

by Paul M. Shiota

Valid name	<i>Decapterus tabl</i> Berry 1968 (Fig. 54)
Synonymy	<i>Decapterus punctatus</i> Ginsburg 1952 (from Berry 1968)
Common and vernacular names	Redtail scad; redtail opelu

Distribution

This species was not recorded from the Hawaiian Archipelago until 1975 when a single specimen was caught at Necker in a bottom trawl in 393 m of water. Distributed in waters 18-393 m deep from Necker Island to Hancock Seamounts.

Distinguishing characteristics

D. VIII-I, 29-33; A. II-I, 24-26-I; LLs. 103-119; Gr. 10-12+30-33. Body rounded, elongate, slender; eye moderate; adipose eyelid well developed; teeth minute, in a single row in both jaws, becoming reduced in number and extent with growth; dorsal fins well separated; terminal ray of dorsal and anal fins consisting of a widely detached finlet; pectoral fins short; scales small, cycloid; lateral line arched to beneath the 13th to 16th dorsal soft ray; scales in curved part of lateral line 61-78, no scutes in curved part; anterior scales in straight part 0-8, scutes in straight part 34-44; dorsal accessory lateral line short, terminating near end of head; shoulder girdle with 2 slight papillae and a shallow groove above and below the pair, the lower papillae and groove the larger; vertebrae 10+14 (Berry and Smith-Vaniz 1978).

In life, metallic bluish-green to bluish-black above and silvery white below; tail reddish. Opercle with a small black spot near the upper edge. Largest Hawaiian specimen, taken at Hancock Seamounts, measured 42.8 cm FL.

Life history

Nothing is known about the life history of redtail scad in Hawaiian waters. In the Philippines juvenile fish in their second year of life enter the fishery in January-April; the bulk of the commercial landings, which consists of young maturing fish, is made in March-May (Tiews et al. 1970). As the fish begin to reach maturity in October-May during their third year of life, they exit the fishery for spawning grounds offshore (Tiews et al. 1970; Ronquillo 1972).

In the Philippines, spawning of *D. tabl* is slightly later than that of *D. macrosoma* which spawns between October and April (Magnuson 1970). Spawning occurs in the pelagic environment, the number of eggs spawned per fish ranging from 28,700 to 48,700 (Tiews et al. 1970).

Redtail scad feeds primarily in the water column on plankton such as copepods, mysis stages of crustaceans, and small fishes (Tiews et al. 1970).

Gear and catch

Red tail scad is harvested with mackerel handline, deep-sea handline, and bottom trawl. Catches up to 450 kg have been made with a fish trawl. There is no commercial fishery for this species in Hawaii.

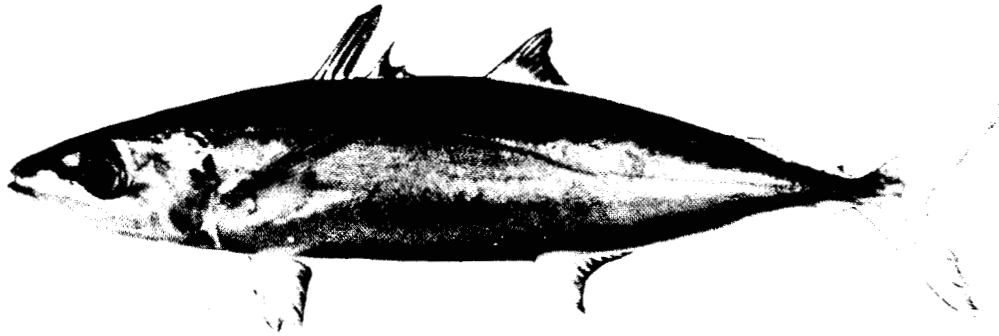


Figure 54.—*Decapterus tabl.*