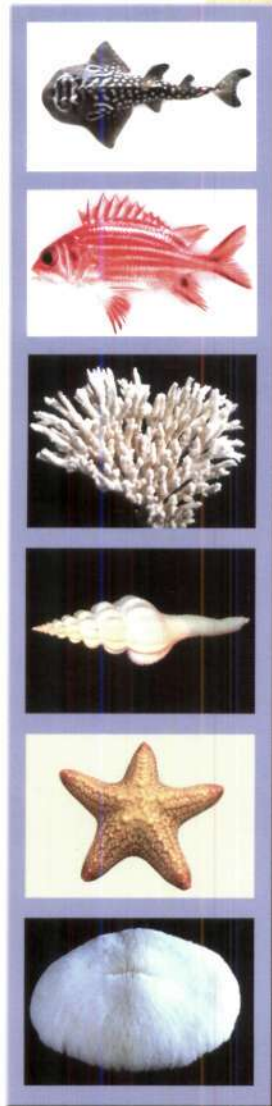




MARINE BIODIVERSITY REFERRAL MUSEUM



Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute
(Indian Council of Agricultural Research)
Cochin - 682 018, Kerala, India
www.cmfri.org.in

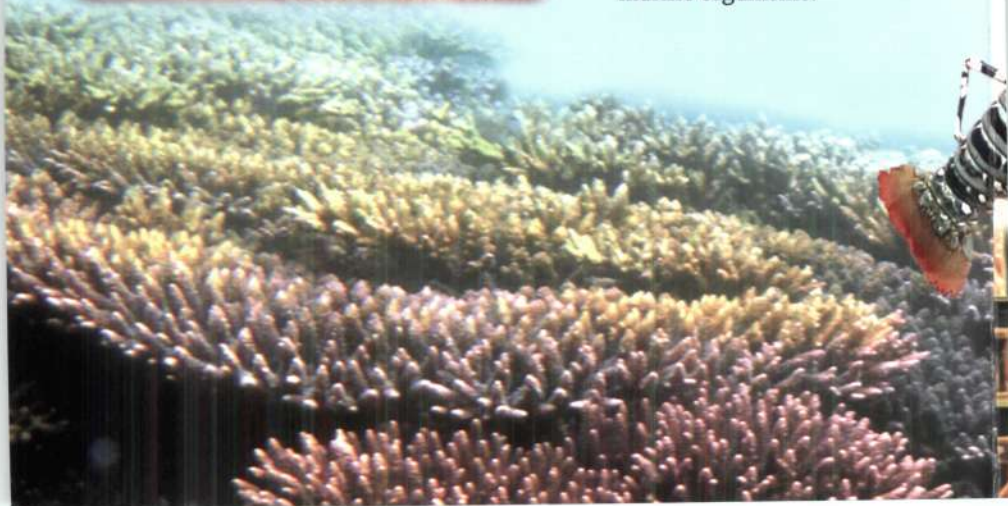
The marine environment supports and sustains an incredibly diversified array of organisms exhibiting myriad forms, shapes and characteristics. The marine resources have been explored by man since time immemorial. The search for new resources continues and the process seems to be never ending as every day species which are entirely new to science are being discovered. Therefore, it is imperative to have a repository of collection of specimens in one place, for future reference.



Inauguration of museum
by Padma Vibhushan
Prof. M. S. Swaminathan



The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) realized the importance and need for a biodiversity museum even in the early 1960s and established one at Mandapam, which was the then Headquarters of the Institute. This museum till date remains a forerunner of marine biodiversity museums in the country, with its awesome collections of marine organisms.





Sphyrna lewini



Eurypegasus draconis



Epinephelus chlorostigma



Cypselurus poecilopterus



Heterocarpus woodmasonii

India is a signatory to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD). It is mandatory for all the signatory nations to strengthen their capacity by designating national reference centres for all the organisms, including the microbes. In this backdrop, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute felt the need to establish a modernized marine biodiversity museum which would serve as a national reference facility, catering to the needs of marine biologists of the country. The realization manifested in establishing a Marine Biodiversity Referral Museum at its Headquarters in Cochin, which was inaugurated by Padma Vibhushan Prof. M. S. Swaminathan, Chairman, National Commission on Farmers, Govt. of India on 4th February, 2006. The museum houses 1541 specimen belonging to various phyla.



Gnathanodon speciosus

The museum displays diverse organisms collected from a wide spectrum of niches ranging from estuaries to coastal and deeper waters of the Indian seas. The museum is also a repository of some of the rare collections from the Antarctic region. The fossil remains of Pleistocene era add to the rarity of the collections. Besides, the splendid display of molluscan shells and corals would be any collector's delight.



Zanclus cornutus



Panulirus ornatus



Portunus pelagicus



Grammoplites scaber



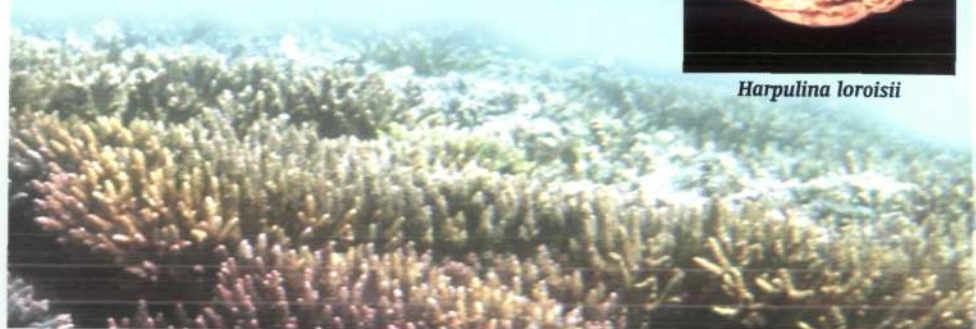
Nemipterus japonicus





The collections are arranged systematically in a group-wise manner so that the visitors can have a better understanding of the resources. Currently, the museum houses 824 specimen of fin fishes, 117 crustaceans, 249 molluscs, 45 echinoderms, 153 corals, 35 sponges, 20 ascidians, 82 sea weeds, a dolphin and 3 Antarctic birds. Besides, the mermaid's purse and the eggs and hatchlings of the Olive Ridley turtle add to the fascination of the visitors. The museum also provides a computerized database of the collections through a user-friendly MS-Access format.

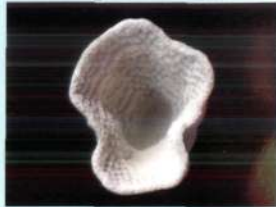
The Marine Biodiversity Referral Museum has opened up avenues for researchers of the country who are conducting research in marine sciences to preserve their valuable holotypes/paratypes of specimen for future reference. The museum is being regularly accessed by scientists, teachers, students and the general public from all over the country and also by researchers from the overseas.



Lobophytum crassum



Acropora divaricata



Turbinaria crater



Tridacna



Strombus listeri



Harpulina loroisii



CMFRI Headquarters, Cochin



A view of the Marine Biodiversity Referral Museum



Concept and design: N.K. Sanil, K. Vinod, Mary K. Manisseri, T. S. Naomi, Rani Mary George, Rekha J. Nair, K. Balachandran, P.M. Geetha & V. J. Thomas

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