

Note on rare landings of Giant stingray *Plesiobatis daviesi* from Gulf of Mannar, South east India

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Giant stingray/Giant stingaree/Davies' stingray/Deep sea sting ray, *Plesiobatis daviesi* (Wallace 1967), belongs to a monotypic family Plesiobatidae. This species has patchy

distribution in the Indo-Pacific covering South Africa, India, Philippines to Australia and Hawaii (Last and McEachran, 2016) in the demersal realm of continental shelf and slopes,



Dorsal and ventral side of the fish

up to 680 m deep (Compagno and Last 1997). Listed as Least Concern (LC) of the IUCN red list of threatened species (White *et al.*, 2015). The present study reports details of two female giant stingray caught in hook and line by artisanal fishers of Pamban Island and morphometric measurements made. The two samples of giant stingrays were caught by hook and line operated from a motorized boat (12m OAL) fitted with 20 hp engine operated at a depth of 300 m, 55 km away from Pamban on 4th September 2022. Fishers usually remove stings on board the vessel itself to get rid of hazards during handling and the smaller one was without tail. As the reported largest *P. daviesi* from India, it had 120 cm DW and 215 cm TL. Pectoral fin (except posterior margin), antero-lateral edges and adjacent area of dorsal were pink, while posterior margin of pectoral and entire pelvic fins were deep purple. Central disc and tail were grey and colour of smaller specimen varied distinctly from the bigger specimen.

Table 1. Morphometrics of *P. daviesi* recorded previously and present study

<i>Plesiobatis daviesi</i>				
Morphometric measurements (cm)	Nair and Soundararajan, 1973	Akhilesh <i>et al.</i> , 2009	Present specimen large	Present Specimen small
Disc width	56.9	50.3	120	74.5
Disc length	57.1	53	118	70
Tail length	49.6	51.5	97	-
Total length	53.4	156	215	70
Length of pelvic fin	-	6.7	18.5	10
Width of pelvic fin	-	4.6	15	7.2
Eye diameter	2.0	1.6	2.8	1.2
Spiracle (inner)	4.1	3.2	7.8	4.9

<i>Plesiobatis daviesi</i>				
Morphometric measurements (cm)	Nair and Soundararajan, 1973	Akhilesh <i>et al.</i> , 2009	Present specimen large	Present Specimen small
Inter spiracle space (anterior)	9.5	8.4	17.8	11.2
Inter orbital space	6.9	7.3	16.5	10
Pre-orbital	19.1	17.9	41	21.8
Mouth width	5.9	6.4	14.5	9
Width of nostril	-	-	18	11
Snout tip to nostril	-	-	32	20
Distance from 1 st gill to snout tip	26.4	24.8	54.5	33
Distance from 2 nd gill to snout tip	-	-	58.2	34.5
Distance from 3 rd gill to snout tip	-	-	61	37
Distance from 4 th gill to snout tip	-	-	64	38.2
Distance from 5 th gill to snout tip	-	29.29	67	39.5
Space between 1 st gillpair	12.73	13.5	31.5	19
Space between 2 nd gillpair	-	-	30	18.5
Space between 3 rd gillpair	-	-	26.5	16
Space between 4 th gillpair	-	-	22	14
Space between 5 th gillpair	7.86	7.7	19.2	11
Length of 1 st gill opening	-	2.04	3.7	3
Length of 2 nd gill opening	-	2.03	4.9	3
Length of 3 rd gill opening	-	-	4.9	3
Length of 4 th gill opening	-	-	4.9	3
Length of 5 th gill opening	-	1.32	3.7	2.5
Distance between 1 st and 2 nd gills	-	-	4.6	2
Distance between 2 nd and 3 rd gills	-	-	3.8	2.5
Distance between 3 rd and 4 th gills	-	-	3.8	2.5
Distance between 4 th and 5 th gills	-	-	3.7	2
Vent	-	-	7.5	4.5