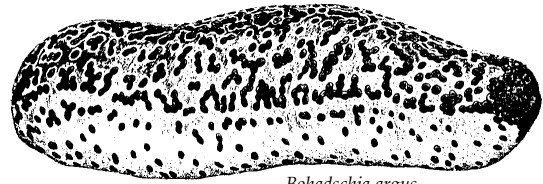


B E C H E - D E - M E R
CORRESPONDENCE



Bohadschia argus

Correspondence from Beche-de-mer
Special Interest group members

compiled by Chantal Conand

From Andrew Morgan 06/06/96

You might also be interested to know that I am doing a Masters degree at the University of Queensland on a local species of sea cucumber. This is funded by a fisheries company from Northern Queensland and aims to set up a successful hatchery and growout system for *Holothuria scabra*, the sandfish. My research last summer was successful in getting spawn and pro-

ducing larvae. In the coming summer we aim to produce juveniles and quantify various parameters affecting the culture of this animal.

Rather than sea-ranch juveniles I am considering polyculture and waste-water drain growout in conjunction with prawns and finfish here at the centre.

From Brian Long 13/03/96

I am a research scientist at the Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research organisation (CSIRO) Australia and we have recently completed a biological survey of the reefs in Torres Strait, northern Australia. As part of the survey we collected infor-

mation on the distribution and abundance of beche-de-mer. We have recently finished a preliminary stock assessment of the beche-de-mer resources of Torres Strait for the Queensland Fisheries Management Authority.

From Mark Baine 02/10/96

I currently undertake fisheries research with the International Centre for Island Technology (ICIT), Heriot-Watt University, Scotland. We were recently awarded Darwin Initiative funding to undertake a 3

year research project entitled 'The taxonomy, life history and conservation of Malaysian holothurians'. This research has begun.

From Randell B. Dietrich, Pres. 3/09/96

R.B. Dietrich Co., 224 Sullivan Street, Ste. A-52, New York, N.Y. 10012, Tel: 212 673-5568, Fax: 212 260-9502, e-mail: dietrich@mail.idt.net

We are an import-export trading company dealing extensively with the Far East (China, Korea, Indonesia, etc.).

Currently several of our clients are interested in the purchase of sea cucumbers, also known as: various forms of beche-de-mer; teat fish (*Microthele nobilis*);

black fish (*Actinopyga miliaris*); deep-water red fish (*A. echinites*); surf red fish (*A. mauritiana*); stone fish (*A. lecanora*), leopard (tiger) fish (*Bohadschia argus*), chalky fish (*Bohadschia marmorata marmorata*); brown sandfish (*Bohadschia marmorata vitiensis*); lolly fish (*Halodeima alra*); *Stichopus variegatus*, etc. . .

We would be interested in the purchase of farm-raised fish if they exist. If you are aware of other suppliers that are capable of producing beche-de-mer in quan-

tity, we would appreciate hearing from you. We are interested in about 4 t a month, on a regular basis. If available, they should be a minimum of 3 inches long after drying. We would like to purchase them dried and smoked.

Alternatively, if you are aware of any suppliers anywhere else in the world, preferably in the cooler waters of South America or Australia/New Zealand, we would be most grateful.

From Clarissa Marte

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Aquaculture Department (AQD), Philippines

Thank you for the *Beche-de-mer Information Bulletin* (April 1996) which I received for the first time. The information contained in this issue was most interesting, particularly since I know very little about holothurians and their fishery. I do know that they are being fished heavily in the Philippines, but there is scanty information on the state of the resource. In reefs or seagrass beds where I have visited, there are hardly any holothurians left.

We encounter only small individuals, and only very rarely large ones of commercial importance. I am interested to look at the culture potential of these animals and would like to know if there is information on the possibility/feasibility of using these animals in polyculture with fish in marine cages. While marine

fish cage culture is still not commonly practiced in the Philippines, this is one area that will rapidly develop in the near future now that areas for land-based culture are near saturation.

One of the environmental effects of net-cage culture is the accumulation of organically-rich sediments from uneaten feeds and fecal material below the fish cage.

I would like to look at the feasibility of stocking juvenile beche-de-mer in areas below or close to the fish cages so that they are able to feed on the organic materials in the sediments. May I request for information on this and other areas such as biology, reproduction and ecology of commercially important species that may be found in the Philippines.

From S. Battaglione

Iclarm, Solomon Islands 13/11/96

In August, I visited Indonesia and saw the cage culture of wild-caught juvenile *Holothuria scabra* in Sulawesi and hatchery production in Bali. The Indonesian Central Research Institute for Fisheries have produced small experimental batches of *Holothuria scabra* juveniles. They do not appear to be as progressed as the Indian researchers. The bottleneck in production is in the nursery culture of 10–20 mm juveniles where they experience problems with fungal infections.

I visited Japan in September and was very impressed with the research into the hatchery production of the temperate species *Stichopus japonicus*. In particular, I believe the development of mass production techniques by Dr Shiro Ito at the Saga Prefectural Sea

Farming Center and Mr Yanagisawa at the Aichi Prefectural Center to be highly relevant to what we are trying to achieve in the Solomon Islands with stock enhancement.

Last year in Japan, 11 Sea Farming Centres released a total of 2,557,000 sea cucumbers, average size 9 mm (range 1–120 mm). In 1996 the Saga produced 366,000 sea cucumbers (mean 15 mm, range 10–20 mm) and released 215,000, the remainder being sold to other Prefectures for release at 5.5 ¥/sea cucumber. Production has risen from 150,000 in 1992, peaking at 500 000 in 1995.

I also had the pleasure of meeting Maria Byrne this week when she visited the CAC.