Cheilosporum spectabile and Halymenia floresia were the major sea weeds and the conspicuous soft coral was Lobophytum crassa.

**Landing of ‘Flying Gurnard’ in Mumbai**

A rare fish ‘flying gurnard’ was landed by a trawler operating in 70-100 m depth in the sea off Mumbai. The species was identified as Dactyloptena peterseni (Nystrom, 1887) and it is reported for the first time along the Indian coast.

The fishes belonging to the family Dactylopteridae are commonly known as Flying Gurnards. This common name arose in the belief that with their large pectoral fin they could fly or glide for short distances. However, there is no evidence that they ever leave the water and glide for short distances. However, they have characteristic ‘Helmet like’ skull with a strong pre-opercular spine due to which many have suggested that these fishes should be called as ‘Helmet Gurnard’.

On 8th May 2009, about 20 fishes with strikingly different morphology and colour pattern were landed at Sassoon docks in Mumbai. They were caught by a trawler operating at 70-100 m depth off Mumbai. The fishers, fish vendors as well as the onlookers were awestruck to find such weird crocodile looking fishes and suspecting them as poisonous. Four specimens were brought for taxonomic identification and biological observation at the Mumbai Research Centre and details were worked out. The species D. peterseni showed absence of 2nd dorsal spine, which in other species usually occurring in the Indian waters, is present. The species belonging to the Genus Dactyloptena have no fishery importance therefore, no separate statistics are available. If caught incidentally, they are marketed fresh but rarely imported. They are mostly used in marine aquarium, especially D. orientalis.

(Reported by P.S. Salvi and V.D. Deshmukh, Mumbai Research Centre of CMFRI)

**Successful harvesting of lobsters from open sea cage at Sutrapada, near Veraval, Gujarat**

As part of the project “Open Sea Cage Culture Demonstration Farms in India” funded by NFDB, a 6 m diameter cage was fabricated and launched in January 2009.