CAES

1983

FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)

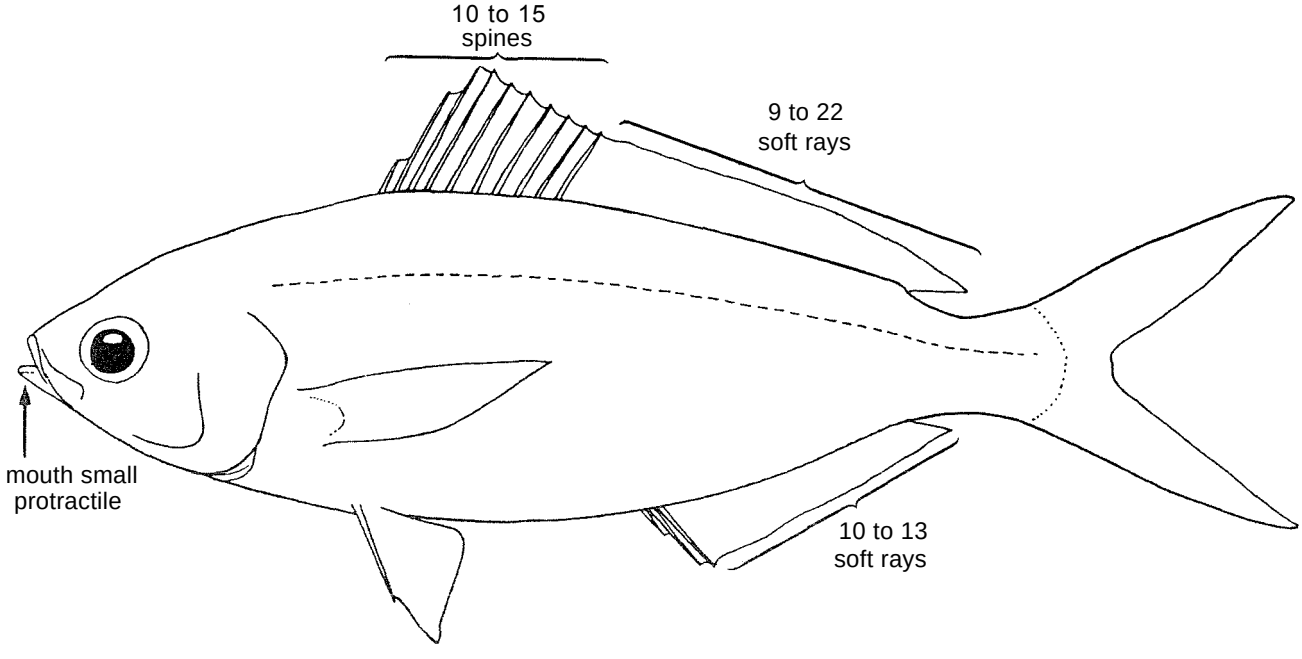
CAESIONIDAE

Fusiliers

Lutjanoid fishes, moderately deep-bodied to slender and fusiform, laterally compressed. Horizontal axis from tip of snout to middle of caudal fin cutting through middle of eye. Eye moderately large, diameter of orbit bony rim around eye) greater than snout length, its lower margin close to upper jaw; mouth small, protractile with 1 or 2 series of small (occasionally miscroscopic) teeth; roof of mouth either toothless or with fine teeth on vomer and palatines. Dorsal fin with 10 to 15 slender, weak spines and 9 to 22 soft rays; base of soft portion of dorsal fin longer than spinous portion in all species except Dipterygonatus balteatus; anal fin with 3 slender, weak spines and 9 to 13 soft rays; caudal fin distinctly forked, with pointed lobes. Scales moderate to small, weakly ctenoid (slightly rough); scale rows above and below lateral line running horizontally. The most reliable diagnostic characters of the Caesionidae appear to be the separate ossification of the ascending premaxillary process and the presence of 1 or 2 finger-like premaxillary lateral processes (see Fig. 3 in Key to Genera).

Colour: usually bluish above grading to white or pink ventrally, frequently with some yellow on the body either in the form of one or more stripes or with the posterior portion of the body and tail yellow; many species with black streaks on caudal lobes or black tips on lobes.

