

## FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indian Ocean)

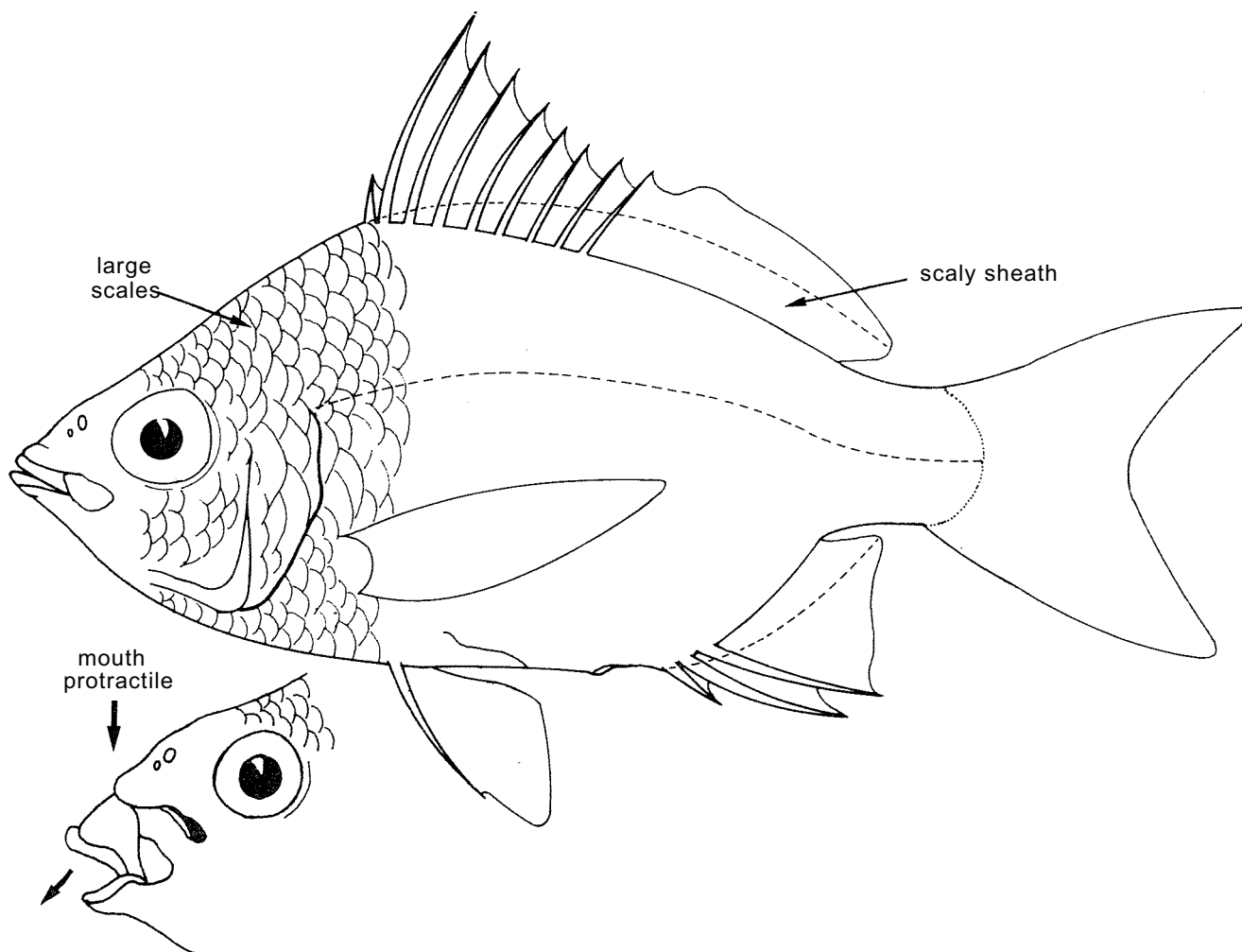
## GERREIDAE

Silver-biddies, mojarras

Small to medium-sized fishes. Body compressed laterally; back elevated to varying degrees, so that body profile may be slender or deep. Mouth strongly protractile, pointing downwards when extended; minute, acute teeth in both jaws. A long, single dorsal fin with 9, occasionally 10, spines and a similar (9 to 11 in Gerres) or larger number (12 to 14 in Pentaprion and 18 in Parequula) of soft rays; anal fin usually with 3, but as many as 5 or 6 spines and 7 to 18 soft rays (typically 10); first dorsal and anal spines very short; bases of dorsal and anal fins with an elevated scaly sheath; pelvic fins with 1 spine and 5 rays, a scaled flap at base of spine; pectoral fins long and pointed. Scales large and obvious, deciduous.

