

SECTION D

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SOME BIOLOGICAL ASPECTS AND THE FISHERY OF THE PONY FISHES (KARALLA) IN THE BOLGODA LAGOON, SRI LANKA

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The present study on the biology and the fishery of the pony fishes "karalla" in the Bolgoda Lagoon was started around 1982.

Four species of pony fishes were recorded from Seine and Ja-kotu namely, *Leiognathus dussumieri*, *L. fasciatus*, *L. brevisrostris* and *Gazza minuta* of which *L. dussumieri* was the most abundant species forming about 90% and 65% of the catch at the head end and the mouth of the lagoon respectively. *G. minuta* was the second most abundant species forming about 1.5% and 23% of the catch at the above two ends of the lagoon. The peak pony fish production was around May/June and the total production was about 02-04 kg/ha/year, which accounted for about 10% of the total fin-fish and shell-fish production from this lagoon.

The standard length of the fish in the exploited stock varied from about 1.5—9.5 cm and the weight ranged from about 1.0-35.0 g. The examination of the age structure indicated that their life cycle was completed within one year. It was observed that the pony fishes entered the lagoon from the sea around January/February, when the salinity of the lagoon water was relatively high.