

Title:	Morphometric and Meristic Characteristics of Birdi Loach, <i>Botia birdi</i> (Chaudhuri, 1909) from a Tributary of Indus Basin, Jammu and Kashmir, India
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Abstract/Description:	The present study describes the morphometric and meristic characteristics of Birdi loach, <i>Botia birdi</i> from Poonch River of Jammu and Kashmir, India. A total of 59 specimens ranging from 75.2-186.0 mm in total length (TL) and 7.91-60.64 g body weight (BW) were collected between July 2013 to April 2014 by using different fishing gears. Positive correlation was observed between total length and other body parts. The highly correlated body parameters in relation to total length were fork length ($r = 0.999$) and post orbital length (PoOL) was found least correlated ($r = 0.776$) and strong correlations was observed between head length (HL) and PrOL ($r = 0.991$) and least correlation($r = 0.929$) between HL and eye diameter (ED). The meristic characters were common in all the specimens (D. I -10, A. I- 6, P. 14, V. I-7, C.19).These findings may provide useful information for the conservation and sustainable management of this important fish in the least explored tributary of Indus basin in India.
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