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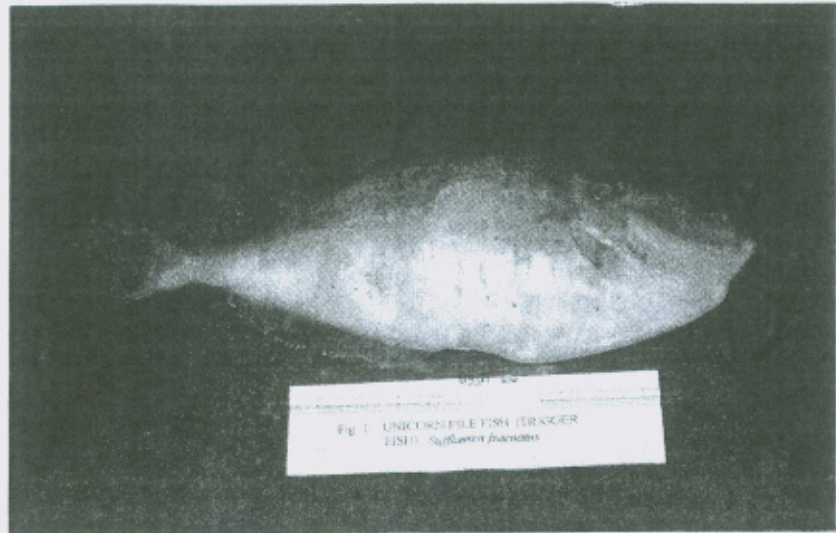
Similarity Between the Cooked Meat of Pomfret and Trigger Fish

Pomfrets are considered a delicacy among seafoods, both in India and abroad. This is mainly because of its taste, colour of the meat and soft bones. Presently its landings in Gujarat are over 15,000 tonnes. Three varieties are commonly landed namely, silver pomfret, Chinese pomfret and Black pomfret. Due to high demand in export market, pomfrets are very expensive in the local market. The price in the local market varies from Rs.125 to 250 per kg depending on the size and variety.

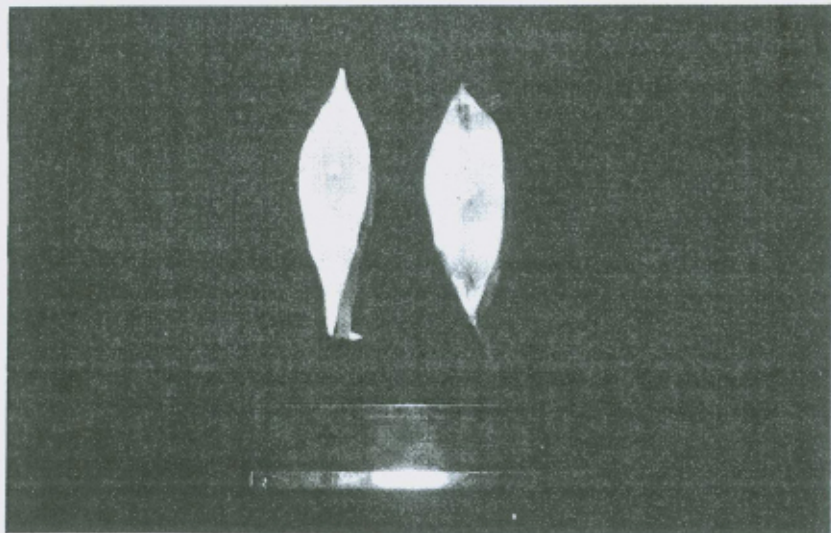
Most of the catch of pomfrets are exported and the rejects usually find their way to the internal markets in major urban centres like Mumbai, Delhi and Calcutta. Catering establishments and hotels are the major markets for pomfrets.

During one of the visits to Khara Kuon fish market in Veraval, a regular landing of Unicorn file fish (*Sufflamen fraenatus*), popularly known as trigger fish and locally known as 'Dokario' was noted. The trigger fish is marketed for domestic consumption in iced form. However, local people do not prefer the fish due to its unattractive appearance. The fish is having high demand in many urban centres. Its present rate is Rs.8 - 10/kg.

The high cost of pomfrets and the demand it enjoys have led the catering houses and the fish trade to look for suitable alternatives in place of pomfrets. It is informed by traders and merchants that the trig-



Unicorn file fish (*Sufflamen fraenatus*)



Steaks from Trigger fish (right) and Pomfret (left)

ger fish is being widely used these days in steak forms in catering establishments.

The trigger fish is flat, white/grey in colour with the eyes situated posteriorly. The steaks were

prepared from both trigger fish and pomfrets. The steaks prepared from trigger fish are very much similar to that of pomfrets. It is difficult for a lay person to distinguish between these two due to

similarity in size, shape, colour and texture (Photographs 1 to 3). During cooking, only slight differences in taste and flavour were noted. The other difference was mainly in the thickness of the skin and hardness of vertebral bones in cooked trigger fish when compared to cooked pomfrets. However, only experienced persons familiar with pomfrets can differentiate between the two.

-Ravi Shankar. C.N., Asok Kumar.K, Badonia. R. and Solanki. K.K.



Silver Pomfret (Pampus argenteus)