



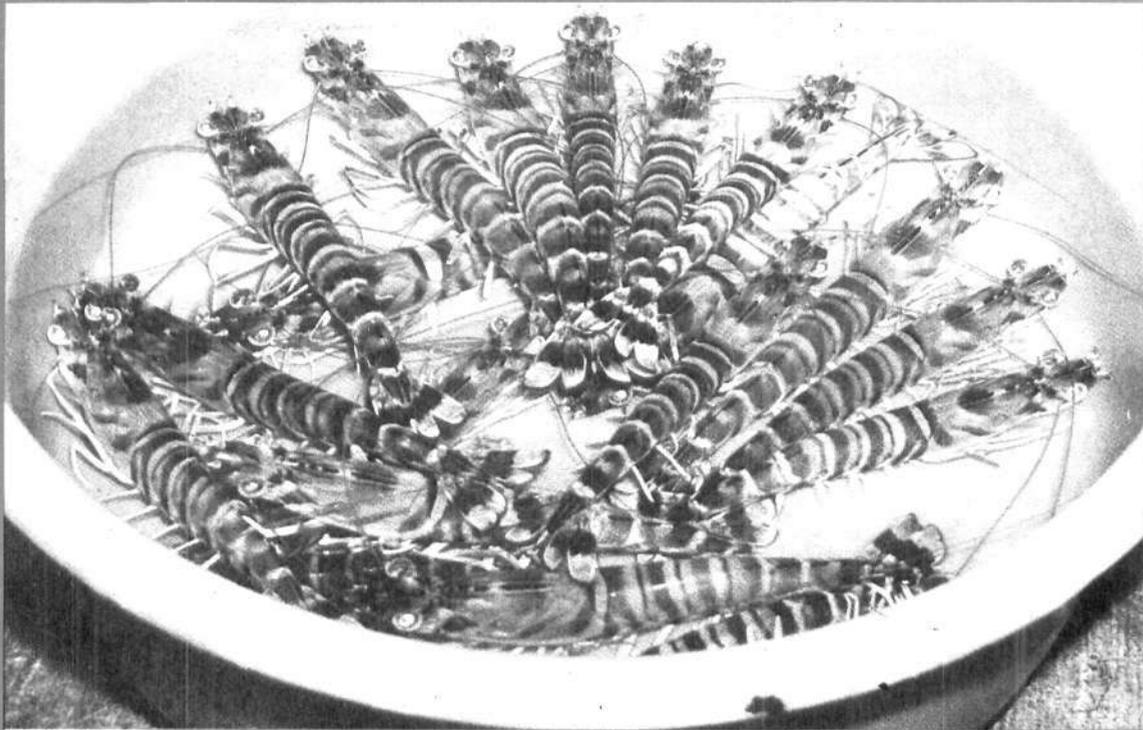
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831 On a whale shark *Rhincodon typus* landed at Mangalore, Dakshina Kan-nada coast

One whale shark *Rhincodon typus* Smith was accidentally caught by a multiday trawl boat on 27-3-1997 at a depth of 30 m off Murdeshwara, about 160 km north of Mangalore. The shark got entangled in the trawl net and was brought to the Mangalore Fisheries Harbour on the same day. The shark measured 550 cm in total length and weighed about 1.5 t. It was purchased by a local fish merchant for Rs. 750/-. Since the shark was very heavy, the fishermen could not lift it out of the water, so it was cut into pieces in the knee-deep water. Only the liver and fins were collected and the other parts of the body were discarded as there was no demand for its flesh locally. The liver weighed approximately 100 kg and was taken for oil extraction. The gut contents of the whale shark were examined. It consisted of a large number of smaller pelagics like *Caranx kalla*, few numbers of *Caranx gymnotethoids*, *Megalaspis cordyla*, semi-digested food materials and digestive fluids. This indicates that the whale shark is piscivorous. The first dorsal fin measured 78 cm in length and 57 cm in breadth. Since the body was cut into several pieces in water itself other detailed measurements could not be taken. The whale shark was a juvenile male.

This is the ninth record of landing of whale shark along the Mangalore coast.

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