

NOTES ON ROD FISHING IN BANGKOK.

By MOM CHAO VIPULYA.

1. PLA KAPONG NAM CHEUT (*Lates calcarifer*.)

ปลา กะพง น้ำจืด.

This fish is caught in March and April, and is most numerous from Klong Toi to Phra Pradeng, Governor's residence, especially in front of the old fort. I have seen one taken in front of Phya Pradibadha's residence at Klong Toi with a live prawn of medium size tied to a fairly large hook (Limerick No. 6/0), and it weighed about 20 lbs. It is excellent eating.

There is another fish somewhat similar in appearance and weight which can be taken in the same way, at the same season and in the same localities, called Pla Ma (ปลาแม่). It also is good eating though not so good as Pla Kapong.

2. PLA BU (*Glossogobius giuris*.)

ปลาชุก.

There are two varieties of this fish in Siam, one called Pla Bu Thong attains a length of 10 inches and is almost transparent with very faint markings. It is seldom eaten by the Siamese as, according to popular belief, it contains the souls of dead people.

The other is of a brownish colour with darker markings. It grows to a fair size, but is not much esteemed among the Siamese as an eating fish on account of the flabbiness of its flesh. The Chinese like it.

I have taken both kinds in ponds with shelled prawns. They also take worms. They are bottom feeders, very voracious, and will swallow the bait straight down and then sometimes lie quiet before making off. They are very poor fighters.

3. PLA CHADO (*Ophiocephalus micropeltes*.)

ปลาชะโด.

This species may be caught during July and August in Nai Lert's pond. It grows much larger than the Pla Chorn, the largest I have taken weighing about 6½ lbs. and specimens of up to 40 lbs. are said to occur. It has teeth bigger and stronger than those of Pla Chorn, and is very savage, so that while guarding its eggs it has been known to attack people. It is one of the most sporting fish and very difficult to land, fighting well and sometimes jumping like a salmon. It roams about for its food, living on Pla Soi (ปลาสร้อย) I have taken it with shelled prawn, live fish and fowl's entrails. It is fairly good eating.

4. PLA MANG PHU (*Ophiocephalus* sp.)

ปลาแมงปู.

This fish, much rarer than the preceding, resembles it in size, shape and markings, except that the general colouration is brighter and the tail dark green edged with red. It also is very savage. I have caught it with live fish and shelled prawns. It is not bad eating.

Both this and Pla Chado are said by the fishermen never to be taken in bell nets (casting), because they at once bite through the meshes and escape.

5. PLA CHORN (*Ophiocephalus striatus*.)

ปลาช่อน.

The best time for this well known fish is January to February after high flood, but it can, as a rule, be taken all the year round. It is very shy and often lies in holes near the banks of ponds. It is not very sporting and is easily landed. As an eating fish the Pla Chorn is much esteemed. I have caught specimens up to 3½ lbs. with a stiff rod, and although their teeth are fairly sharp there is no need to use wire. Live fish may be used as bait, on the surface or 2ft. under, the best being Pla Kadi (ปลากระดี่) and Pla Mor (ปลาหมอ). Small frogs are also taken and I have caught them in the evening with grasshoppers and cockroaches, and in the morning with fresh pork.

6. PLA MOR THAI (*Anabas testudineus*.)

ปลาหมอไทย.

This fish can be caught all the year round, but is commonest from May to February. One weighing ½ lb. is considered a good size. It is fairly common in the rice fields, and except that it is very bony is good eating. If parboiled the small bones may be extracted, but this requires time.

It takes worms or small prawns, and is itself used as a bait for Pla Chorn.

7. PLA MOR CHANG YIEP (*Pristolepis fasciata*.)

ปลาหมอช้างเหยียบ.

The usual weight of this fish is 2-3 ozs., though I have seen one of 2 lbs. It digs down into the mud of stagnant ponds and on account of its flat appearance is supposed to have been trodden on by elephants going to bathe. Hence the name.

It takes the same bait as the preceding, and also crickets and grasshoppers. The flesh is almost the same.

8. PLA KADI (*Trichopodus maculatus*.)

ปลากะดี.

I have never caught this species with a rod. It is used as bait.

9. PLA NEUA ON (*Cryptopterus cryptopterus*.)

ปลาเนื้ออ่อน.

The Pla Neua On is found all the year round except in the cold weather. I have caught it in the river and in Nai Lert's pond. It is not very sporting. It may be taken with worms or shelled prawns. The weight is anything up to 3 lbs. and it makes one of the best eating fish in Siam and fetches a good price in the market.

Another fish closely resembling this in appearance and taste is the Pla Khang Buan.

10. PLA KHAO (*Wallago attu*.)

ปลาเคียว.

