Fig. 2. *Arius tenuispinis* landed at New Ferry Wharf, Mumbai.

taken for 120 specimens and the total length ranged from 283 to 486 mm with the corresponding weight ranging from 286 to 998 g. The maximum number of specimens belonged to the size range 420-429 mm (Fig. 3). The catch fetched ₹ 10 per kg at the landing centre. Fifty four specimens of *A. tenuispinis* were analysed for further biological studies. It was observed that 70% of the guts were in ‘trace’ and ‘empty’ condition. The species seems to mainly feed on ‘fish’ (43%) followed by ‘Acetes’ (35.4%), other crustacean species (21.5%) and molluscs (0.1%). The sex-ratio observed was 1:1 and all the specimens analysed were in ‘immature’ condition.

The revival of this resource over the years needs to be studied further. In the year 2009, the landings seems to have increased substantially. Introduction of new type of gear, like bottom trawl for the capture of *A. tenuispinis* could have led to the increased exploitation of the species.

Record of *Octopus lobensis* Castellanos and Menni, 1969 from Maharashtra waters

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Octopuses popularly called as ‘devilfish’ are caught mainly as bycatch in the bottom trawl. Due to the growing demand for octopus in the international market, octopus fishery is catching up in Maharashtra. The main fish landing centers for octopus at Mumbai are New Ferry Wharf and Sassoon Docks. Octopus contribute 3% towards the total cephalopod catch in Mumbai (CMFRI, 2008). *Cistopus indicus* dominates the octopus fishery in Mumbai waters (Sundaram and Sarang, 2004). The other species of octopus recorded from Mumbai waters are *Octopus membranaceus*, *Octopus dollfusi* and *Octopus aegina*.

With the increased exploitation and expansion of fishing grounds, new records of cephalopods are reported from various places all along the Indian coast. Ommen (1971 and 1977) identified few species of octopus along the west coast of India. Thirty eight commercially important species have been reported from the Indian seas (Silas *et al.*, 1985), however targeted fishery for octopus is lacking.

A new entrant to the octopus fishery in Mumbai waters is *Octopus lobensis* Castellanos and Menni, 1969 (Fig. 1). This octopus is commonly known as ‘lobed octopus’. The species was observed in trawl landings at New Ferry Wharf. The depth of operation is about 30-40 m at 70-80 km off north-west coast. The occurrence of *O. lobensis* is reported for the first time from this region. Kripa *et al.* (2000) recorded...
the occurrence of this species from Kerala waters and is the second dominant species in the fishery contributing 12% of the total octopus catch. The species entered the fishery in Mumbai waters probably from 2006 onwards and present in the fishery almost throughout the year with peak period of abundance during January-April.

*O. lobensis* is a benthic species occurring in shallow waters down to 60 to 80 m depth. They are found in south-west Atlantic region (Roper et al., 1984). The body of *O. lobensis* is smooth and bulky and the male is larger and heavier than females. Mantle is broad, short and globular with its width almost equal to length. Arms are broad, moderately long and very robust at bases. The arm lengths of twelve specimens were measured to arrive at the arm formula and it was observed that *O. lobensis* has an arm formula of 1 > 2 > 3 > 4. The 3rd left arm of males is shorter as compared to females of the corresponding size. The species has a striking similarity with *Cistopus indicus* but for its stout body and comparatively shorter arm lengths.

According to Roper et al. (1984) the maximum mantle length of the species is 100 mm. However, the mantle length of the species landed at Mumbai ranged from 65 to 190 mm with weight ranging from 213 to 1120 g. The mantle length ranged from 35 to 136 mm and weighed 5 to 400 g in Kochi waters (Kripa et al., 2000).

Thirty specimens of *O. lobensis* were analysed for biological studies. Majority had guts with ‘trace’ and ‘empty’ condition and the food was in finely macerated state. The species seems to mainly feed on ‘fish’ (66.7%) followed by ‘prawn’ (15.2%), squids (1.6%) and 16.5% was digested matter. Unlike other octopods, where males are more in number, this species has a sex ratio of 1:1.5. About 50% of the specimens analysed for the maturity studies were in ‘mature condition’ followed by ‘gravid’ (37.5%) and very few ‘immature’ specimens (12.5%) were present. The fecundity of the species ranged from 700 to 4660 numbers and the ova diameter ranged from 1-3 mm. Some octopods are known to make seasonal migrations, which are influenced by breeding activity. It seems that in all probability this species may have come to nearshore waters for breeding.

Octopus resources are almost totally exported and *O. lobensis* fetches high price owing to its bigger size and better quality of flesh. The price range between ₹ 50-70 per kg at the landing centre.

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**New distributional record of zoned paper bubbleshell sea slug,**

*Hydatina zonata* (Gastropoda: Hydatinidae) from the Bay of Bengal, off Chennai

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Two specimens of the paper bubbleshell, *Hydatina zonata* were observed in trawl landings at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour, collected at a depth of 50 - 70 m (clayey sediment) off Chennai coast (13°06'59.50"N 80°17'38.99"E). *H. zonata* was noticed in trawl bycatch along with several other fish species. Both were live specimens and vermivorous in nature. *H. zonata* is a rare form of sea slug and known to be endemic to the Indo-Pacific region. The species was earlier reported from India from Pamban, Kundukkal Point and Mandapam (Satyamurti, 1952) along the south-east coast, and once from Gujarat (Menon et al., 1961) along the north-west coast. Ganesh et al. (2012) reported paper bubble shell, *H. zonata*...