Pak. J. Nematol., 26 (2): 199-205, 2008

THE INFLUENCE OF GUT NEMATODE PARASITES ON LENGTH, WEIGHT AND CONDITION FACTOR OF *JOHNIUS BELANGERII* CUVIER, 1830

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Abstract

This study involves 53 specimens of fish (*Johnius belangerii* Cuvier, 1830) off Arabian Sea, collected from Karachi coast, during September, 2005 to November, 2006 and examined for the presence of gut nematode parasites (*Echinocephalus* spp., and *Ascaris* spp.). Parasitological inspections revealed the effects of these parasites on body condition. This was determined to assess the significance and possible impact of these parasites in fishes of this area. Condition measures the variation from the expected weight for length, as an indicator of fatness, general well-being and parasitic infection. Infested specimens show lower weight than expected (Kn < 1.0) and non-infested specimen had Kn > 1.0. It was possible to infer that gut infestation with parasites alters weight; therefore knowledge of parasites in fish is important to determine the length, weight relationship for which a relative condition factor (K) could be derived.