Small to medium-sized fishes occurring in clear coastal waters, mostly over rocky bottoms and coral reef areas; usually schooling in large midwater aggregations. Taken mainly with seines and gillnets and often found in local markets.



SIMILAR FAMILIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Lutjanidae: difficult to distinguish from Caesionidae on the basis of any single external character, but most members of the Lutjanidae are deeper-bodied, have the eye well above the horizontal axis of the body, lack a strongly forked caudal fin and are not bright blue in colour (except Paracaesio); most other lutjanid genera either have no scales on dorsal and anal fins or have the caudal fin much less deeply forked, or possess a median (symphysial) knob at tip of lower jaw; scale rows running obliquely upward in many species.

Nemipteridae: eye generally above horizontal axis of body; less than 10 dorsal soft rays (more than 10 in Caesionidae, except for Dipterygonatus balteatus) and only 7 anal fin rays (9 to 13 in Caesionidae).

Lethrinidae: eye generally above horizontal axis of body; base of soft part of dorsal fin generally shorter than base of spinous part (soft part generally longer than spinous part in Caesionidae); 8 to 10 soft rays in anal fin (11 or more in Caesionidae, except in Dipterygonatus balteatus); usually enlarged canines in front of jaws, sometimes lateral molars.

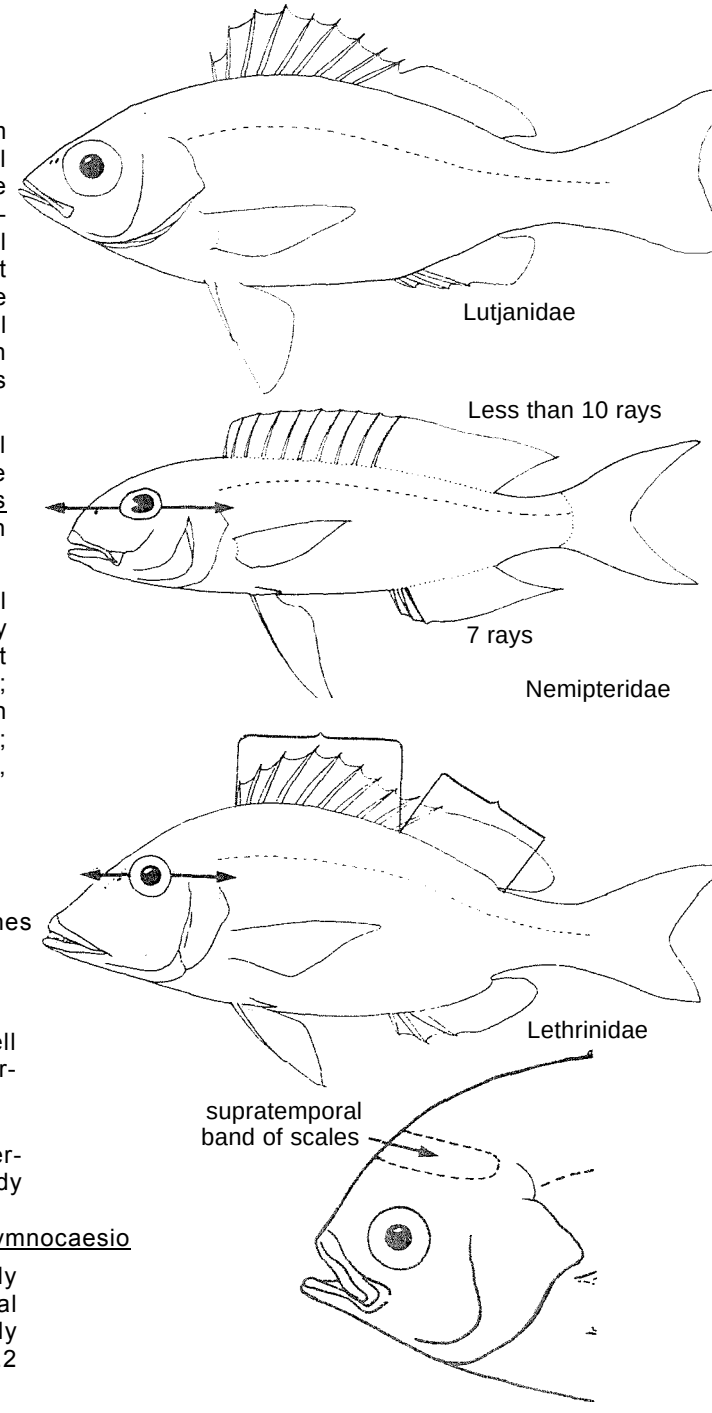


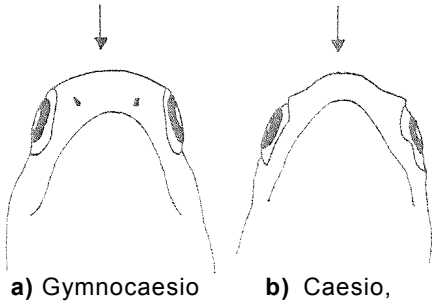
Fig. 1

KEY TO GENERA OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

1a. Dorsal fin spines 10 to 12; a distinct, well delimited, supratemporal band of scales; interorbital space below this band scaleless (Fig.l)

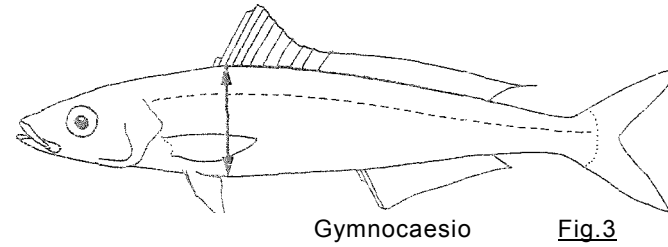
2a. Dorsal and anal fins without scales; interorbital space relatively flat (Fig.2a); body very elongate; its depth 5 to 6 times in standard length (Fig.3) ..... Gymnocaesio

2b. Dorsal and anal fins entirely, or partially covered with scales (Figs 5,b); interorbital space convex, not flat (Fig.2b); body moderately deep to elongate, its depth 2.2 to 4.2 times in standard length (Figs 5,6)



a) Gymnocaesio **b)** Caesio, Pterocaesio

Fig.2

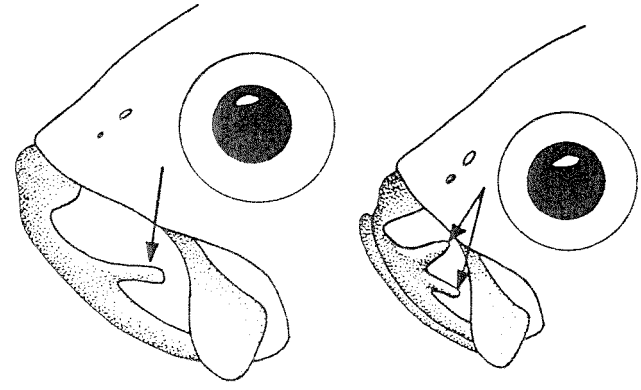


Gymnocaesio Fig.3

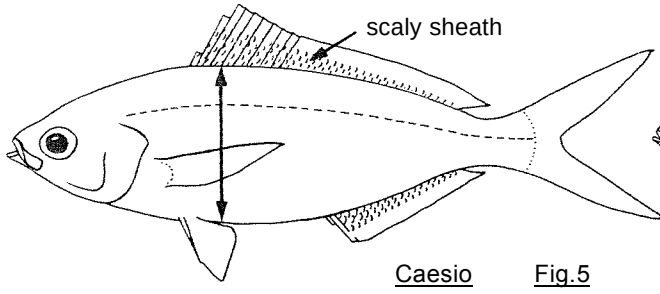
3a. Premaxilla with a single process on each side, in addition to the median ascending process (Fig. 4a); moderately deep-bodied, its depth usually 2.2 to 3.4 times* in standard length (Fig.5) ..... Caesio

3b. Premaxilla with 2 processes on each side in addition to the median ascending process (Fig. 4b); body slender, its depth generally more than 3.4 times in standard length (Fig.6) ..... Pterocaesio