I have caught the above up to 12 lbs. with live fish and with shelled prawns, and am told it takes salt roasted Pla Tu. It fights fairly well and a wire leader is advisable. It should be fished for deep. Though not a clean feeder it makes fairly good eating.

11. AI KAAW (*Bagarius* sp.)

อ้ายแก้ว.

I have never caught or seen this species, but several of my friends have. It is found in the Menam Chao Phya, hiding under logs or floating houses. It grows to an immense size, and is said to take cooked rice made into a ball, but I am uncertain of this.

12. PLA PHIA (*Labeo chrysophekadion*.)

ปลาเพี้ย.

I have seen the Pla Phia taken by nets in the river, and have myself caught it in ponds. The fish propagate and grow rapidly averaging in weight about 4 lbs. each, but I have caught specimens of 6½ lbs. It is fond of staying near steps and in June, July, November and December bites well. It takes bread-paste, mussels (หอยนางรม) or shelled prawns cut into small pieces, and the large individuals give fairly good sport. It is not bad eating.

13. PLA NUAN CHAN (*Cirrhinia microlepis*.)

ปลานวนจันทร์.

This fish grows to a large size. Although normally feeding chiefly on weeds in the pond, it takes paste, shelled prawns and

mussels. It fights well but is seldom taken on the rod, the largest I have caught in this way being 8 lbs., while with a net I have caught out of 15 lbs. It is fairly good eating.

14. PLA PROM HUA MEN (*Osteochilus melanopleura*.)

ปลาพรหมณ์ หัวเหิน.

This has the same habits as Nos. 12 and 13, and is taken with the same kinds of bait.

15. PLA AI BA (*Leptobarbus hoeveni*.)

ปลาอีขม บ้า.

This species is caught from May to November with paste, prawn or the leaf of a kind of cabbage or parsley, or a certain wild creeper, as bait. For its size it is a good fighter, but too bony to make good eating.

16. PLA KA-HAE (*Barbus (Puntius) schwanefeldi*.)

ปลากะแห.

This fish is caught with the same bait as the preceding and also with worms. It is not very sporting.

17. PLA KA-HO (*Catla catla*.)

ปลากะโห้.

The Pla Ka-ho inhabits ponds and the river. I have only caught one in a pond with a net, but they are taken in the river on hand lines chiefly at the mouth of Klong Bang Luang or in front of the Ministry of Marine, where a specimen may weigh up to 60 or 70 lbs. The fishermen let their small boats be dragged about until the fish is tired which may take two or three hours. As bait they use a large ball of cooked rice. The fish makes fairly good eating.

18. PLA KA-SUP (*Hampala macrolepidota*.)

ปลากะสุบ.

This species attains a large size and fights well. It is not often taken with the rod. Paste may be used as bait, or its favourite food Pla Siew (ปลาสิ่ว), with which it must be taken by spinning.

19. PLA SALAT (*Notopterus notopterus*.)

ปลาฉลาด.

This fish is very common in Siam, bites well and may be taken with worms or prawns, but is not good to eat because of its bony nature.

20. PLA KLAI (*Notopterus chitala*.)

ปลาเกลาย.

Pla Klai may be caught in Nai Lert's pond or at Bang Pa In, where it occurs in large numbers, from May to September. It grows to a fair size, the usual weight being about 8 lbs., but I have caught specimens up to 16 lbs.

It is very savage during the egg-laying season, and the big ones fight well and jump. As bait small live fish, shelled prawns or worms may be used. A stiff rod is desirable.

Only the part near the stomach is good eating, the rest is full of small bones.

21. PLA SAWAI (*Pangasius pangasius*.)

ปลาสมาย.

The above is found during October and November in the Lopburi river, Bang Pa In and the Menam Chao Phya, and from July to August in Nai Lert's pond. I have caught it up to 6½ lbs., but much bigger ones occur.

22. PLA TE-PO (*Pangasius larnaudii*.)

ปลาเทโพ.

This species is commonest at Paknampo and Pak Hai and I have taken one of 10 lbs. there. It has a large tail and fights well. The bait to use is either worms or prawns, or the small banana "Kluey Kai." A stiff rod is necessary. The fish are bred for the market in ponds and a 3 lbs. fish costs about 5 ticals 50 stgs.

23. PLA DUK (*Clarias batrachus*.)

ปลาตุก.

This fish grows to about 12 inches or more, and lives in the same localities as Pla Chorn and Pla Mor. It is scaleless and has two projecting spines near the side of the neck which are poisonous. The bait used is worm or prawn, but the fish gives no sport. The flesh is yellow and used as food by the country people.

24. PLA SALIT

ปลาสลิต.

The Pla Salit is a compressed fish attaining a weight of ½ lb. or more. It is sometimes found in ponds, preferring still and stagnant water, where it propagates rapidly. Worms may be used as bait, but the fish gives little sport. Its flesh is good and is extensively used for food.

