

## Three baleen whales washed ashore along Uttara Kannada coast of Karnataka

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Three instances of stranding baleen whales were observed along the coast of Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka during July and August 2016. All strandings were recorded from the southern part of the district. The first whale was washed ashore on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at Ramangindi, Dhareshwar, 12 km south of Kumta ( $14^{\circ} 21' 710''N$  and  $74^{\circ} 24' 36''E$ ). The whale was in a decomposed condition when washed ashore. The post mortem was carried out by a veterinary doctor. It was identified as Bryde's whale *Balaenoptera edeni*. The total length of the male whale was 44 feet weighing approximately 10 tonnes (Fig. 1). The second whale washed ashore on 27.7.2016 at Hollangadde 7 km from Kumta ( $14^{\circ} 27' 432'' N$  and  $74^{\circ} 22' 615'' E$  was also in decayed condition. It was identified as baleen whale and measured 46 feet (Fig. 2). The



Fig. 1. Bryde's whale stranded at Dhareshwar

third, identified as a baleen whale (*Balaenoptera* sp.) washed ashore on 13.8.2016 at Pavinkurvaribagilu 7 km from Honnavar ( $14^{\circ} 19' 348''N$  and  $74^{\circ} 24' 811''E$ ) was in a decayed condition and its total length was 40 feet (Fig. 3). All the three whales, after post mortem by local veterinary



Fig. 2. The baleen whale stranded near Kumta

doctors at the place of stranding were buried by forest officials and Gram Panchayat authorities. Literature review on whale strandings indicated reports of two baleen whales stranded on this coast, one at Nadibag, near Ankola on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1987 and another at Hollangadde 7 km south of Kumta on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1987 (Telang, 1987, *Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv. T&E Ser.*, 78:17). Another stranding of baleen whale was recorded on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1996 at Harikantrawada, Keni of Ankola Taluk (Kakati, 1997, *Mar. Fish. Infor. Serv. T&E Ser.* 147:15). The strandings of three baleen whales within a period of one month is a rare phenomena on the Uttara Kannada coast.



Fig. 3. The baleen whale stranded near Honnavar