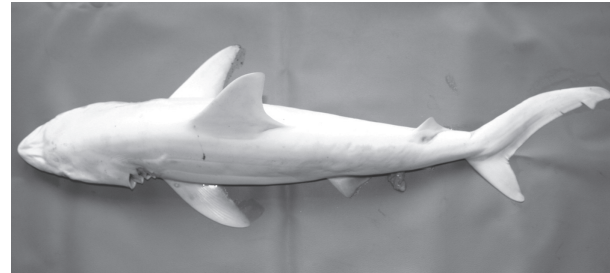


First record of albinism in the blacktip reef shark *Carcharhinus melanopterus* from Malabar coast

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Albinism is lack of pigmentation caused by an enzyme deficiency involving the metabolism of melanin during prenatal development. Among teleost fishes, albino individuals have been reported in numerous species, but in elasmobranchs it is rare. A white coloured blacktip reef shark identified as *Carcharhinus melanopterus* was caught in October, 2010 by a gillnet unit operating off Calicut at a depth of 40 m. The specimen measured 82 cm in total length and weighed 3.2 kg. Morphometric and meristic characteristics were collected and compared with those of normal specimens of the same sex and equivalent length. There were no morphometric



Albino blacktip reef shark *Carcharhinus melanopterus* caught along the Malabar coast

differences between the normal specimen and albino shark except its lack of body pigmentation.