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**_.

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**Fig. 1. **_**Octopus lobensis**_ Castellanos and Menni, 1969
from the north-east coast of India at a depth of 30 m (silty sediment) off Koyyam in Andhra Pradesh where the river Vamsadhara joins Bay of Bengal. Though a few reports on empty *H. zonata* washed ashore are available (Satyamurti, 1952), the present finding is the first record of live *H. zonata* from the Bay of Bengal off Chennai coast.

**Systematics**

Class : Gastropoda Cuvier, 1797  
Subclass : Ophisthobranchia Milne-Edwards, 1848  
Order : Cephalaspidea Fischer, 1883  
Family : Hydatinidae  
Genus : *Hydatina* Schumacher, 1817  
Species : *zonata* (Lightfoot, 1786)

**Shell description and morphometric measurements**

Shell is ovoid, fragile and thin, light straw coloured with dark brown broad spiral band enclosing white, one near its sunken spire, another in the middle of the body whorl and third one at its lower part. Suture is deep, aperture broad, thin, sharp and surface smooth. Foot is very large, broad and extends beyond the shell while moving. Cephalic shield has two pairs of anterior lobes. Rhinophores are long and broad. The border of the foot, rhinophores, and cephalic shield are margined with white colours, followed by dark chocolate and gradually lighter in the middle. Lower part of the foot is light brown in colour. Shell length 41-45 mm; width 23-35 mm; weight 8-15 g.

*H. zonata* occur at depths between 50 and 70 m in fine sand. The species was reported earlier as *Hydatina velum* (Gmelin, 1791) which is its synonym.

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**Large sized oilfish Ruvettus pretiosus** (Cocco, 1833) ever recorded from Gulf of Mannar, south-east coast of India

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*Ruvettus pretiosus* belonging to the Family Gempylidae of perciform fishes is closely related to Scombridae. Gempylidae fishes are commonly called as snake mackerels or escolars and this family has 16 genus and 24 valid species. *R. pretiosus* is one of the large sized fishes with the maximum record of 300 cm total length (Nakamura and Parin, 1993). It is bentho-pelagic, reported to be distributed along the tropical and temperate seas of the world. Venu and Kurup (2006) reported the occurrence of snake