u>Family</u>	<u>Species Names</u>	4
1. Cyprinidae:	Catla catla Labeo rohita L. calbasu L. gonius L. dero L. boga L. pangusia Cirrhinus mrigala C. reba Ctenopharyngodon idella Hypophthalmichthys molitrix Cyprinus carpio C. specularis C. nudus Puntius ticto P. javanicus P. sarana	
2. Bagridae:	Aorichthys seenghala A. aor Mystus bleekeri M. cavasius	
	M. gulio Mystus tengana M. vittatus Rita rita	5
3. Siluridae:	Ompok bimaculatus O. pabo O. pabda Wallago attu	
4. Sisoridae:	Bagarius bagarius	
5. Schilbeidae:	Ailia coila Clupisoma garua Eutropiichthys vacha E. murius	
6. Pangasiidae:	Pangasius pangasius	
7. Chacidae:	Chaca chaca	
8. Clariidae:	Clarius batrachus C. gariepinus	
9. Heteropneustidae:	Heteropneustes fossilis	
10. Centropomidae:	Chanda nama C. ranga C. baculis	
11. Nandidae:	Nandus nandus	
12. Badidae:	Badis badis	
13. Anabantidae:	Anabas testudineus	
14. Belontiidae:	Colisa chuna C. fasciata C. lalia	
15. Notopteridae:	Notopterus notopterus N. chitala	

16. Channidae:	Channa punctatus C. punctatus C. striatus C. marulius
17. Clupeidae:	Hilsa ilisha Gudusia chapra
18. Amphinoidea:	Amphipnous cuchia
19. Mastacembeloidae:	Macrognathus pancalus M. aculeatum
20. Monopteriidae:	Monopterus cuchia Macrabrochium rosenbergii.

Present investigation revealed that water bodies of Dhubri district are rich in ichthyofaunal diversity. Ghosh and Sarma (2007) also reported that diversity of fish found to be more numerous in the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra River. Carps constitute the largest group of ichthyofauna in the study area. Ilish (Hilsa ilisha), Chital (Notopterus chitala), Borali (Wallago Sp.) along with some other large sized catfishes are some highly valuable fish species found abundantly in this zone of Assam.

It is noteworthy that Conservation of Hilsa ilisha is an urgent need in the Lower Brahmaputra Valley basin of Assam since it is captured in large scale in this month (October, 2013) from this area as they reached here by migrating from the nearby salt water bodies of the Bengal Sea for breeding purposes in the fresh water of Brahmaputra River. Prices are also down to 100-150 per KG of this highly valued fish in this month in the Dhubri district because of their availability especially in the areas of Southern bank of the Brahmaputra River of the Dhubri district of Assam. But we should not forget it that we are losing the future egg / spawn / population of this species from our area! We have to stop large scale fishing of this species during breeding season in our fresh water bodies by motivating our uneducated fisher men with scientific and logical explanations.

5. References

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