

First record of the Oman cuttlefish, *Sepia omani* Adam and Rees, 1966 from Maharashtra waters

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Many new records of cephalopods are reported from Maharashtra waters over the years. A new entrant of cuttlefish, *Sepia omani* Adam and Rees, 1966 (Fig. 1) was observed in trawl catches at New Ferry Wharf, Mumbai. The depth of operation was about 30-40 m at 70-80 km north of Mumbai coast. The species was observed in the catch in April 2009. The dorsal mantle length of the species landed ranged from 40 to 75 mm with corresponding weight ranging from 17.66 to 59.73 g. According to Jereb *et al.* (2005) the maximum mantle length of this species is 100 mm. The occurrence of *S. omani* is reported for the first time from Maharashtra waters.

S. omani is distributed in the Northern Indian Ocean, Gulf of Oman, off Pakistan and western India (Jereb *et al.*, 2005). Some of the important distinguishing characters of *S. omani* are: the mantle is oval with the dorsal anterior margin triangular. Club sucker-bearing surface flattened with 3 or 4 suckers in transverse rows and 3 to 5 suckers in middle of the longitudinal row extremely enlarged (Fig. 2). The cuttlebone is acuminate and has a long spine (Fig. 3, 4). The dorsal surface of the mantle has dark brown transverse stripes.



Fig. 1. *Sepia omani* Adam and Rees, 1966

Twelve specimens of *S. omani* were analysed for further biological characteristics. The stomach condition was ascertained as per Kore and Joshi (1975). The Index of preponderance was estimated as suggested by Natarajan and Jhingran (1961). Majority of the guts were empty and the food was in finely macerated condition. The species seems to mainly feed on fish (80%) followed by prawn (20%). Majority of the specimens were immature. The species was not observed in the catch thereafter and the present observation appears to be a rare occurrence.



Fig. 2. Enlarged suckers on the arms of *S. omani*



Fig. 3. Cuttle bone of *S. omani* (dorsal surface)



Fig. 4. Cuttlebone of *S. omani* (ventral surface)