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भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद
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ON THE OCCURRENCE OF WHALE SHARK OFF SOUTH ANDHRA COAST*

The whale shark *Rhincodon typus* known to occur in the Indian seas is occasionally caught by gill-nets, purse-seines and trawls. A male whale shark measuring 4.45 m in length caught in a trawlnet on 24-9-1992 at a depth of about 40m off Antharvedi Palli Palem, nearly 100 km south of Kakinada was landed at Kakinada on the next day (Fig. 1). The various body measurements taken are given below. On enquiry, the fishermen informed that some quantities of prawns, sciaenids, ribbonfish, goatfish and others were also caught in the net but due to severe damage caused to the net by the whale shark, the catch was lost. As there was also no demand for the meat or fins, the whale shark was discarded on the beach. The fish is locally called as *pamparameenu*.



Fig 1. Whale shark *Rhincodon typus* landed at Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh.

Details of the whale shark landed at Kakinada on 25-9-1992 :

1. Locality : Antharvedi Palli Palem
2. Time and method of capture : 18.00 hrs, by trawl net
3. Sex : Male
4. Weight : About 1,000 kg
5. Contents of stomach: Could not be examined

6. Gill parasites	: Nil
7. External parasites	: Nil
8. Measurements (cm)	
a. Total length	: 445
b. Standard length	: 432
c. Head length	: 130
d. Girth of body (maximum)	: 275
e. Width of mouth from angle to angle	: 80
f. Vertical height of :	
i. First dorsal fin	: 39
ii. Second dorsal fin	: 17
iii. Anal fin	: 16
g. Length of caudal fin along upper margin	: 144
h. Snout to origin of :	
i. First dorsal fin	: 248
ii. Second dorsal fin	: 364
iii. Pectoral fin	: 135
iv. Pelvic fin	: 310
v. Anal fin	: 400
i. Inter space between :	
i. First and Second dorsals	: 122
ii. Anal and caudal	: 75
iii. Pectoral and pelvic origins	: 190
iv. Pelvic and anal origins	: 80
j. Length of pectoral fin along outer margin	: 100
k. Length of pelvic fin along outer margin	: 40
l. Length of second dorsal	: 27
m. Length of first dorsal	: 58
n. Length of clasper	: 15

There is only one earlier report on the landing of whale shark along Andhra coast. A 6.1m long specimen was landed at Visakhapatnam in May, 1965.

*Prepared by : P. Ramalingam, K. R. Somayajulu, K. Dhana Raju, N. Burayya, V. Abbulu, Ch. Ellithathyya and T. Nageswara Rao, Kakinada Research Centre of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kakinada - 533 004.