



समुद्री मात्स्यकी सूचना सेवा MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE

No. 163 :

January, February, March 2000



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

2.5 km (Fig. 4-6). Thirty seven specimens were measured and the details are given in Table 1. Details of the other dolphins could not be collected for they were partly decomposed and submerged in water.

926. On the mass stranding of dolphins at Vellapatty near Tuticorin in the Gulf of Mannar

The mass stranding of dolphins is not a rare phenomenon along the Indian coasts. There are many such instances followed by detailed investigations on the stranding of dolphins in the past 40 years and are well documented. On 28.6.99 a total of 42 numbers of dolphins were stranded at Vellapatty a fishing village situated 8 km north of Tuticorin. On hearing the news the authors visited the said village and conducted an on- the- spot study.

The dolphins were identified as *Sousa chinensis* (Osbeck), the hump-back dolphin (28 Nos) and *Stenella longirostris* Gray, the spinner dolphin (9 Nos). The former one had 34-37 teeth on each side of the upper and lower jaws and the latter had 44-51 teeth on each side of the upper and lower jaws (Fig.1, 2 & 3). The stranded dolphins lay scattered all along the beach from Vellapatty village to the river mouth for about 2-

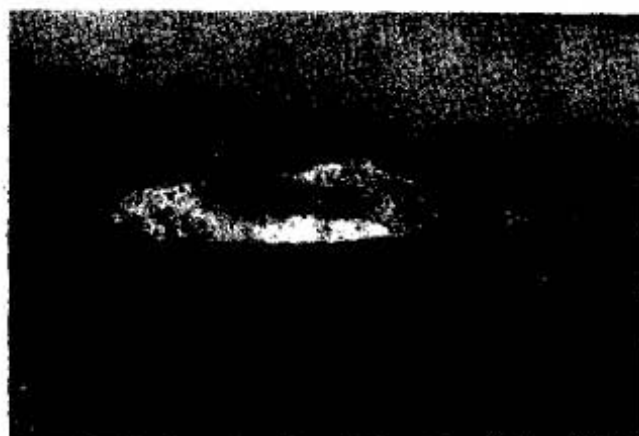


Fig. 1. Stranded dolphin *Sousa chinensis*.



Fig. 2. *Stenella longirostris*.



Fig. 3. Teeth on the upper and lower jaws of *sousa chinensis*

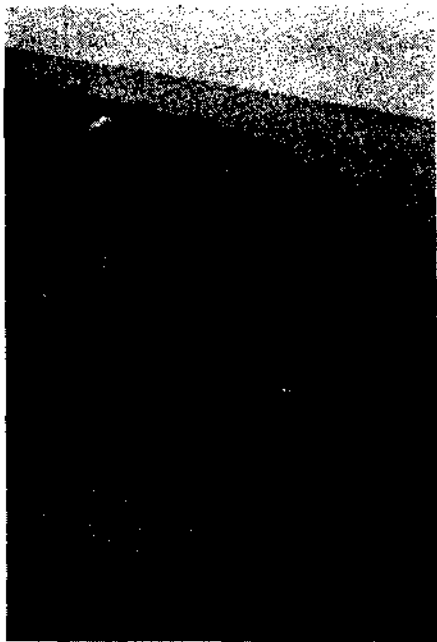


Fig. 4. Stranded dolphins at Vellapatty beach—a view.



Fig. 5. Stranded dolphins at Vellapatty beach—another view



Fig. 6. Stranded dolphins at Vellapatty beach yet an other view.

The size varied between 98 and 238 cm. In all 24 females, 10 males and 3 indeterminate specimens (young ones) were encountered. On enquiry with the local fishermen it was understood that the possible cause for mass stranding of dolphins might be due to dynamiting fishing carried out by some fishermen of the nearby fishing village.

Gulf of Mannar is notorious for fish poachers who use dynamites for fishing. After two days of the incident two fishermen were nabbed by local police with gelatin sticks and dynamites along with their fishing gear. This proved that dynamite fishing prevails around Tuticorin despite a ban promulgated by the Tamil Nadu State Government under the Fisheries Regulation Act against using dynamite in fishing.

TABLE 1. Morphometric details of the stranded dolphins

Total length (cm)	No. of teeth on each side of upper and lower jaw	Sex	Approximate weight (kg)
-------------------	--	-----	-------------------------

1. *Stenella longirostris* (spinner dolphin)

180	44+46, 59+50	F	75
227	46+46, 49+47	F	150
213	46+45, 51+48	M	135
230	44+46, 44+44	F	160
238	46+47, 48+48	F	185
216	45+46, 44+44	M	155
218	46+44, 44+46	M	165
210	46+46, 44+47	F	175
210	46+46, 48+48	M	185

2. *Sousa chinensis* (hump-back dolphin)

117	37+37, 34+34	F	25
201	34+34, 36+36	M	125
214	34+35, 35+35	F	115
194	37+37	F	90
210	34+34, 36+35	F	95
198	35+34, 34+35	F	110
202	35+34, 36+35	F	120
98	Not sprouted well	Indeterminate	20
108	"	"	18
102	"	"	22
220	36+34, 35+34	F	125
208	37+37, 37+37	F	105
217	34+35	M	120
216	34+35, 36+36	F	125

224	34+34, 34+34	F	135
192	35+34, 36+36	F	90
187	34+34, 36+37	F	90
227	35+36, 36+37	F	145
155	34+35, 35+36	M	55
205	34+36, 35+35	M	150
190	35+35, 36+34	F	95
195	34+34, 35+36	F	105
205	36+36, 35+37	M	105
165	35+35, 36+34	F	65
195	36+36, 37+36	M	70
212	36+37, 34+35	F	125
221	36+37, 34+36	F	135
189	34+35, 37+37	F	85

Reported by T.S. Balasubramanian, A Chellam, P. Muthih,
R. Gurusamy and K.Srinivasagam, TRC of CMFRI,
Tuticorin 628 001, India.
