

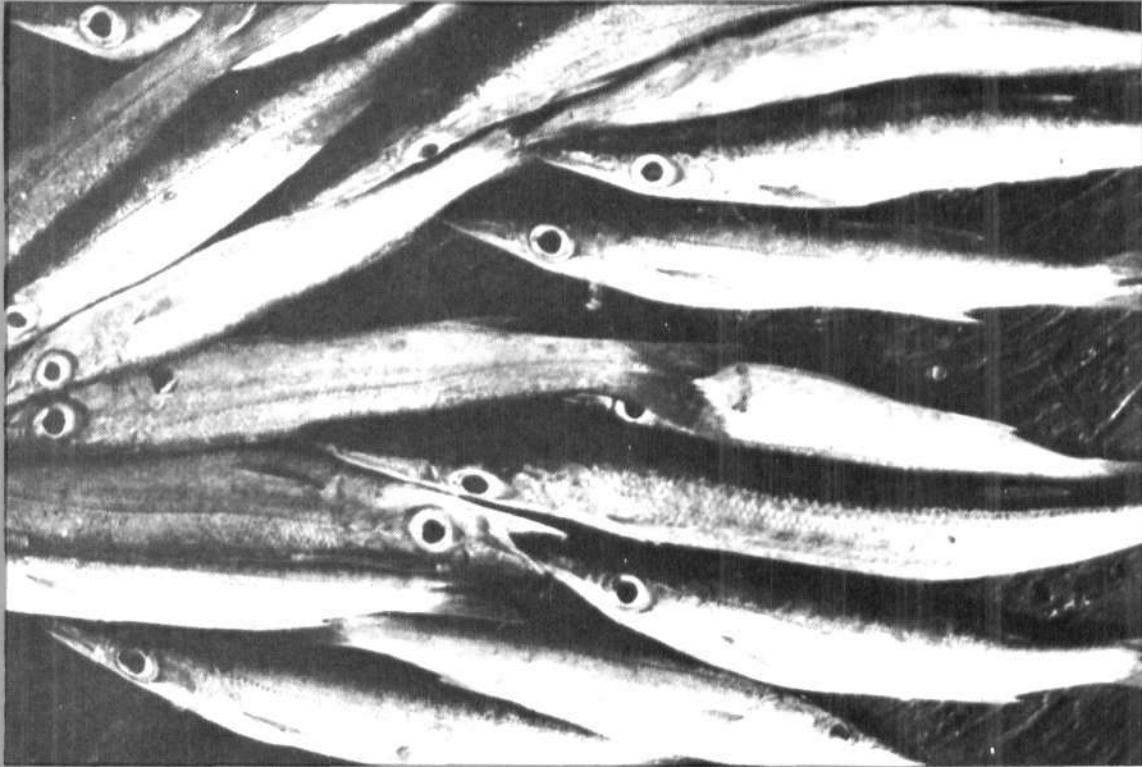


समुद्री मात्स्यकी सूचना सेवा

MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE

No. 120

MARCH, APRIL 1993



तकनीकी एवं विस्तार अंकावली TECHNICAL AND
EXTENSION SERIES

केन्द्रीय समुद्री मात्स्यकी अनुसंधान संस्थान
कोचिन, भारत CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
COCHIN, INDIA

भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद
INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

**ON AN ACCIDENTAL LANDING OF FALSE KILLER WHALE
PSEUDORCA CRASSIDENS BY DRIFT GILLNET OFF VEERPANDIANPATNAM,
GULF OF MANNAR***

False killer whale has a world wide distribution. They are oceanic in habit and move in schools. On several occasions these whales are found to move to shallow water area and get stranded or entangled in the fishing gears. The stranding, sighting and landing of false killer whales have been reported by several authors along the India coast.

An immature female False killer whale *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen) with partly or just developing dentitions measuring 2.08 m was brought to the shore at Veerapandianpatnam (Gulf of Mannar) on 6-8-1992 by drift gillnet (Paruvalai - mesh size 120-170 mm) fishermen. The fisherfolk reported that the young whale got

entangled in the drift gillnet operated for tuna at a depth of 50 m around 3 O'clock in the morning. The specimen was brought to the shore intact, and could not be disposed off due to poor demand it is not consumed by local people.

The specimen was black in colour. The eye was small. Teeth were partly developed in lower jaw and teeth gums were seen in upper jaw. Both dorsal fin and flippers were small. The caudal fluke was well developed. Locally this whale is known as "Panai meen". As the present one is small and a young one, it is called by the fishermen "Panai meen kuttij" signifies calf of a whale. It earned the name Panai meen due to its general surfacing and diving behaviour. At

*Reported by H. Mohamad Kasim, K.M.S. Amcer Hamsa and T. S. Belasubramanian, TRC of CMFRI, Tuticorin - 628 001.

