Description of fish
DESCRIPTION OF THE FISH

*Rhinomugil corsula* (Hamilton), 1822 belongs to order Mugiliformes and family Mugilidae. The systematic position of the fish is based on the scheme of classification suggested by Berg (1940) with certain modifications as recommended by Misra (1959) and Srivastava (1968).

- Phylum: Chordata
- Sub-phylum: Vertebrata
- Super-class: Gnathostomata
- Class: Teleostomi
- Sub-class: Actinopterygii
- Order: Mugiliformes
- Family: Mugilidae
- Genus: Rhinomugil
- Species: *R. corsula*

This species was described by Hamilton in 1822 as *Mugil corsula*. But later on various authors had been treating it under different genera. In 1863 Gill described it under genus *Rhinomugil* Gill (Type species: *Mugil corsula*, Ham.). But Day (1878, 1889) continued calling it *Mugil corsula* Ham.

*Rhinomugil corsula* (Ham.) presently is the most recognized name accepted by Misra (1959), Srivastava (1968) and Jhingran (1983).
Common names:

Bengali - Elanga-er-wari, in-gelee; Oriya - Kakunda; Punjabi - Hurdwahre; Assam - Keski; Hindi - Undala; Aligarh - Oran.

Salient features:

Body torpedo shaped, pointed anteriorly. Slightly compressed laterally. Dorsal profile is straight but ventrally it is bulging out giving it a convex contour. Eyes of the fish are without adipose lids and elevated with their upper margin above the level of flat inter-orbital space. Head in profile with dorsal side nearly flat and compressed. Upper jaw overhung by the snout and is longer than the lower. Upper lip thick and notched for receiving the tubercle of the lower lip. Both jaws are having a row of very small and minute teeth. Caudal fin is slightly emerginate. Scales are ctenoid covering most portions of the body except fins and eyes. The fish is steel grey dorsally and lighter along the abdomen. Dorsal and caudal fins are greyish. The maximum size recorded in the present study is 396 mm (Plate I).

Field notes:

These fishes swim in groups with their eyes just above the water surface. At the slightest alarm they dive down with great rapidity. They have been observed to take short jumps as well (Plate I).
Geographical distribution:

*R. corsula* is found in freshwaters like rivers and lakes etc., and in estuaries far above the tidal influences. It is most common in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Tamil Nadu. Local fishermen of Aligarh (U.P.) commonly call it as Oran.
PLATE I

Top : Photograph showing *R. corsula* (Ham.) in natural habitat.

Below : Photograph showing *R. corsula* (Ham.).