New record of kobi cuttle fish, *Sepia kobiensis* Hoyle, 1885 from the Bay of Bengal, off Karaikal coast of south India

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On 16th October 2012, kobi cuttle fish, *Sepia kobiensis* were caught by trawl gears operated along the Karaikal coast (lat 10°49’ 11.01” N; long: 79°43’ 79.52”E) of south India at a depth of around 100-200 m. The specimens were identified as *Sepia kobiensis* Hoyle, 1885 based on the identification characters as described in Jereb and Roper 2005 (Fig. 1 and 2). This species has not been reported earlier and therefore considered as a new record to the inshore waters of Bay of Bengal along Karaikal coast. It is a demersal cuttlefish inhabiting up to 160 m depth and has been found to occur in Mumbai waters along the west coast of India. The occurrence of the species in the fishery along Mumbai coast is highly seasonal, constituting a fishery during October-December with peak landings in November.

**Taxonomic position and distribution**


The species is known to be distributed worldwide in Western Pacific: South China Sea, East China Sea, and Yellow Sea to southern and central Japan (Jereb and Roper 2005).

**Description**

The mantle is elliptical with a width 45-50% of the mantle length. The antero-dorsal margin is acutely and triangularly protruded, while the ventral margin is gently concave. The fins are narrow, starting below the mantle opening and is about 80% of mantle length. The funnel is slender, reaches the base of the ventral arms and the funnel valve is short and conical in shape. Swimming membrane is poorly developed in the ventral arms. The arms are short, attenuate and sub-equal in size. The arm suckers are globular quadric serial in size with those in the median rows larger than the marginal ones. Left arm in males is hectocotylised and suckers are greatly reduced in size. The oral surface is hollowed out and transversely ridged. Tentacles are long and thin, tentacular club short and narrow. Tentacular suckers are arranged in eight rows transversely with five suckers of the third longitudinal row much larger than the others. Swimming keel is broad extending proximally beyond base of club and the protective membrane is poorly developed.
The cuttlebone is lanceolate and large in the striated zone area (Fig. 3a and b). Shell taper towards the posterior end, acuminate at the anterior end and has a very narrow chitinous margin. The dorsal surface has faint median rib, whereas the ventral surface has a median groove forming a broader depression in the anterior part of the loculus. The inner cone has narrow lateral limbs and the posterior portion is elongated. A cup-like process formed by the outer cone surrounds the inner cone. The spine is long and directed upwards. The animal is dark brown in colour with the exception only in the periphery and the fins, where the chromatophores are very minute and distally placed with prominent small dots on the rim. The ventral side is faint pinkish in colour due to fewer chromatophores developed.

Revival of fishery of the thinspine sea catfish, *Arius tenuispinis* at Mumbai, Maharashtra

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Catfish landings by trawlers in Mumbai comprise of three major species viz., *Arius dussumieri*, *Osteogeneiosus militaris* and *Arius caelatus* with *A. dussumieri*, forming approximately 30-35% of the landings. However, of late the landings of *Arius tenuispinis* has showed an unusual upward trend at New Ferry Wharf, Mumbai and the species is observed in the catch almost throughout the year. Analysis of *A. tenuispinis* catch data from New Ferry Wharf during the period 1987 to 2012 clearly indicates collapse of the fishery of this species, showing signs of subsequent revival. The landings of this species reduced drastically from 352 t in 1987 and totally disappeared from the catch during the period 2000-2004. From 2005 onwards, there seems to be a gradual revival of the fishery (Fig. 1) (Raje and Vivekanandan, 2008). A similar decline of *A. tenuispinis* was also observed at Visakhapatnam (Lakshmi and Rao, 1992). The percentages of *A. tenuispinis* in the total catfish landings during this period decreased from 12.4% (1987) to nil (2004) and then a gradual increase to 27.3% (2012) indicating a total revival of its fishery in Maharashtra waters. The species composition during this period was: *A. dussumieri* (32.8%), *Osteogeneiosus militaris* (27.5%), *A. tenuispinis* (9.2%), *Tachysurus caelatus* (9.2%), *T. thalasinus* (10.9%), *T. jella* (3.2%), *T. sona* (4.4%), *T. serratus* (1.2%) and other catfish species (1.6%).

On 28th September 2009, an unusual heavy landing of *A. tenuispinis*, to the tune of about 450 t was observed at New Ferry Wharf (Fig. 2). The fishing was carried out at 30-40 m depth, 70-80 km off north-west coast. Length measurements were...