
BOOK REVIEW

Field guide to the Identification of Backwater Fishery Resources, Author: Dr. S. Bijoy Nandan
Publisher: Cochin University of Science & Technology, Kerala, India, Price: Rs. 350/-, Year: 2012

The book meets the long - felt need for a field guide to backwater fishes and shell fishes of Kerala. The author is eminently qualified to write such a book as his early professional training including his PhD has been on backwater life. Moreover he had a long innings as a research scientist in the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute. Although, a field guide, he has not sacrificed any professional rigour in presentation and all norms which characterize a good taxonomist have been adhered to scrupulously. Marine fisheries form the most important applied aspect of the science of marine biology. A knowledge of the marine and backwater resources both in the culture and capture mode becomes crucial for developing a comprehensive understanding of the respective ecosystems. The first step towards developing an understanding of a fishery is the availability of suitable keys for identification. The backwaters forms an important biotope in the context of coastal fishery as in addition to being the permanent habitat for several species, the backwaters also constitute a temporary abode for riverine fishes as well as some of the marine species.

In view of this, I understand that the author during the course of his various researches on backwater

systems has collected and identified almost all the fish and shellfish species and that forms the basis of this publication. Therefore, this field guide to the identification of backwater fishery resources by S. Bijoy Nandan is a commendable effort and he portrays the fishery data as well as those on taxonomy in a lucid manner. I am sure that this will constitute an excellent study and reference guide to the students, researchers, planners, policy makers and also those pursuing higher studies in the area of fishery science.

Flawless photographs, beautiful line drawings and succinct descriptive accounts enables even a beginner with the confidence to identify the composition of a catch. It has come out at an opportune time as almost all of our rivers and backwaters face the threat of pollution from industrial and domestic wastes. I wish to recommend this book as a must to all college libraries as well as to all those who care for the conservation of the biodiversity of a watery state like Kerala.

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