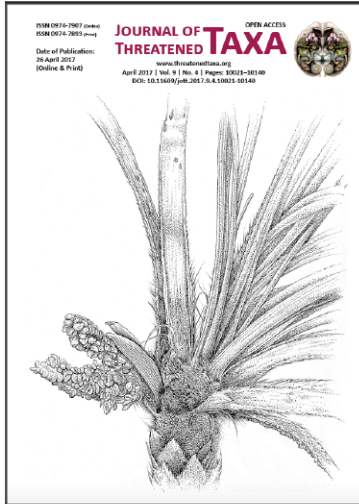


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NOTE

**A NEW RECORD OF GUNTHER'S WASPFISH
SNYDERINA GUENTHERI (BOULENGER, 1889)
(SCORPAENIFORMES: TETRAROGIDAE) FROM
VISAKHAPATNAM, INDIA**

Muddula Krishna Naranji & Sujatha Kandula

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The waspfishes (family Tetrarogidae) of the order Scorpaeniformes are native to the Indian Ocean and the west Pacific, and are poisonous fishes possessing poison glands on their spines. Family Tetrarogidae is represented by a single species *Snyderina guentheri* (Boulenger, 1889) in the bottom trawl by catches at

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Thirty-five specimens of *Snyderina guentheri* (62–124 mm SL) were collected from Visakhapatnam fishing harbour, Andhra Pradesh, coast of India (17°44'N & 83°23'E) (Fig. 1) during the study period 2010–2015. The specimens were examined carefully and identified following Fischer & Bianchi (1986) and Froese & Pauly (2015).

Snyderina guentheri (Boulenger 1889) (Image 1)

Description based on 35 specimens measuring 85–164 mm TL.

Meristic characters: Dorsal fin XIII (XII in one specimen), 10-12; Anal fin III, 6 (5 in one); Ventral fin I, 5; Caudal fin 13; Pectoral fin 13; Lateral line pored tubes 18–23; Gill rakers 3-5+1+8-13=13–18; Pyloric caeca 5–6; Vertebrae 27.

Diagnostic characters: Body oblong, compressed, posterior part of body elongated and narrow; pre dorsal profile with deep slope from first dorsal spine to snout, with concavity before eyes; inter orbital convex; eyes large, diameter more than snout length. Supra orbital ridge elevated. Mouth large, slightly oblique; maxilla smooth, broad posteriorly, reaching below middle of

eye; jaws sub equal, lower jaw slightly projecting. Teeth villiform, in bands on jaws and arrow head shape band on vomer; broad patches of teeth on roof and floor of pharynx; no palatine teeth; tongue smooth, rounded apically; nostrils close to each other, anterior one tubular with flap posteriorly; posterior nostril entire, round close to base of preocular rim. Gill opening wide; gill membrane free from isthmus; pseudobranchiae present slit below fourth gill arch. Gill rakers short, reduced to spiny knobs at end of arch, opercular flap pointed, reaches below the base of seventh dorsal spine.

Dorsal fin continuous; origin above posterior border of eye; spines strong; first spine 2/3 diameter of eye; third spine longest, half head length; spinous dorsal high, rays divided, last dorsal ray adnate to caudal peduncle by thin membrane. Pectorals long, reaching above first anal ray, all rays branched, except first ray. Pelvic fins shorter than pectorals, origin just behind that of pectorals, with a strong spine, not quite reaching anal fin. Third anal spine longest, rays longer than longest spine; rays branched. Caudal long, rounded.

Body scales cycloid, small, thin, non- imbricate, mostly hidden under skin; no scales on head, ventral

A NEW RECORD OF GUNTHER'S WASPFISH *SNYDERINA GUENTHERI* (BOULENGER, 1889) (SCORPAENIFORMES: TETRAROGIDAE) FROM VISAKHAPATNAM, INDIA

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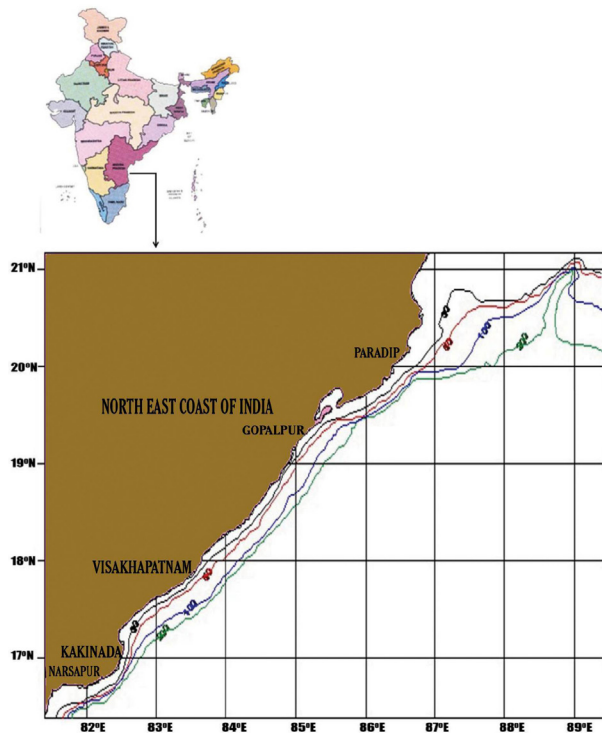


Figure 1. Map showing sample collection centres



Image 1. *Snyderina guentheri* (Boulenger, 1889) 124mm, TL

side of body, below base of dorsal fin, axil of pectoral and bases of pelvic and anal.

