

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*

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.

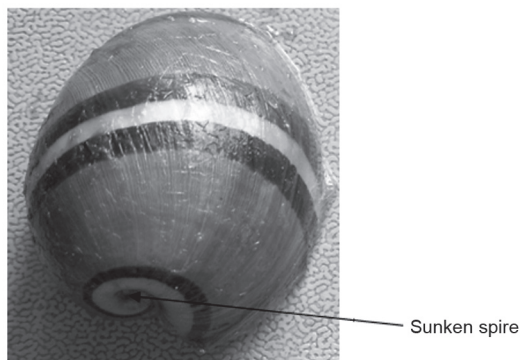


Fig. 1. Dorsal view of *Hydatina zonata* landed at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour

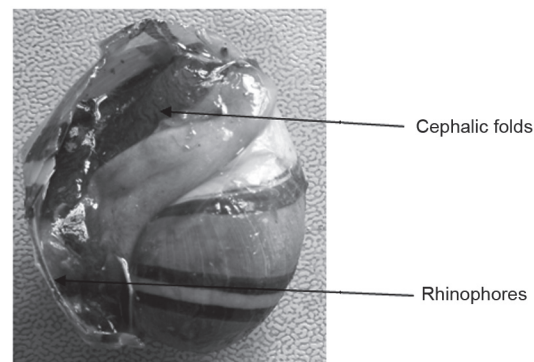


Fig. 2. Ventral view of *Hydatina zonata* landed at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour