



## Study of Diversity, Size and Consumption of some Small Fishes in Patna

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Received : November 2016

Accepted : March 2017

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**Abstract :** *Small fishes are an important source of animal protein in our diet. Its consumption and availability needs to be monitored. The study was aimed at estimating people's choice and the small fishes available in a fish market in a prime location in Patna. Results indicate that small fishes are preferred by lesser percentage of people as compared to big fishes. Majority prefer both small and big fishes. Nine types of small fishes were observed during the course of study. Their dimensions vary due to time of study.*

**Keywords:** *Small fishes, Diversity, Size, Consumption.*

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### Introduction:

Fish plays an important role in fighting hunger and malnutrition as being rich food for poor people. Fish is not only a source of proteins and healthy fats, but also a unique source of essential nutrients, including long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, iodine, vitamin D, and calcium. The multiple benefits of fatty fish high in omega-3s and small fish eaten whole containing nutrients in the skin and bones clearly illustrate seafood's irreplaceable nutritional value. Small fish is an integral part of our diet, providing an important source of animal protein and healthy fats for much of the world's population, and should be a key element of every food security and nutrition strategy. Many small fish families are found in Bihar like Bagridae, Belonidae, Cyprinidae, Siluridae, etc. Bihar is rich in small fish fauna represented by *Cirrhinus reba*, *Labeo bata*, *Oxygaster bacaila*, *Mystus tengara*, *Mystus bittatus*, *Ompak pabda*, *Gadusia chapra*, *Labeo gonius*, *Puntius sp.* and others. The nutritional benefits of small fish consumption are also particularly important for people living with HIV/AIDS. Small fishes are also rich in iron, zinc, magnesium, phosphorous, calcium, vitamin A and vitamin C. Small low-value fishes, which are largely consumed by the poor, provide more minerals than the same quantity of wheat or large fishes, as they are consumed whole, with the bones intact. Over 90% of global inland capture fisheries production is used for human consumption, the majority of which is in the developing world (*Welcomme et al. 2010*). For example,