TABLE 1. Measurements (in cm) of the False killer whale *Pseudorca crassidens* caught at Veerapandianpatnam (Gulf of Mannar)

Snout to tail notch (TL)	:	208.0
Snout to angle of mouth	:	21.0
Snout to eye (anterior margin)	:	24.5
Snout to blow hole	:	26.0
Snout to insertion of flipper	:	42.0
Snout to origin of dorsal fin	:	98.0
Snout to origin of genital opening	:	102.0
Snout to origin of anus	:	117.5
Length of blow hole	:	4.5
Diameter of eye (horizontal)	:	1.8
Inter orbital distance	:	34.5
Post dorsal distance	:	84.2
Length of upper jaw	:	22.0
Length of lower jaw	:	21.0
Number of teeth on upper jaw	:	No teeth, 9 teeth in gum were seen
Number of teeth on lower jaw	:	8+8 partly developed
Width of base of dorsal fin	:	26.0
Height of dorsal fin	:	24.0
Inner curvature of dorsal fin	:	19.5
Maximum width of flipper	:	11.5
Height of flipper	:	26.0
Inner curvature of flipper	:	21.0
Spread of caudal length	:	34.0
Girth of body at head	:	78.5
Girth of body at dorsal	:	88.0
Girth at caudal	:	22.0
Weight approximately	:	60 kg

times during the course of its diving it keeps its body in vertical position for a while which resembles the Palmyrah tree of this area.

Necessary morphometric measurements are presented in Table 1. An up-to-date list of stranding, landing and sighting of False killer whales along the Indian coast from 1902 is also given in Table 2.

This whale feeds mainly on fishes and cephalopods. It attains maturity at 4.25-4.5 m. Not hunted, but about 30-50 numbers are taken annually by long line fisheries in the Pacific region earlier. Since tuna fishery is at its peak off Veerapandianpatnam, this whale might have got isolated from its school and mixed up with the tuna shoal feeding on sardines and anchovies which are abundant in the shallow fishing grounds off Veerapandianpatnam. In that process of its orientation, it might have got entangled in the drift gillnet. The genital opening measured 22 cm with two parallel slits each on either sides of the genital opening measuring 6 cm (inner) and 5.5 cm (outer) in length respectively.

TABLE 2. Stranding, sighting and capture of False killer whales *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen) from the Indian sea

S. No.	Date of stranding, sighting or capture	Place	Length	Sex	Reported by and Reference	Remarks
1	14-2-1902	Trivandrum	16' 10"	—	Ferguson and Lydekker, 1903 <i>J. Bombay nat. Hist. soc.</i> , No. 15	—
2	—	Trivandrum	11' 10" & 10' 9.5"	Male & Female	Dawson, 1911 Ref. Pillay, 1926	Skeleton in Trivandrum Museum
3	1907	Rajakamangalam	—	—	Ref. Pillay, 1926	—
4	—	Thengapatnam	—	—	Ref. Pillay, 1926	—
5	27-11-1960	Pozhikara (between Cape Comorin and Colachal)	2.79 m & 3.75 m	Male & Female	Silas and Kumara Pillay, 1960	Caught alive and died after three days
6	27-1-1960	Uvari (between Cape Comorin and Tirichendur, Tamil Nadu)	—	—	Silas and Kumara Pillay, 1960	—
7	27-11-90	Alleppey, Kerala	—	—	Silas and Kumara Pillay, 1960	—
8	28-7-1975 (stranded)	Puthiappa, Calicut Kerala	4.23 m	Female	R. S. Lal Mohan et al., <i>MFIS, T & E Series</i> , No. 55, 1984	Dragged ashore, died after 2 hours
9	18-10-1975 (stranded)	Rameswaram, Gulf of Mannar	3.84 m	Male	R. Thiagrajan et al., <i>MFIS, T & E Series</i> , No. 55, 1984	Towed to the shore and died
10	27-7-1976 (caught)	Port Blair Andaman	3.96 m	—	D. B. James, <i>MFIS, T & E Series</i> , No. 55, 1984	2 numbers got entangled by gill nets.
11	7-3-1983	Camp bell bay Shastri Nagar	4.57 m & 4.87 m	Male & Female	D. B. James <i>Proc. Symp. Endangered Mar. Ant. & Mar. Parks</i> , 1985 (1)	—
12	5-7-1988 (sighted 3 specimens)	Off Mandapam, Palk Bay	Larger 4.5 m & Smaller 2.5-3m	—	P. Vedavyasa Rao et al., <i>MFIS, T & E series No. 95</i> , 1989	One larger whale and two smaller whales were sighted
13	6-8-1992	Off Veerapandianpatnam, Gulf of mannar	2.08 m	Female	H. M. Kasim, K.M.S. Ammer-Hamsa, T. S. Balasubramanian, Present report	Accidental landing by drift gillnet