

by Michael P. Seki

Valid name *Pseudocaranx dentex* (Bloch and Schneider 1801) (Fig. 56)

Synonymy (?) *Scomber ascensionis* Osbeck 1771
Scomber cordila (non-Linnaeus) Bonnaterre 1788
Scomber dentex Bloch and Schneider 1801
Trachurus imperialis Rafinesque 1810
Caranx luna Geoffroy Saint-Hillaire 1809
Citula banksii Risso 1826
Caranx dentex Cuvier 1833
Caranx solea Cuvier 1833
Caranx analis Cuvier 1833
Selenia luna Bonaparte 1846
Caranx guara Jordan and Evermann 1896
Caranx cheilio Snyder 1904
Carangus cheilio Jordan and Evermann 1905
Uraspis cheilio Jordan 1925
Caranx ascensionis (Osbeck) Fowler 1928
Caranx adscensionis (Osbeck) Smith 1949
 (from Berry 1959; Fischer 1978)

Common and vernacular names White trevally; thick-lipped trevally; butaguchi; buta ulua; pig ulua

Distribution

Uncommon in the main islands but abundant in the NWHI from the west bank of Nihoa to Kure Atoll. Inhabits not only banks and benthic slopes but also inshore areas. Found at depths between 18 and 183 m in the NMFS surveys. At Kure Atoll, HDAR field surveys found butaguchi in waters 1.5 m deep and occasionally in large schools of 200-300 individuals (Okamoto and Kawamoto 1980).

Distinguishing characteristics

D. VIII, I, 24-27; A. II, I, 20-23; P1. I, 19-20; Gr. 11-14+23-28 (Berry 1959; Fischer 1978). Body elongate, compressed; lips thick, fleshy, inferior jaw, unlike most of the other carangids; snout pointed, elongate in profile with a slight concave depression in the interorbital region.

In life, greenish blue dorsally becoming silver ventrally; a yellow stripe runs along the side of the body from the caudal peduncle through the eye. A distinctive black spot on posterodorsal edge of opercle; fins are yellow.

The NMFS samples from the NWHI ranged from 9.0 to 131.4 cm (0.05 to 11.5 kg).

Life history

Butaguchi in the NWHI are opportunistic bottom feeders (Seki 1984b). Of the stomach samples analyzed, fishes of the Families Congridae, Priacanthidae, and Serranidae, crustaceans such as crabs and shrimps, and octopuses were the most important. Time of feeding is unknown. Catch data suggest the species has a wide range of foraging grounds.

The functional length-weight relationship of 267 butaguchi (ranging from 33.3 to 89.0 cm) caught in the NWHI is:

$$W = 1.70 \times 10^{-8} L^{3.0074},$$

where W = weight (kg) and L = fork length (mm) (Uchiyama et al. 1984).

In NMFS age and growth studies, only a linear growth stanza was calculated because the largest fish examined had not reached the asymptotic growth phase. Preliminary estimates placed a 1-year-old at 30 cm and a 2-year-old at 66 cm.¹⁰

During the NMFS survey ripe ovaries were collected in January and July (Uchiyama and Tagami 1984).

Gear and catch

Butaguchi is taken principally by deep-sea handline, but has also been captured in traps.

Catch data are unavailable because the present statistical reporting system combines several species of carangids.

The species is scarce in the main islands; however, it is among the more abundant species in the NWHI and contributes significantly to the NWHI bottom fish landings (see footnote 6).

¹⁰Uchiyama, J. H., J. Enitan, and J. D. Sampaga. Age and growth estimates of snappers and jacks of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Southwest Fish. Cent. Honolulu Lab., Natl. Mar. Fish. Serv., NOAA, Honolulu, HI 96822-2396 (manuscr. in prep.).

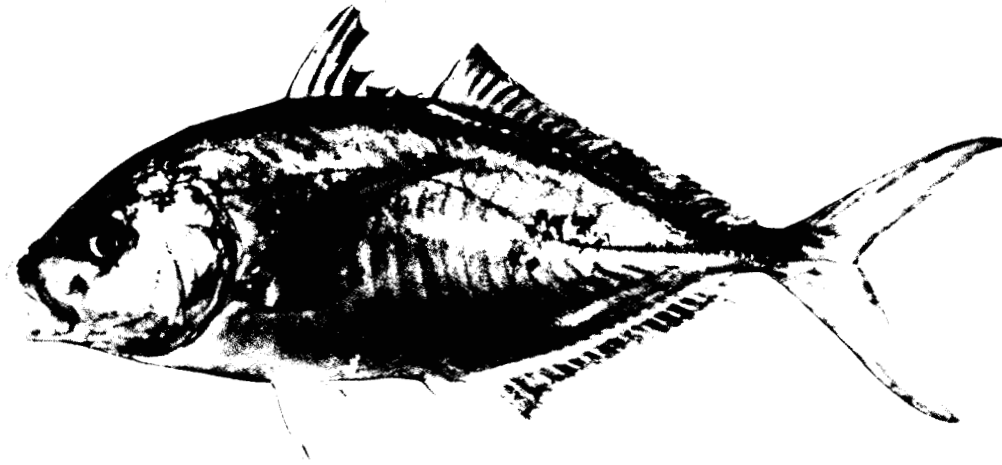


Figure 56.—*Pseudocaranx dentex*.