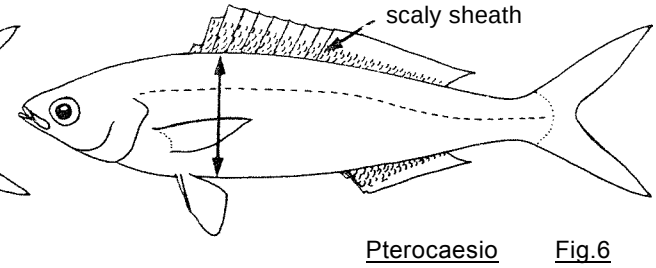
1b. Dorsal fin spines 14; interorbital space with scales, no distinct supratemporal band of scales ..... Dipterygonatus



a) Caesio Fig.4 b) Pterocaesio



Caesio Fig.5



Pterocaesio Fig.6

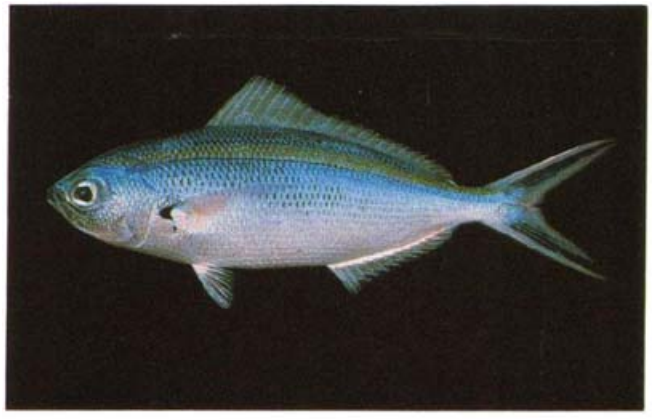
LIST OF SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Code numbers are given for those species for which Identification Sheets are included

Caesio caerulaureus Lacépède, 1802	CAES Caes 1 (= LUT Caes 1, Areas 57/71)
Caesio cuning (Bloch, 1791)	CAES Caes 2 (= LUT Caes 3, Areas 57/71)
Caesio lunaris Cuvier & Valenciennes, 1830	CAES Caes 3
*** Caesio sp. 1	
*** Caesio sp. 2	
Caesio striatus Rüppell, 1828	CAES Caes 4
** Caesio suevicus (Klunzinger, 1884)	CAES Caes 5
Caesio teres (Seale, 1906)	
Caesio xanthonotus Bleeker, 1853	CAES Caes 6
Dipterygonatus balteatus (Cuvier & Valenciennes, 1830)	
Gymnocaesio gyrrinopterus (Sleeker, 1856)	CAES Gym 1
** Gymnocaesio sp.	
Pterocaesio chrysozona (Cuvier & Valenciennes, 1830)	CAES Pter 1
Pterocaesio digramma (Bleeker, 1865)	CAES Pter 2
Pterocaesio pisang (Sleeker, 1853)	CAES Pter 3
Pterocaesio tile (Cuvier & Valenciennes, 1830)	CAES Pter 4

Prepared by K. Carpenter, East est Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

* Except Caesio striates where the body depth is contained 3.4 to 4.2 times in standard length
** Endemic to Red Sea
*** New species y et to be described



Caesio caerulaureus 208 mm S.L.
Solomon Is.

Caesio cuning 157 mm S.L.
Sri Lanka

Caesio lunaris (underwater photo)
Red Sea

Caesio striatus 123 mm S.L.
Red Sea

Caesio suevicus 178 mm S.L.
Red Sea

Caesio xanthonotus 139 mm S.L.
Maldive Is.

Pterocaesio chrysozona 99 mm S.L.
Red Sea

Pterocaesio diagramma 230 mm T.L.
(underwater photo) Philippines

Pterocaesio pisang 107 mm S.L.
Solomon Is.

Pterocaesio tile 175 mm S.L.
Eniwetok, Marshall Is.

