Landing of a tagged black marlin *Istiompax indica* (Cuvier, 1832) at Tharuvaikulam, Tuticorin

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In Tharuvaikulam (8°53′42″N, 78°09′56.6″E), Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, India, there is a regular drift gill net (mesh size 120-140 mm) fishery targeting mainly tunas and seer fishes. The fishing trip is multiday (5 to 6 days) and the operation is only during night, with normally one haul per day. In this gear, bill fishes are also landed being entangled and not gilled. Normally four species of billfishes are landed such as *Istiophorus platypterus*, *Tetrapterus angustirostris*, *Istiompax indica* and *Xiphias gladius*. On 1.2.13, two numbers of *I. indica* was landed along with other fishes. Out of this two, one was with a tag which was on the body immediately below the dorsal fin. This was actually caught on 31.1.13 off Mandapam (8°30′04″N; 79°14′06″E) where the depth was more than 300 m.

The size of the fish was: Body length (From tip of lower jaw to fork length): 268 cm, Eye - fork length: 237 cm. The fish was released by African Billfish Foundation on 3.2.2012 at 3°41′S; 40°12′E (near Tanzania). The days at liberty was nearly one year and this is the first report of a tagged bill fish recovered from Indian waters.

**Fig. 1.** Black marlin with the tag

**Fig. 2.** The tag with the number and other details

Largest black marlin, *Istiompax indica* (Cuvier, 1832) landed at Tharuvaikulam, Tuticorin

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Black marlin is a highly migratory, large oceanic apex predator that inhabits tropical and subtropical waters of the Indian and Pacific oceans. Little is known on the biology of black marlin in the Indian Ocean. In the present observation, a black marlin landed on 25.3.2013 by drift gill net operated from...
Tharuvaikulam landing centre is reported. The fishing was conducted off Mandapam at a depth beyond 300 m. There is a regular landing of black marlin by drift gill net here which are actually entangled and not gilled. The fish measured 422 cm total length, 344 cm body length or Lower jaw fork length (LJFL) and 292 cm Eye-Fork length (EFL). Other size groups landed on the same day had LJFL and EFL as: 217 cm, 183 cm; 280 cm, 245 cm; 223 cm, 200 cm and 230 cm, 197 cm respectively.

In the Indian Ocean, documented maximum size for females is 306 cm LJFL and for males, it is 280 cm LJFL (IOTC-2012-SC15-20(E)). The size range of black marlin taken by commercial long line fisheries is 150 to 310 cm (mostly 170 to 210 cm) LJFL in the western Indian Ocean and 170 to 310 cm (mostly 185 to 240 cm) LJFL in the Coral Sea (FAO Fisheries synopsis No.125, Vol.5. Bill fishes of the world). It can be seen that the present specimen is larger than the recorded sizes from elsewhere.

Four species of jellyfishes recorded from Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar

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Four species of scyphozoan jellyfishes have been recorded from Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar viz., Cassiopea cf. andromeda (Forsskål, 1775), Chrysaora caliparea (Reynaud, 1830) [species inquirenda], Mastigias cf. papua (Lesson) and Rhopilema cf. hispidum. The species Cassiopea cf. andromeda has been recorded from Tuticorin coast and the remaining three species have been recorded from Mandapam and Thiruppalaikudi coast of Palk Bay. The Rhopilema sp. is an edible jellyfish and are commercially harvested for export market. All the species of the genus Chrysaora can inflict painful stings and cause severe scars.