Colour: usually a brilliant silver, occasionally with dusky markings on sides; margin of spinous part of dorsal fin often black.

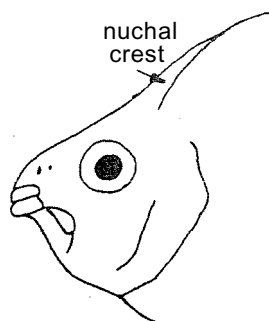
Living in coastal waters of all warm seas; a few temperate species. Mostly found in sandy shallows, but also in estuaries and even fresh water.



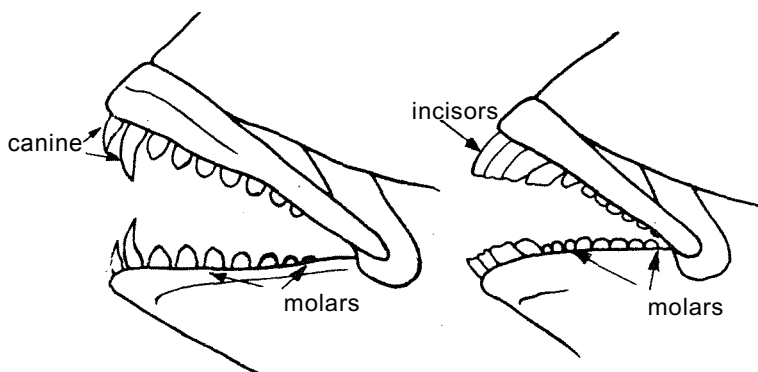
**SIMILAR FAMILIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

Leiognathidae: bony nuchal "crest" or "spine" on nape; scales minute, barely visible.

Sparidae: mouth not strongly protrac- tile; incisor, canine and/or molar-shaped teeth in jaws.



Leiognathidae



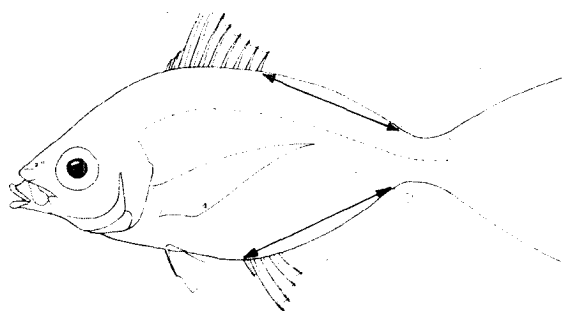
Argyrops

Diplodus

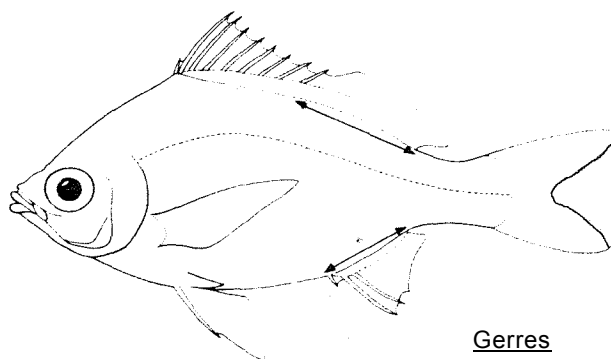
Sparidae: Examples of teeth

**KEY TO GENERA OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

- 1a. Anal fin base longer than base of soft-rayed portion of dorsal fin; 5 or 6 spines and 12 to 14 soft rays in anal fin (Fig.1)... Pentaprion
- 1b. Anal fin base shorter than base of soft-rayed portion of dorsal fin; 2 to 4 spines and 7 to 10 soft rays in anal fin (Fig.2) .....Gerres



Pentaprion Fig.1



Gerres Fig.2

LIST OF SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

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

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <u>Gerres abbreviatus</u> Bleeker, 1850          | GERR Gerr 1  |
| <u>Gerres acinaces</u> Bleeker, 1854             | GERR Gerr 6  |
| <u>Gerres argyreus</u> (Bloch & Schneider, 1801) |              |
| <u>Gerres filamentosus</u> Cuvier, 1829          | GERR Gerr 2  |
| <u>Gerres kapas</u> Bleeker, 1851                |              |
| <u>Gerres limbatus</u> Cuvier, 1830              |              |
| <u>Gerres lucidus</u> Cuvier, 1830               | GERR Gerr 7  |
| <u>Gerres macracanthus</u> Bleeker, 1854         |              |
| <u>Gerres macrosoma</u> Bleeker, 1854            |              |
| <u>Gerres oblongus</u> Cuvier, 1830              | GERR Gerr 8  |
| <u>Gerres oyena</u> Forsskål, 1775)              | GERR Gerr 3  |
| <u>Gerres poieti</u> Cuvier, 1829                | GERR Gerr 9  |
| <u>Gerres rappi</u> (Barnard, 1927)              | GERR Gerr 10 |
| <u>Gerres richi</u> (Cuvier, 1830)               |              |
| <u>Gerres setifer</u> (Hamilton-Buchanan, 1822)  |              |
| <br>   |              |
| <u>Pentaprion longimanus</u> (Cantor, 1850)      | GERR Pent 1  |

Prepared by D.J. Woodland, Department of Zoology, The University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W., Australia

---

\*This list includes species recorded from the area whose presence is extremely unlikely and species that are probably synonymous with others in the list. It is subject to review pending a revision of the species of the whole of the Indo-Pacific region by D.J. Woodland, who would welcome receiving material in good condition for identification

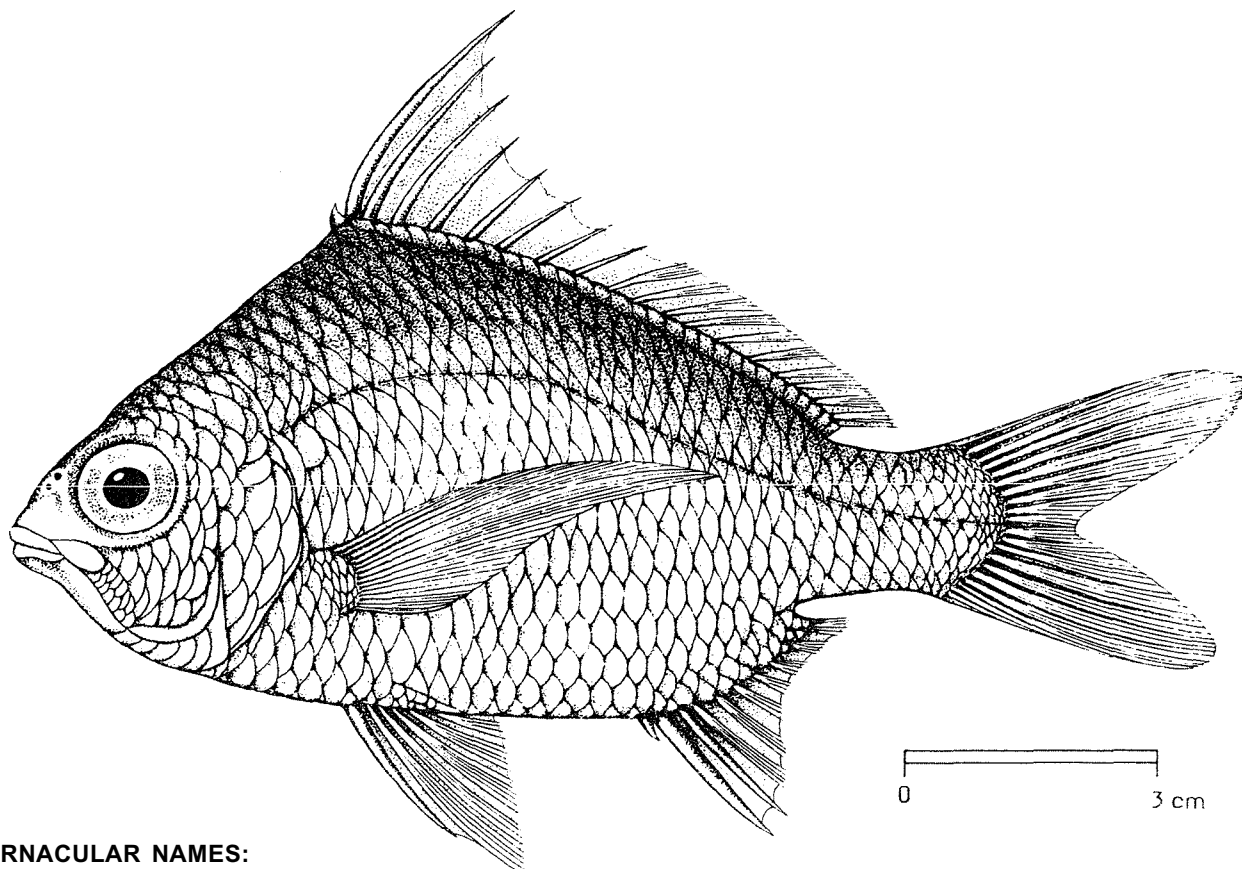
FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY : GERREIDAE

