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अनुसंधान संस्थान RESEARCH INSTITUTE
कोचिन, भारत COCHIN, INDIA

भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद
INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

ON TWO LARGE SPECIMENS OF DEVIL RAY *MANTA BIROSTRIS* (WALBAUM) LANDED AT TUTICORIN*

Two female specimens of devil ray locally known as 'Kombu thirukkai' measuring 3020 and 3050 mm in total length and 5670 and 5700 mm in breadth respectively were landed at Tuticorin North fish landing centre on 29.03.'93 (Fig. 1). The approximate weight of the two rays was 1375 and 1425 kg. The specimens were auctioned for Rs.550/- and Rs.600/- respectively at the fish landing centre.

Plank built boats locally called 'Vallam' were engaged for fishing with a crew of 5 to 7 fishermen. The gears used were a stationary bottom set net locally know as 'Thirukkai Valai'. The length of the net is approximately 6-7 m. The nets were made out of nylon thread with a mesh size of 45 cm and operated at a depth of 50 m.

The occurrence of this speices has been reported by D.B. James, CMFRI, Madras (*I.J.F.*, **32**, (4) : 492-494 (1985), at Karwar' by K.Y.Telang and T.B. Harikantra (MFIS, 85) and by S. Rajapackiam *et al.* (MFIS, 106). But the size of the present specimens sets the maximum recorded so far.

The following observations were made on the morphometry of the devil rays.

Particulars	Specimen No.1 in mm	Specimen No.2 in mm
Total length of the body	3020	3050
Standard length of the body	2340	2420
Width of the body	5670	5700
Inter orbital distance	1370	1375
Inter cephalic horn distance	780	785
Length of cephalic horn	680	700

Width of cephalic horn	270	300
Diameter of eye	90	95
Length of eye	70	75
Diameter of eye ball	30	32
Length of mouth	790	800
Length of tail	1290	1310
Total length of gill slits	590	600
Width of first gill slit	510	520
Width of second gill slit	530	525
Width of third gill slit	510	515
Width of fourth gill slit	460	475
Width of fifth gill slit	370	380

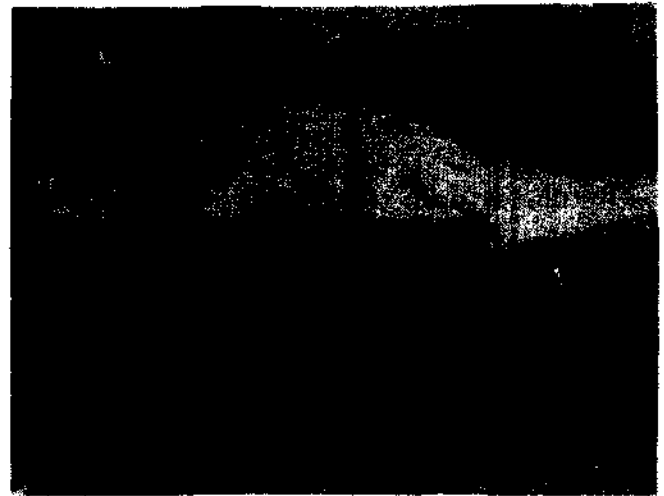


Fig. 1. Devil ray landed at Tuticorin.

*Reported by R. Gurusamy and T. S. Balasubramanian, Tuticorin Research Centre of CMFRI, Tuticorin - 628 001.