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THE FOOD, FEEDING AND REPRODUCTION
IN AN ESTUARINE POPULATION
OF GREEN-BACK MULLET, *LIZA TADE* (FORSSKÅL)
IN THE NEGOMBO LAGOON, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Studies carried out for a period of three years indicate that *Liza tade* in the Negombo lagoon of the west Sri Lanka is a non-intermittent spawner spawning in February-March, June, August, October and December. Males were more abundant in smaller size groups but a 1:1 sex ratio was observed from the 32-cm class onwards. The fecundity ranged from 80750 to 477000 for fish ranging from 14.5 to 35.1 cm in total length. The mean lengths at maturity were 17.5 and 22.8 cm for the males and females, respectively. Polychaetes and detritus constituted the major food items of the diet.

INTRODUCTION

Liza tade (Family Mugilidae) has been considered as an important grey mullet species in the brackish-water fisheries of tropical regions and has been recorded from the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indo-Pacific seas (Gopalakrishnan 1974, Fischer & Bianchi 1984). Some aspects of its biology have been studied in India (Pillay 1954, Thakur 1970) and it is described as a potential species for brackish-water aquaculture (Pakrasi *et al.* 1966). Although it is one of the most abundant grey mullet species in the fin fish catches from brackish-water bodies in Sri Lanka (Munro 1955, Wijeyaratne 1984), no studies have been carried out so far on the biology of this species. The aim of this study was to get background data on its biology for efficient management of its fishery in brackish-water environments.

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