CAES Caes 1

1983
(= LUT Caes 1,
Areas 57/71)

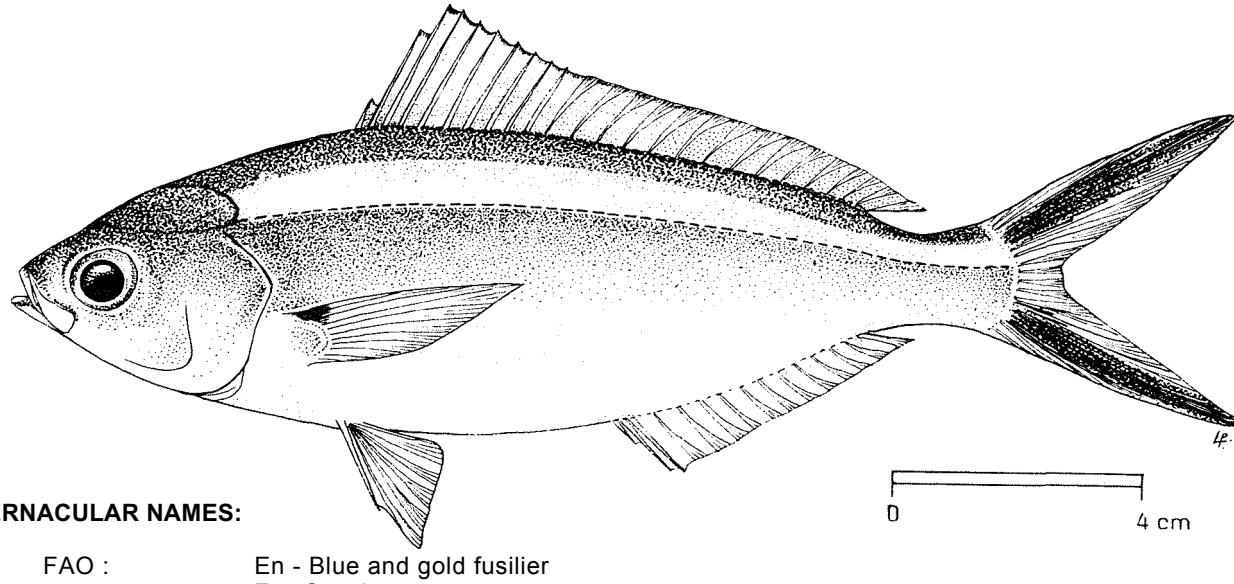
FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: CAESIONIDAE

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)

Caesio caerulaureus Lacepède, 1802

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: None



VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Blue and gold fusilier
Fr - Caesio azuror
Sp - Fusilero azur

NATIONAL:

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

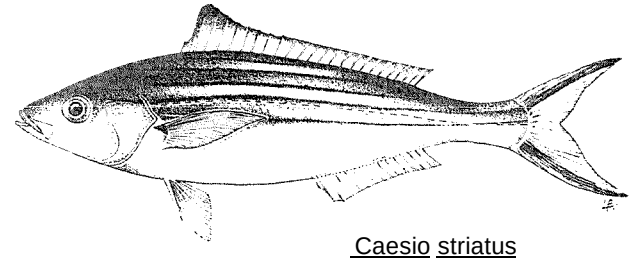
A moderately slender, fusiform, compressed fish (depth 2.9 to 3.4 times in standard length) with an oblique, small mouth and a deeply forked caudal fin with slender, pointed lobes; dorsal and ventral profiles equally convex. Eye moderately large, diameter of orbit greater than snout length; teeth minute, conical, in a single series in jaws; roof of mouth toothless. Dorsal fin with 10 slender, weak spines and 15 (rarely 14 or 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 slender, weak spines and 12 rarely 13) soft rays; pectoral fin with 20 to 22 rays. Scales thin, 65 to 70 in lateral line; dorsal and anal fins almost completely scaled; supratemporal bands of scales separated in the middle by a narrow, scaleless area.

Colour: bright blue on back and head, silvery-white (pink to reddish after death) below; a prominent longitudinal yellow stripe from head to caudal fin (fading after death); a black blotch at upper base of pectoral fin; each lobe of caudal fin with a broad, longitudinal, black band.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA :

Caesio striatus: body more slender, its depth 3.6 to 4.2 times in standard length (2.9 to 3.4 times in C. caerulaureus); 18 or 19 pectoral; in rays (20 to 22 in C. caerulareus).

