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Bramble sharks belong to the family Echinorhinidae. Two species of bramble sharks, *Echinorhinus brucus* (Bonnaterre, 1788) and *E. cookie* (Pitschman, 1928) are known to occur in the Indian seas. They are generally found at a depth of 450-900 m and rarely seen in shallow waters. Bramble sharks have discontinuous distribution on shelves and slopes of cold-temperate

and tropical waters.

A male bramble shark, *E. brucus* of length 144 cm, weighing 18.5 kg, was caught by a deep-sea trawler operated at a depth of 150 m off Ponnani and landed at Beypore Harbour on 12-1-2002. (Fig 1). The specimen had no anal fin and dorsal fins without any spines. The body and fins were with buckle like dermal denticles varying from

small to large and some of these are found in groups to form a large plate. Colour is dark gray above, lighter to white below with blackish blotches on sides. The liver of the specimen weighed 2.9 kg and contained 43.9% of oil. The stomach contained semi-digested material. The



Fig.1 Bramble shark *Echinorhinus brucus* landed at Beypore on 12.1.2002

morphometric measurements are given in Table 1.

This species is common in eastern Atlantic especially from North Sea to Portugal, where it is caught in bottom trawl and line gear. Bramble sharks are of little interest in fisheries. In Eastern Atlantic it is utilized for fishmeal. The liver oil has high value. Landings of bramble sharks from Indian waters were reported earlier.

Table-1 Morphometric measurements of the bramble shark in cm

Total length	144
Standard length	107
Snout to origin of first dorsal	88
Snout to origin of second dorsal	97
Snout to anterior end of orbit	10
Snout to anterior end of gill aperture	24
Snout to anterior base of pelvic fin	78
Width between pectoral and pelvic fin	32
Base of pelvic fin	14
Base of pectoral fin	10
First dorsal base width	8
Second dorsal base width	7
Inter dorsal space	8
Second dorsal origin to tip of the caudal fin	55
Width of the mouth	16
Width between inner ends of nostril	7
Horizontal diameter of orbit	4
Distance between orbits	13
Snout to tip of pectoral fin	38
Caudal fin origin to tip of upper lobe	29
Length of claspers	12
Length of liver lobe	70
Total weight	18.5 kg