Head with spines and smooth ridges, covered with skin. Lachrymal with two spines; first one blunt, slightly backward and downward, extending over maxilla; second one long and pungent, directed back, extending posteriorly nearly to end of maxilla, 2/3 eye diameter. Suborbital ridge strong, without spines; preopercular edge with four spines, upper most one strong, sharp, slightly shorter than second spine, lower three spines rudimentary, hidden under skin; opercle with two rudimentary ridges. Two bony ridges start above

Table 1. Morphometric data of *Snyderina guentheri* represented in the catches of Visakhapatnam.

Characters	<i>S. guentheri</i> , n= 35	
	Standard length in mm 62–124	
	Min–Max	$\bar{X} \pm S.D$
As percentage of standard length		
Total Length	126.7–138.70	133.7±2.81
Body depth	30.6–38.7	35.9±2.14
Head length	40–48.2	44.3±2.94
Pre dorsal distance	17.2–22.8	19.5±1.77
Pre pectoral distance	30.9–40.3	35.3±2.99
Pre pelvic distance	33.3–40.3	36.8±2.31
Pre anal distance	62.5–72.1	67.6±2.59
Dorsal base	80.4–88.7	83.2±2.87
Anal base	21.11–29.03	24.64±1.66
Pectoral base	8.62–14.5	10.9±1.35
Dorsal spine height	21.55–29.03	24.49±1.86
Soft dorsal height	20–25.80	22.04±1.27
Pectoral length	30.64–38.14	34.02±2.12
Soft pelvic length	21.77–30.64	25.00±2.80
Anal spine height	17.77–23.85	21.36±1.58
Soft anal height	20.96–25.80	22.50±1.24
As percentage of head length		
Head depth	53.57–65.90	60.55±3.9
Head width	35.71–45.83	40.91±2.73
Eye diameter	17.85–25.80	21.91±2.86
Pre orbital distance	17.85–27.58	24.533±2.39
Post orbital distance	57.14–65.90	62.75±2.97
Inter orbital	17.85–27.58	23.14±2.75
Upper jaw length	35.71–46.80	40.78±2.51
Lower jaw length	30.43–40.90	35.18±2.90
Maxillary width	12.5–19.04	15.85±1.96
Snout length	16.07–24.52	19.76±2.93
Caudal peduncle depth	7.54–12.90	10.11±1.52

posterior nostril, run along middle of interorbital space to base of first dorsal spine, forming a narrow groove between them. Two smooth longitudinal ridges behind supraorbital rim; postorbital ridge runs longitudinally from eye to below origin of lateral line; nasal, preocular, postocular, tympanic, parietal, nuchal spines absent. Air bladder present, thin and oval sin shape. Pyloric appendages small.

Head and body reddish-brown, with close-set small round pale spots; lower flanks paler. Brown blotch above eye, jaws pink in colour. Side of body with four

irregular brown blotches on lateral line, posterior ones fading gradually; first one largest, distinct, behind upper part of gill opening; second one extends below 11th to last dorsal spine; third extends below base of fifth to seventh dorsal rays; last one extends below last dorsal ray to caudal peduncle; lower flanks with scattered black spots. Dorsal membrane dusky with pale or (in some specimens) dark spots. Irregular dark brown blotches on fourth to eighth dorsal spines; another similar below last dorsal spines and anterior rays. Pectorals, pelvics, anal and caudal brown with pale spots.

Description, meristic counts (Table 1) and morphometric data are in good agreement with that of Boulenger (1889), Smith (1957), Talwar (1977), Fisher & Bianchi (1986) and Froese & Pauly (2015). In the present study, a specimen with very short second preorbital spine on left side only was observed. The type locality is Gulf of Oman (Boulenger 1889); subsequent records by Boulenger (1901) and Norman (1939) are from Gulf of Aden.

The earlier and only record of this species of India is by Talwar (1977), who collected 14 specimens from trawl catches at depth of 300m in March 1975 off Quilon on the western coast of India. From India, Talwar (1977) recorded it from the continental slope

off the southwestern coast of India. He attributed the scanty record of this species to "the habitats that are not easily reached by conventional methods of collecting". According to Froese & Pauly (2015) it grows to 215mm TL. This is the first record of this species from Visakhapatnam coastal waters, India. The local Telugu name of the fish is 'Murri moyyah'.

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