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REDISCOVERY AND REDESCRIPTION OF *CAPOETA PUCKELLI* DAY AFTER ONE AND HALF CENTURY

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ABSTRACT : *Capoeta puckelli* Day is a forgotten fish name after its original discovery in 1868. During a research survey, these authors could collect some specimens of this rare fish from Karnataka, near to its type locality. This fish species differs from its relative species in having 7 branched rays in dorsal fin, 24 lateral line scales, 9 pre-dorsal scales, 2½ scales between lateral line and ventral fin; weak and non-osseous last undivided dorsal fin ray and in having a deep black elongated spot on dorsal fin from its 3rd to 6th branched rays.

Key words : Forgotten species, Redescription, *Puntius bimaculatus*, *Puntius dorsalis*.

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INTRODUCTION

Capoeta puckelli was described by Day (1868) from Bangalore. His description was based on a single specimen given to him by Major Puckell. Day (1868) described it in detail and could demarcate it from all its congeners. But all later scientists omitted this name from all their literature and treated as synonym of other *Puntius* species. Researchers after Day (1868) treated it as an invalid species; its name and details have been disappeared from most of the taxonomic literature; it can be currently considered as a forgotten species.

Day (1868) described it as *Capoeta (Puntius) puckelli* from Bangalore. Day (1878, 1889) believed in the existence and identity of this species in his later volumes too. After examining some *Puntius* species from Chitaldurg district of Karnataka, Hora (1936) synonymised it with *Puntius dorsalis* (Jerdon, 1849). He relied on similarities in colour markings-on dorsal fin base and caudal fin base- of both the species and believed *P. puckelli* as a young one of the Jerdon's species. But he forgot the difference in position of the colour spot and nature of last undivided dorsal fin. Jayaram (1991) - even though he never agreed with its synonymy-due to unavailability of topotypic specimens- was forced to follow Hora (1936). Menon (1999) considered it as a synonym of *Puntius bimaculatus* Bleeker. During a recent taxonomic survey, these authors could collect some

specimens of *Puntius* species from Karnataka. On careful analysis, it was identified as *Puntius puckelli* Day.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Fishes were collected using cast nets and preserved in 10% formalin. Standard taxonomic methods are followed; measurements were made point to point with dial callipers and data recorded to tenths of a millimetre. Counts and measurements were made on the left side of specimens. Head length and measurements of body parts are given as proportions of standard length (SL); subunits of the head are presented as proportions of head length (HL); distance between two fins or between fin and vent is taken from the origin of the fin. The rediscovered fishes are now deposited in the museum at Department of Zoology, BJM Govt. College Chavara, Kerala. Relative species of it deposited in Zoological Survey of India museums were taxonomically analysed and compared.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Topotypic materials examined: DOZ, GCC 71, 3, 22-28 mm SL, a waterstream near Hunsur, Karnataka, India, coll. Mathews Plamoottil and Vineeth K 24/01/2020.

Capoeta puckelli

Day (1868). *Proc. Zool. Soc. London*. P. 197. (Type locality: Bangalore)