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ON THE OCCURRENCE OF WHALE SHARK *RHINIODON TYPUS* ALONG THE KAKINADA COAST *

During the routine observations, the reporter came across, a specimen of whale shark *Rhiniodon typus* on 18th April 1984, at Dummulapeta landing centre at Kakinada (Fig. 1). The whale shark which was a female was entangled in a gill net accidentally and was towed by two non-mechanised boats.

The morphometric measurements (in cm) of the shark are given below.

Total length (from tip of snout to the tip of the upper caudal lobe)	601
Tip of snout to first gill opening	97
Tip of snout to last gill opening	142
Tip of snout to origin of first dorsal fin	270
Tip of snout to end of first dorsal fin	325
Width of head at eyes	117
Distance between the nostrils	58
Width of mouth	92
Distance between the end of first dorsal fin and the origin of second dorsal fin	70
Distance between the posterior boarder of second dorsal fin to origin of caudal fin	45
height of upper caudal lobe	152
Height of lower caudal lobe	94
Width of second dorsal fin	17
Height of first dorsal fin	77
Height of second dorsal fin	32
Length of pectoral fin	111
Height of pectoral fin	92
Base of pectoral fin	44
Height of body at pectoral origin	72
Height of body at first dorsal fin origin	69
Weight	3 tonnes
Sex	Female

The colour of the animal was grey on the dorsal side with numerous closely distributed white spots of different sizes on the body including the head. Lower lobe of caudal fin was white in colour. A mid dorsal ridge started behind the eyes and ended at the origin of the first dorsal fin. Besides, three prominent ridges were present on either side of the body. The specimen had no external injuries or parasites. As there was no demand for its flesh, the fish was towed back by two boats and dumped far away into the sea on the subsequent day.

Some more observations on the landings of the whale shark were made along the Kakinada coast and the relevant details are given in Table 1.



Fig. 1. The whale shark land along the Kakinada coast.

TABLE 1. Occurrence of whale sharks along the Kakinada coast

Date of capture	Landing centre	Type of gear employed	Total length (in m)	Sex	Depth at which occurred (in m)
13-1-1978	Kothapeta	Shore-seine	6.09	Male	5-8
13-1-1978	Yerralahpeta	Shore-seine	5.68	Female	5-8
13-1-1978	Yellalahpeta	Shore-seine	5.93	Female	5-8
23-1-1978	Perumallapuram	Shore-seine	6.61	Male	5-8
24-1-1978	Koppirivanipeta	Shore-seine	5.85	Female	5-8
26-2-1979	Yetimoga	Gill-net	7.40	Male	50
18-4-1984	Dummulapeta (Present report)	Gill-net	6.01	Female	50
21-3-1985	Kakinada Fishing Harbour	Trawl net	7.64	Male	60
05-1-1987	Kakinada Fishing Harbour	Trawl net	5.93	Female	50

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