

Occurrence of near threatened tiger shark, *Galeocerdo cuvier* (Peron & Lesueur, 1822) from Puri coast, Odisha

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Tiger shark, *Galeocerdo cuvier* (Peron & Lesueur, 1822) has a circumglobal distribution in tropical and warm temperate seas. The Tiger shark, *G. Cuvier* belongs to the family *Carcharhinidae*, which is constituted by 12 genera and 54 valid species. The genus *Galeocerdo* represents a single species *G. cuvier*. It is locally known as Valiyasurav. Tiger sharks feed on sea turtles, sea cow, teleost fishes, sea snakes, sea birds, jellyfishes, rays, marine mammals and crabs. This species is considered as an apex predator in the marine ecosystem.

On 20th March, 2013 a single specimen of tiger shark measuring 105 cm (total length) with approximate weight of 10 kg was landed at Pentakota landing centre, Puri, Odisha coast. The species was incidentally caught in hook and line operated from traditional fishing craft between 40-70 m depth from the coast.

The species is characterised by fusiform body, stout forward of the first dorsal fin, snout very short and bluntly rounded. Upper labial furrows long reaching the eyes, teeth coarsely serrated, inter-dorsal ridge present, caudal peduncle relatively narrow. Second dorsal much smaller than first. Keel on each side of

caudal peduncle. Upper caudal lobe with long tapering tips. Grey colour above with vertical black to dark grey tiger stripe and spots marking on side and fins (Fig.1).



Fig. 1. Tiger shark, *Galeocerdo cuvier*, 105 cm (Total length)

Tiger sharks are included under Appendix II of CITES, making the trade of this species regulated. The species are categorized as “Near Threatened” in 2001 by the IUCN Red list of Threatened species. It is not usually fished commercially but previously it has been targeted for the fins, liver and jaws.