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indien Ocean)

*Gerres abbreviatus* Bleeker, 1850

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: None



VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO :            En - Deepbody silver-biddy (= Deepbody mojarra of Areas 57/71)  
                    Fr - Blanche élevée  
                    Sp - tv1ojarra chata

NATIONAL:

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

Body deep, its depth contained 1.9 to 2.3 times in standard length. Anterodorsal profile ascending steeply, at an angle of about 45° in a straight line to base of first dorsal spine. Spines strong, particularly the second anal which is either subequal to 0.8 times or much longer than the base of anal fin; pectoral fin long, tip of depressed fin reaching to or past level of base of first anal spine; caudal fin strongly forked, longest rays about 2.5 times the length of median rays. Four rows of scales between base of 5th dorsal spine and lateral line scale row; typically, fewer than 38 lateral line scales, to base of caudal fin and 2 or 3 more pored scales on scaly sheath on base of fin.

Colour: silvery, tinged with brown dorsally; indistinct, fine, dark stripes following scale rows in older fish; many specimens, particularly juveniles, with 7 to 11 slender, dark bars along sides. Dorsal fin edged with black; trailing edge of caudal fin dusky; pelvic and anal fins yellowish.

## DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA :

Gerres filamentosus: 2nd dorsal fin spine elongated, but often damaged; 2nd anal fin spine much shorter than length of anal fin base.

G. poietii: 2nd anal spine exceptionally robust; more than 37 lateral line scales, excluding those covering the bases of the rays of the caudal fin (typically, fewer than 38 scales in G. abbreviatus).

G. rappi: 5 rows of scales (excluding scaly sheath of dorsal fin) between base of 5th dorsal fin spine and lateral line scale row (4 in G. abbreviatus); more than 42 lateral-line scales (excluding those covering the bases of caudal fin rays).

Other species of Gerreidae: slender-bodied, the depth more than 2.3 times in standard length. Furthermore, anal fin base longer than base of soft part of dorsal fin in Pentaprion longimanus.

Leiognathidae: nuchal crest on nape; scales barely visible.

### SIZE:

Maximum: 25 cm; common to 15 cm.

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:

Within the area, along the west and south coast of India and around Sri Lanka. Elsewhere from the east coast of India through the Indo-Malayan Archipelago to the South China Sea, Papua New Guinea and northern Australia.

Living in small schools on sandy bottoms; juveniles in the littoral zone, larger fish down to 40 m depth.

Juveniles feed on zooplankton, adults on small polychaetes, bivalves, crustaceans and fishes.

### PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

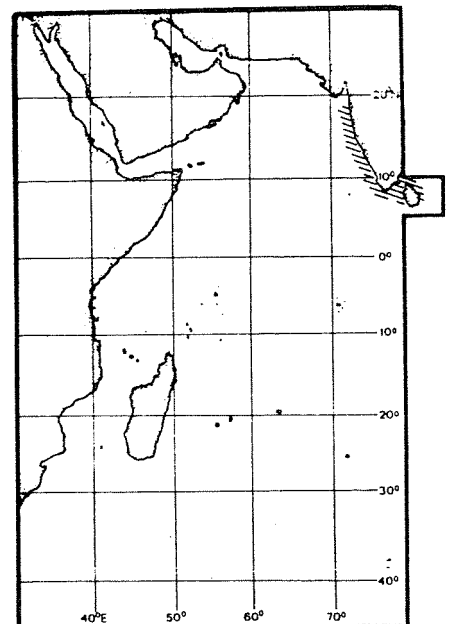
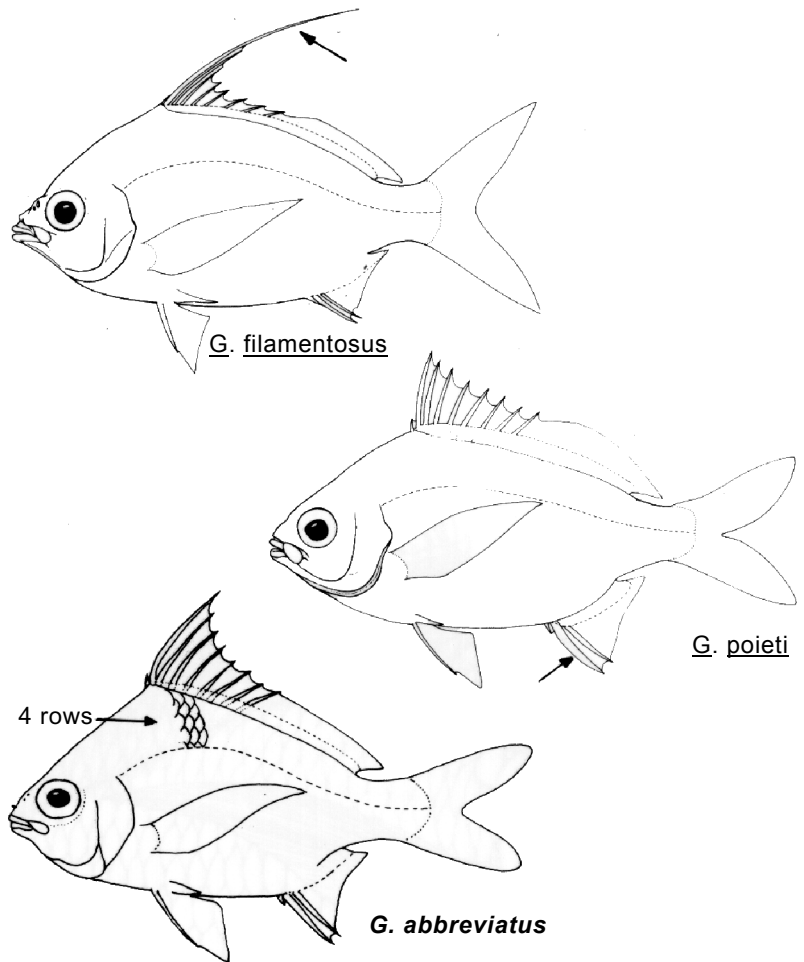
Shallow coastal waters.

### CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Juveniles are taken by set traps and seines, adults by trawlers.

Usually marketed fresh, but the flesh deteriorates rapidly; processed into fish balls and marketed frozen in some other fishing areas.

