

ICAR scientists name new fish species after Tamil Nadu

SPOT NEWS

ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) functioning under the aegis of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), have discovered a new fish species, Moray eel fish of the genus *Gymnothorax*, from the Cuddalore coast.

The newly discovered fish species has been named after state “Tamil Nadu”, as *Gymnothorax tamilnaduensis* with a common name as “Tamil Nadu brown moray”.

The species has been described based on specimens / samples collected through exploration-survey conducted along the coastal waters of Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu. This was particularly undertaken at fish landing centres of Parangipettai and Mudasalodai by the Ph.D. Scholar Mr. P. Kodeeswaran and Scientist, Dr.G. Kantharajan.

The researchers conducted extensive morphological analysis, skeleton radiography, and advanced molecular markers combined with species delimitation computational techniques

To conclude that this Moray eel specimens from Mudasaloodai is distinct from other species of the genus *Gymnothorax*. Further, few specimens were sent to Dr. Anil Mohapatra, Scientist, Zoological Survey of India, who is an expert in the field, for final confirmation.

NEW FISH SPECIES NAMED AFTER TAMIL NADU

Gymnothorax tamilnaduensis sp. nov.



Zoosystematics
and Evolution



A new short brown unpatterned moray eel (Anguilliformes, Muraenidae) from the southeast coast of India, Bay of Bengal

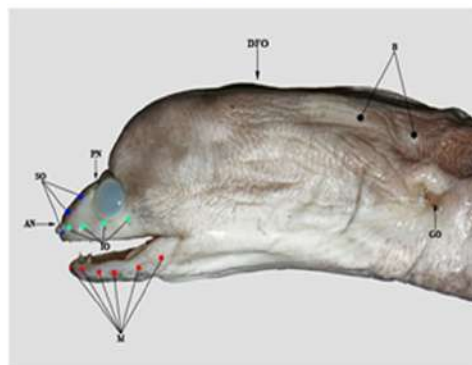
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Gymnothorax tamilnaduensis sp. nov., Kodeeswaran, Kantharajan, Mohapatra, Kumar & Sarkar, 2023



Etymology. The species is named “tamilnaduensis” with reference to the state Tamil Nadu from where it was collected from Off Cuddalore coast and possible distribution in Chennai coast.

Fig. 1. New Fish species named after Tamil Nadu.

In Indian waters, hitherto 28 species of *Gymnothorax* have been documented so far. The species described herein represents India and increases the total amount of species of *Gymnothorax* to 29. The present description is also the first new species of the genus *Gymnothorax* from the south-eastern coast of India, Bay of Bengal.

The holotype of this new species is registered at the National Fish Museum and Repository of the ICAR-NBFGR, Lucknow. The name of the species is registered in ZooBank, the online registration system for the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN). The discovery was accepted by the international scientific community and the findings published in the international peer-reviewed journal "Zoosystematics and Evolution".



Fig. 2. The short brown unpatterned moray eel

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