

## Rare occurrence of the bramble shark *Echinorhinus brucus* (Bonnaterre, 1788) along the Veraval coast

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A spiny shark or bramble shark *Echinorhinus brucus* (Bonnaterre, 1788) was caught in trawl operated near Pakistan border off Veraval coast (Fig. 1). *E. brucus* is exclusively marine, inhabiting deep waters. It is also called sluggish bottom shark, sometimes occurring in shallow waters, especially on the continental and insular shelves and upper slopes upto 900 m depth.



Fig. 1. Spiny shark, *Echinorhinus brucus* caught by trawlers at Veraval

Bramble sharks have dorso-ventrally compressed head (Fig. 2) and the body is long cylindrical, covered with scattered, large protruding thorn-like denticles two small spineless dorsal fins placed far back on the body just before the tail and five pairs of gill slits (Fig. 3). It has no anal fin and has thick caudal peduncle (tail stalk). Teeth are star-cusped and similar in both the jaws. The skin of its back and sides is sparsely strewn in large scales with either one or two sharp points. The colour of the species is dark grey with metallic reflections without darker blotches. They can reach a maximum length of 3.94 m (13 ft) and weigh 500 lbs (227 kg). There are records on the occurrence of this species in the



Fig. 2. Dorso-ventrally compressed head of *Echinorhinus brucus* with denticles

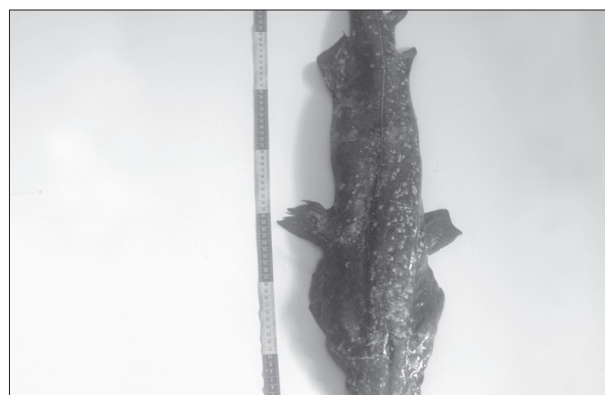


Fig. 3. Body of bramble shark covered with denticles

Western Atlantic, Mediterranean, Pacific Ocean, Australia and New Zealand. The phylogenetic position of this species is as follows:

Phylum	:	Chordata
Class	:	Chondrichthys
Subclass	:	Elasmobranchii
Order	:	Squaliformes
Family	:	Echinorhinidae
Genus	:	<i>Echinorhinus</i>
Species	:	<i>E. brucus</i>

Length measurements of bramble shark landed at Veraval:

Total length	: 87.5 cm	1 <sup>st</sup> dorsal to 2 <sup>nd</sup> dorsal	: 4.5 cm
Total weight	: 2.63 kg	Pelvic to pectoral	: 18.5 cm
Length from snout to 1 <sup>st</sup> dorsal	: 52.5 cm	Pelvic to 1 <sup>st</sup> dorsal	: 24 cm
Snout to pelvic	: 49.5 cm	Pelvic to tail notch	: 11.5 cm
Snout to orbit	: 7 cm	Pelvic to caudal end	: 31 cm
		Eye diameter (dorso-ventral)	: 1.9 cm
		Intra-orbital length	: 8.5 cm

## Occurrence of a large cornet fish, *Fistularia petimba* in trawl catches of Veraval coast, Gujarat

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A large cornet fish (*Fistularia petimba*) belonging to the family fistulariidae was collected on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009 from the Bidiya Fish Landing Centre, caught by trawler off Veraval coast at a depth of 60 m (Fig. 1). The body of the fish was elongate having depressed mouth at the end of a long tubular snout which was hexagonal in cross section and teeth in jaws with small ridges on snout with antrorse serrations, the upper ridges diverging anteriorly and the inter-orbital space flat. Dorsal and anal fins were short-based and opposite with 15 rays and 15 dorsal segmented rays; pectoral fins with 15 rays; pelvic fins



Fig. 1. *Fistularia petimba* caught by trawlers at Veraval

small and abdominal with 6 rays. Lateral line was arched, running anteriorly almost along the middle of back and then bending down to side and continuing posteriorly to an elongate filament produced by the middle of two caudal fin rays. Posterior lateral line was ossified without spines. The colour of the fish was brown, becoming lighter to silvery below. Dorsal and anal fins were with orange cast becoming transparent at base and caudal filament white. The following are the morphometric and meristic characters:

Total length	: 1480 mm
Total weight	: 2529 g
Length from snout to 1 <sup>st</sup> dorsal	: 1155 mm
Opercular length	: 100 mm
First dorsal to furcal	: 210 mm
Pelvic to pectoral	: 185 mm
Pelvic to anal	: 460 mm
Eye diameter	: 20 mm
Dorsal rays	: 15
Anal rays	: 15
Pelvic rays	: 6
Pectoral rays	: 15
Brancheostegal rays	: 8
Length of prolonged caudal fin ray	: 200 mm