

A RECORD OF AN UNUSUALLY LARGE TIGERSHARK,  
*CALEOCERDO ARTICUS* (FABR.), FROM OFF VERAVAL

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ABSTRACT

An unusually big specimen of a Tiger shark, *Galeocerdo articus* (Fabr.), measuring 378 cm is recorded from Veraval, and a brief description of the specimen is given.

The Tigershark, *Galeocerdo articus* (Fabr.), locally known as "Kaida Koo" is one of the giant sharks of Indian waters and is considered to be ferocious. It is reported to attain a maximum length of 4.5 meters (Misra 1955) and to occur on both the coasts of India (Sarangdhar 1943; Devanesen and Chidambaram 1948). Though it is said to be common on west coast during November-December, so far there has been no report on its occurrence from the north Gujarat coast.

On October 1982 one specimen measuring 378 cm and weighing nearly a tonne was caught in a drift net off Veraval. Young ones of the species, measuring on an average one meter in size, have been observed to land commonly off Veraval by both drift net and trawl.

The various morphometric measurements of the adult specimen are presented below along with those of a commonly occurring young one for comparison. The measurements are in cm.

	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Young one</i>
Total length	378.0	101.5
Length of head	103.0	22.0
Maximum depth of fish	77.0	13.5
Eye diameter	4.0	2.0
Inter-orbital space	49.0	10.5
Cleft of mouth	72.0	10.5
Predorsal distance	110.0	28.5
Height of first dorsal fin	41.5	10.5
Base of first dorsal fin	31.0	8.0
Height of second dorsal fin	18.0	4.0
Base of second dorsal fin	16.0	3.5
Height of pectoral fin	56.5	12.5
Base of pectoral fin	19.0	5.0
Height of pelvic fin	22.0	4.0
Base of pelvic fin	21.0	4.0
Height of anal fin	24.0	5.0
Base of anal fin	15.0	3.5
Length of caudal fin	89.0	32.0
Height of caudal fin	45.0	10.0

Teeth large, flat, triangular and obliquely serrated on both the edges; 24 in number on both the jaws. The teeth on lower jaw smaller than those on the upper jaw. The tiger shark is known to feed indiscriminately and voraciously on fishes, prawns, crabs, turtle, rotting carcasses, etc. Even remains of human body have been reported in the gut contents of this species, indicating it to be a man-eater (Aravindakshan 1981). However, the present specimen was observed to have an empty stomach. The weight of liver was approximately 50 kg. This specimen was a female and there were no embryos in the uterus. However, smaller females of this species had been observed to contain as much as 43 embryos in the uterus (Devanesen and Chidambaram 1948).

Though the species do not constitute any considerable portion of the shark landings as in the case of other bigger sharks, viz., *Carcharinus melanopterus* and *C. limbatus*, the occurrence of *G. articus* has not been altogether rare.

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