

Biometry of Stellate Puffer *Arothron stellatus* (Bloch & Schneider, 1801) from Shatt Al-Basrah Canal

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Abstract. One specimen of stellate puffer *Arothron stellatus* was caught by local fisherman from Shatt Al-Basrah canal during June 2011. Biometry was measured including morphometric and meristic characteristics. Total and standard length was 431.4 and 360.2 mm respectively. Ratio of different morphometric characteristics to total length were detected, the highest was 59% for Preanal fin length, while the lowest was 3.9% for eye diameter. There were 4 vertebrae in the dorsal fin base, 6 vertebrae in the post anal fin and the total vertebrae were 17, branchiostegal rays were six rays.

Introduction

Tetraodontidae is a family of primarily marine and estuarine fish of the Tetraodontiformes order. The family includes many familiar species which are variously called puffer fish, balloon fish, blowfish, bubble fish, globefish, swellfish, toadfish, toadies, honey toads, sugar toads, and sea squab (Froese and Pauly, 2011). The scientific name of this family refers to the four large teeth, fused into an upper and lower plate, which are used for crushing the shells of crustaceans and mollusks, their natural prey. There are 185 species of puffers in 28 genera, (Oliveira *et al.*, 2006). They are most diverse in the tropics and relatively uncommon in