


## Southern sun fish *Mola ramsayi* (Giglioli 1882) recorded from Kochi

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Family Molidae with three genera (*Ranzania*, *Masturus* and *Mola*) and four species are known as the world's heaviest fishes with a planktivorous diet. Known for their truncated anatomy, these fishes are characterized by lack of caudal bones, ribs and pelvic fins (Tifler, 1980). A southern ocean sunfish *Mola ramsayi* with total length 111cm and weighing 50kg was landed at Munambam Fisheries Harbour on 6 September 2013. The fish was caught by

trawlers at a depth of 50m off Quilon (8° 58' 487 N and 76° 05' 381 E) for threadfin breams along Kerala coast.

*Mola ramsayi* is characterized by 16 fin rays on the clavus region, of which 8 bear ossicles. It bears close resemblance to *Mola mola* from which it differs in the number of fin rays on clavus and rougher nature of skin (Bass *et al.* 2005). Southern ocean sunfish is an oceanic species and has been



Fig. 1. *Mola ramsayi* landed at Munambam Fisheries Harbour

reported from Australia, New Zealand (Peque 1989) and southeast Atlantic. It has been reported earlier from Chennai (Mohan *et al.* 2006) in 2006 with a total length of 83.5 cm and weight 10.5kg. This is the first report from the Eastern Arabian Sea and also the largest specimen recorded from Indian waters. The fish is said to attain 300 cm TL (Heemstra 1986). The present report contributes to the extended distribution of the species.

The meat of sunfishes are reported to be a delicacy in Japan, however, the fish was not auctioned here, probability due to its low market value in internal markets.

**Morphometric measurements of *M. ramsayi* (in cm).**

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Total length	:	111
Standard length	:	91
First dorsal length	:	48
Anal length	:	47.5
Pectoral length	:	14.5
Eye diameter (vertical)	:	6.5
Eye diameter (horizontal)	:	6.5

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