

LARVIVOROUS POTENTIAL OF FISH SPECIES FOUND IN RIVER-BED POOLS BELOW MAJOR DAMS IN KANDY AND NUWARA ELIYA DISTRICTS OF SRI LANKA.

Larvivorous potential of twelve fish species found in river-bed pools below the major dams in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya districts of Sri Lanka was studied in the laboratory from September to November 2001. Fish were collected from river-bed pools below the major dams at Laxapana, Kotmale, Nilambe, Adikarigama (Victoria) and Rantembe using a sweep net. Five fish of each species were placed in enamel containers containing 3 L of dechlorinated water. The fish were allowed to acclimatise in the water for ½ hour. Thereafter, 25 third and fourth stage Anopheline larvae (mosquito eggs were provided by Dr S Handunnetti, Malaria Research Unit, University of Colombo) were introduced into each container. The larvivorous potential of each fish species was determined by taking the average number of larvae consumed by a fish within minutes 1,2,3,4,5,10,20 and 30 and hours 01 and 24. If all the larvae were consumed in less than 10 minutes, another batch of 25 larvae was introduced and records were made as previously.

Danio malabaricus, *Poecilia reticulata*, *Oreochromis niloticus* and *Oreochromis mossambicus* consumed more than an average of 8 larvae per fish within 10 minutes. *Rasbora daniconius* and *Aplocheilus dayi* too are larvivorous fishes but it took one hour to feed on an average of 8 larvae by *Rasbora daniconius* and 9 larvae by *Aplocheilus dayi*. Consumption of 100% larvae was achieved by *Poecilia reticulata*,

Oreochromis mossambicus and *Oreochromis niloticus* within 10 minutes, *Danio malabaricus* within 30 minutes, and *Rasbora daniconius* and *Aplocheilus dayi* within 01 hour. *Oreochromis mossambicus*, *Oreochromis niloticus*, *Poecilia reticulata* and *Danio malabaricus* showed very high larvivorous potential. *Rasbora daniconious* and *Aplocheilus dayi* also showed high larvivorous potential. Field trials are to be carried out to determine their larvivorous activity under field conditions.