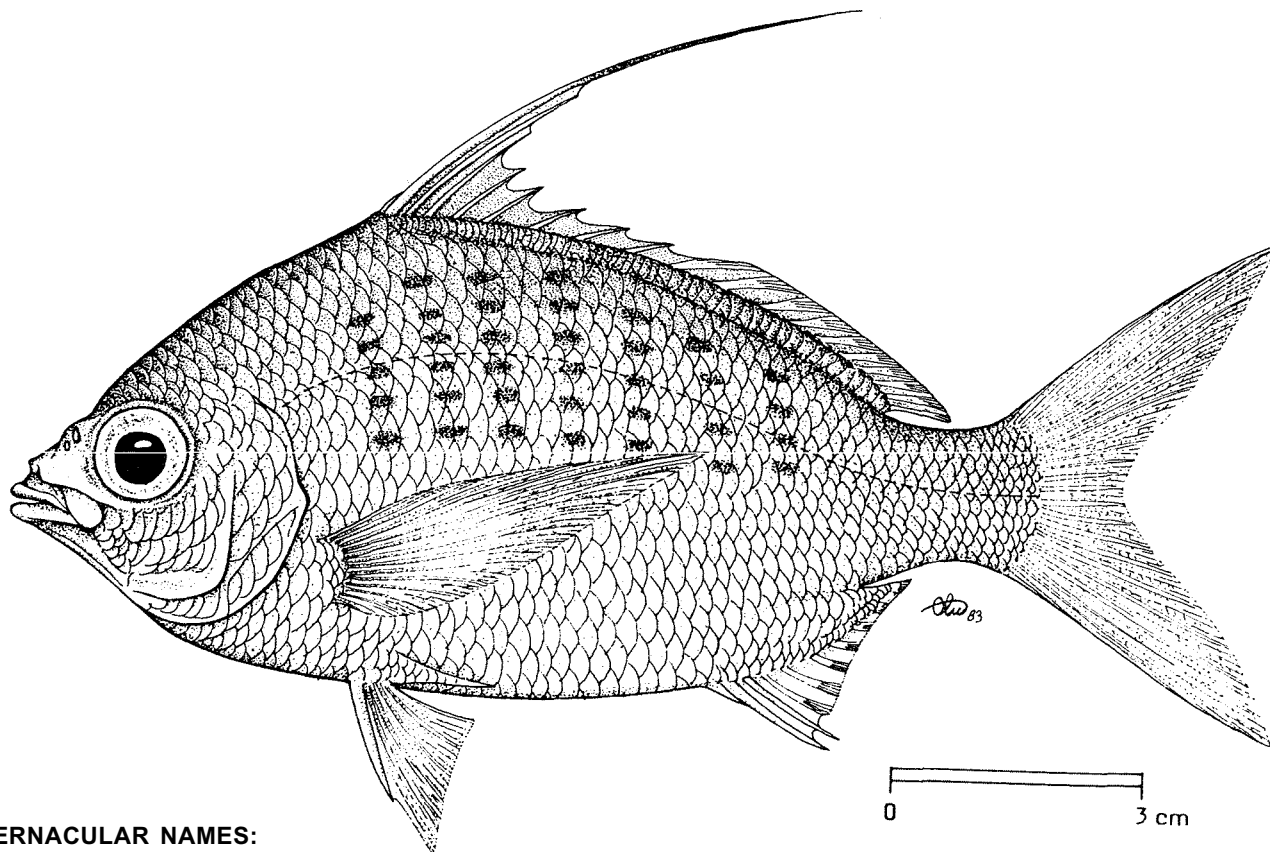


## FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: GERREIDAE

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indian Ocean)Gerres filamentosus Cuvier, 1829

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: Gerres punctatus Cuvier, 1830  
Pertica filamentosa Munro, 1955  
 ? Gerres macracanthus Bleeker, 1854



## VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Whipfin silver-biddy (= Whipfin mojarra of Areas 57/71)  
 Fr - Blanche fil  
 Sp - Mojarra de hebra

NATIONAL:

