

## The Current Status and Abundance of the Genus *Citharinus* in Jebba Lake, Niger State, Nigeria

**Authors :** M. B. Mshelia, J. K Balogun, J. Auta, N. O. Bankole

**Abstract :** The current status and abundance of the genus *Citharinus* was carried out in Jebba Lake, Niger State, Nigeria from January to December, 2011. The aim was to determine the extent of exploitation of the genus *Citharinus* in Jebba Lake so as to advice the government of Nigeria on how to overcome difficulties in terms of the sustainability of the said fish in the Lake. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data obtained. A total of 2,389 of the genus *Citharinus* were caught during the sampling period. Only two species of the genus *Citharinus* were caught with 1,220 in number and 430.68kg total weight of *Citharinus citharus* and 1,169 in number and 418.56kg total weight of *Citharinus latus*). The current total yield estimated for the genus *Citharinus* in Jebba Lake in the six (6) sampling sites was calculated and pooled together to be 849.24kg. A day's catch was calculated to be 35.38kg. The monthly and annual yields of the genus *Citharinus* were calculated to 1061.55 equivalents to 1 ton and 12 metric tonnes respectively. For the fecundity, June, July and August were discovered as the spawning period for the genus *Citharinus* and out of total experimental gillnet catch of 2, 389, only 244 (10.21%) of *Citharinus citharus* and 231 (9.67%) of *Citharinus latus* were in sexually mature stage. Out of these numbers, 113 (46.31%) were males and 121 (53.69%) were females of *Citharinus citharus* and 112 (48.48) were males and 119 (51.52) were females of *Citharinus latus*. The youngest mature males in either of the two had a standard length of 31.5 with a weight of 800.5g While the youngest spawning females were having the standard length of 29.5 cm with a weight of 1,300.5g. It was also discovered that females started maturing earlier than the males at the standard length for females and males to be 18.0cm and 19.5cm respectively. Their fecundity ranged from 15,000 to 16, 500 eggs. The sex ratio of 1172 that were males and 1217 that were females was 1 male to 1.0383 females which was equivalent to 1:1 sex ratio of male to female. It was concluded that Jebba Lake had suffered seriously over exploitation of the genus *Citharinus* and proper management have to be enforced on the lake otherwise the threat of fish being extent may arise.

**Keywords :** Jebba Lake, Niger State, Nigeria, *Citharinus citharus*, *Citharinus latus*, fecundity, sex ratio

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