



Dead mammal at Mogaveerapatna was False Killer Whale: Scientists

‘This is the first time it was found stranding on State coastline’

Scientists have said that the 10-ft long whale that was washed ashore at Mogaveerapatna in Ullal, off Mangaluru, on Thursday was a False Killer Whale (*Pseudorca Crassidens*).

According to Prathibha Rohit, principal scientist and head of Indian Council of Agricultural Research’s Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Mangaluru, this is the first time a False Killer Whale was found stranding on Karnataka coastline. The earlier incidents of stranding of this mammal was reported in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

In a statement, Ms. Rohit said False Killer Whales were the largest species of the family of Delphinide that includes dolphins, killer whales, and pilot whales. This species of oceanic dolphin are common in deep tropical to warm temperature seas. They visit coastal waters but prefer remaining deep waters. They are found throughout the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.

The False Killer Whale, she said, was actually a dolphin. These dolphins have similarities with killer whale in the form of shape, number of teeth, skull shape, and size. This species is often mistaken for bottlenose dolphins, short-finned pilot whales, or long-finned pilot whales.