



Accession Number: - Z00019

Scientific Name: -*Sperata seenghala*

Family: Bagridae

Common Name: Giant river catfish

Physical Characteristics:

Earlier, they were placed under the genus *Mystus*. *Sperata seenghala* has a robust, elongated body typical of many catfish species. It has a somewhat flattened head and a tapered tail. The body is generally grey to brownish on the dorsal side, with a lighter, almost white ventral side. The fish often has dark spots or mottling along its body. This species has long barbels (whisker-like structures) around the mouth, which are used to sense its environment and locate food. There are usually four pairs of barbels. The dorsal fin is relatively small and contains a spine. The pectoral fins also have strong spines, and the caudal fin is forked. It can grow to a significant size, with adults reaching lengths of up to 90 centimetres (35 inches); however, they are more commonly 50 to 70 centimetres (20 to 28 inches) in length.



Geographical Distribution:

It is found in the river systems of South Asia, including countries like India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

Economic Importance:

It plays a vital role in the regional economies where it is found, through fisheries, aquaculture, recreational fishing, and ecotourism. Its conservation and sustainable management are crucial to maintaining these economic benefits while ensuring the long-term viability of its populations.