Other Caesio species: all lack the characteristic longitudinal, black band along each caudal fin lobe.



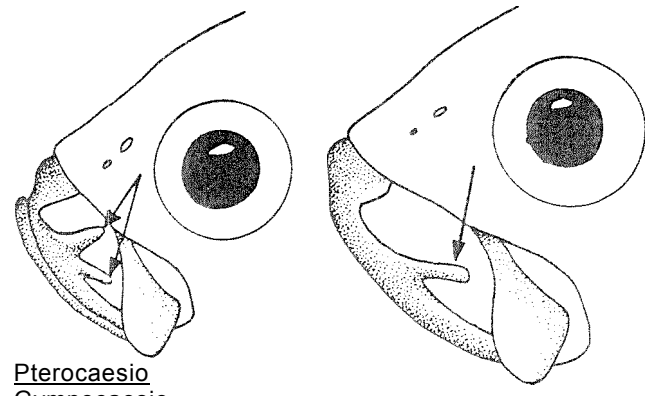
Caesio striatus

Pterocaesio species: 2 finger-like premaxillary processes in Caesio); caudal fin lobes black only at tips, except in P. tile. which has 10 to 12 dorsal fin spines and 20 or 21 dorsal soft rays (10 spines and 15 soft rays in C. caerulaureus).

Gymnocaesio gymnopterus and Dipterygonatus balteatus: 2 finger-like premaxillary processes; body more slender, its depth 4.7 or more times in standard length; dorsal and anal fins scaleless.

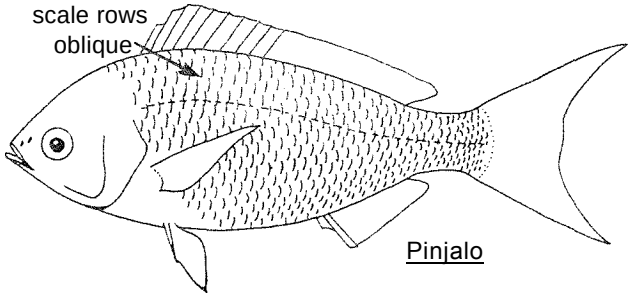
Paracaesio species (Lutjanidae): soft dorsal fin rays i0 or 1.7; soft anal rays 8 or 9.

Pinjalo species (Lutjanidae): scale rows on body oblique (horizontal in C. caerulaureus).

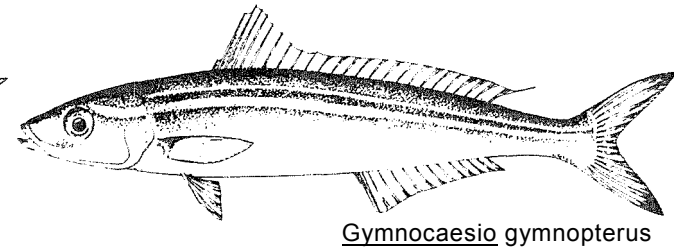


Pterocaesio
Gymnocaesio
Dipterygonatus

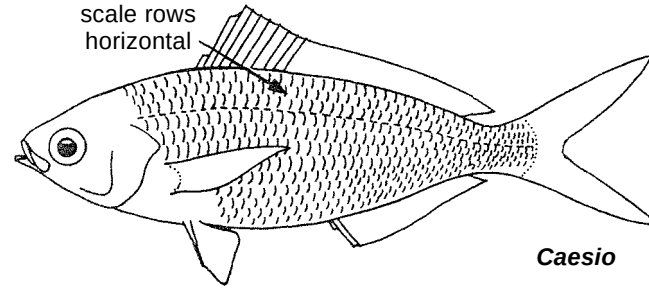
Caesio



Pinjalo



Gymnocaesio gymnopterus



Caesio

SIZE:

Maximum: 25 cm; common to 20 cm.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR

Throughout most of the area and eastward to the tropical western Pacific.

Inhabits coastal waters and rocky and coral reef areas; a schooling fish.

Feeds on zooplankton in large midwater aggregations.

PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

Coastal waters. throughout its range.

CATCHES. FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Caught mainly with seines and gillnets.

Sometimes utilized as live bait for tuna fisheries. Marketed mostly fresh.