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

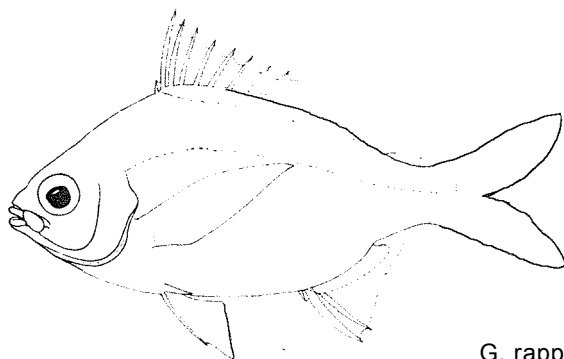
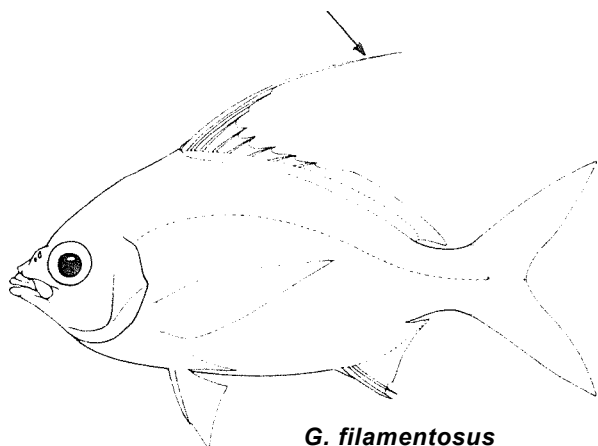
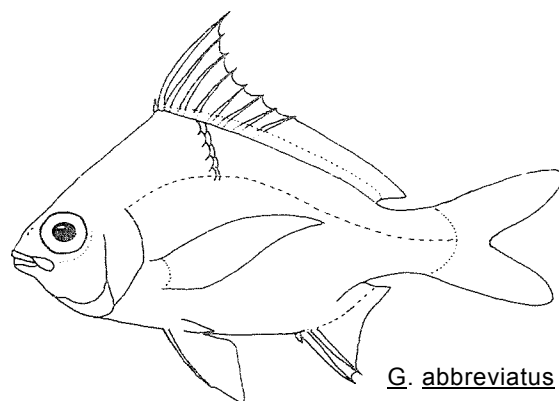
Body compressed, elevated; its depth contained 2 to 2.5 times in standard length in larger specimens, up to 3 times in smaller specimens. Anterodorsal profile ascending steeply at an angle of about 40° to horizontal axis. Second dorsal spine laterally compressed, produced into a filament whose tip extends past level of first anal spine filament often damaged); third dorsal spine laterally compressed, as long as distance from tip of snout to pre-opercular margin; pectoral fin long, tip of depressed fin reaching to level of origin of first anal spine; 2nd anal fin spine much shorter than anal fin base; caudal fin deeply forked, its longest rays 3 times the length of median rays.

Colour: silvery, with 7 to 10 columns of ovoid spots on upper portion of sides, coalescing as bars in small specimens. Pectoral, pelvic, caudal and anal fins dusky hyaline; tips of pelvics, anal and lower lobe of caudal, white; dorsal fin hyaline except for the end of the filamentous spine, which is black. Iris silvery with a dark ovoid patch in the anterodorsal quarter.

## DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA :

Other species of Gerreidae: 2nd dorsal fin spine not filamentous. Furthermore: 3 scale rows between lateral line and 5th dorsal fin spine in G. lucidus, and 4 in G. poieti and G. abbreviatus (4.5 to 5.5 in G. filamentosus); last spine of dorsal fin much longer than eye diameter in G. rappi (subequal in G. filamentosus); 3rd dorsal fin spine shorter than tip of snout to posterior margin of preopercle (longer than in G. filamentosus).

Species of Leiognathidae: nuchal crest present on nape; scales barely visible.



### SIZE:

Maximum: 25 cm; common to 15 cm.

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:

Widespread in all warm seas of the Indo-Pacific, from the east coast of Africa through the Indo-Malayan archipelago, South China Sea, northern Australia and the west Pacific islands.

Lives in shallow coastal waters to depths of at least 50 m, on sandy bottoms, including coralline areas.

Feeds on small organisms living on sand and mud bottoms.

### PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

Inshore waters.

### CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Caught mainly with beach seines and bottom trawls.

Flesh excellent but spoils very rapidly.

