

Kaleidoscope

Stranding of the Risso's dolphin in the Gulf of Mannar

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A dead female dolphin identified as Risso's dolphin, *Grampus griseus* (Fig.1) was found on the shore at Vedhalai, Gulf of Mannar near Mandapam, Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu on 5th May 2019. 26 morphometric parameters recorded are given below (Table 1).

The specimen was relatively robust with unique body, head was blunt without distinct beak. Compared to other dolphins the forehead was bulging with relatively more squarish profile than the rounded melon. A prominent vertical crease on the front side of the melon was noticed. The dorsal fin was relatively tall and slender with a pointed tip. The flippers were relatively long. The upper jaw had only one pair of worn teeth and the lower jaw had six pairs of worn-down teeth. With the available morphometric information including the absence of beak, blunt-head and its overall size, with its bulk ahead of the dorsal fin, it was identified

as *Grampus griseus*. The carcass was in an advanced stage of decomposition and necropsy findings did not reveal any abnormalities.

Table 1: Morphometric measurements of the Risso's dolphin

Morphometric parameters	Measurement (cm)
Length, tip of forehead to angle of mouth	: 15
Length, tip of forehead to blowhole	: 25
Length, tip of forehead to center of eye	: 22
Length, tip of forehead to anterior insertion of dorsal fin	: 115
Length, tip of forehead to tip of dorsal fin	: 127
Length, tip of forehead to fluke notch (total length)	: 232
Length, tip of forehead to anterior insertion of flipper	: 43
Length, tip of forehead to center of umbilicus	: 101
Length, tip of forehead to center of genital aperture	: 148
Length, tip of forehead to center of anus	: 157
Length, notch of flukes to center of anus	: 60
Length of flipper: anterior insertion to tip	: 44
Length of flipper: axilla to tip	: 29
Width of flipper: Maximum	: 16
Fluke span	: 58
Width of flukes	: 28
Depth of fluke notch	: 5
Height of dorsal fin	: 31
Width of dorsal fin	: 20
Base of dorsal fin	: 37
Girth: axillary	: 94
Girth: maximum (at anterior insertion of dorsal fin)	: 136
Girth: at the level of anus	: 51
Blubber thickness: ventral	: 2
Total number of teeth on one side of upper jaw	: 1
Total number of teeth on one side of lower jaw	: 6



Fig. 1. Carcass of Risso's dolphin in Gulf of Mannar