

**ON A LARGE CATCH OF THE FINLESS BLACK PORPOISE**  
***NEOMERIS PHOCAENOIDES* (CUVIER)**

On 12th November 1959, 17 porpoises were landed in a large shore seine, locally known as Rampani, and two more of the same variety in another, operated side by side with the former, at Malpe on the South Kanara Coast. The animals measured from about 3½ to 5 feet in length and were characteristically greyish black throughout except for a slightly paler ventral side. The smallness in size, beakless condition, the prominent blunt rounded head and the absence of a triangular dorsal fin clearly indicate that the animal is the Finless Black Porpoise, *Neomeris phocaenoides* (Cuvier). Their occurrence in such large numbers at one place is of interest since previous records show that they are seldom seen more than two at a time. The species has a wide distribution in the Indo-Pacific ranging from Cape of Good Hope to Japan and is often known to ascend the estuaries of larger rivers.

Four embryos were recovered from these mammals. The largest of them is a male measuring 155 mm. in length. Another of about the same length is a female, while the other two embryos are considerably smaller, a male and a female measuring 98 mm. and 93 mm. respectively. A set of measurements in mm. is given in the table below.

Body Proportion	Serial number and sex of embryos*		
	1♂	2♂	3♀
Total length (Being taken from the anterior most-point of the head to the middle of the tail flukes)	155	98	93
Depth of body	34	24	23
Length of pectoral flipper along outer edge	33	22	20
Width of the pectoral flipper	11	7	7
Distance between right and left tail flukes	38	17	15
Tip of snout to vertical level of anterior corner of eye	5	3	—
Tip of mandible to vertical level of anterior edge of eye	4	1	1
Tip of mandible to axilla	36	22	21
Tip of mandible to anterior point of genital orifice	83	56	55
Width of gape of mouth	18	12	11

\* Another embryo of about 155 mm. length, a female, was left behind with Mr. Bilaye, Sub-Inspector of Fisheries, Fish Curing Yard, Malpe, for exhibition purposes.

The embryos resemble the adult in all respects except for the following notable external features :—

1. The more pointed nature of the snout in the 98 and 93 mm. embryos.
2. Presence of four papillae on each side of the upper lip representing bristles.
3. Eyes completely closed in the 93 and 98 mm. embryos while they are slit-like in 155 mm. embryo.
4. The absence of the external apperture of the auditory meatus in the 93 and 98 mm. embryos.
5. Penis remaining in an everted condition (fig. 2).

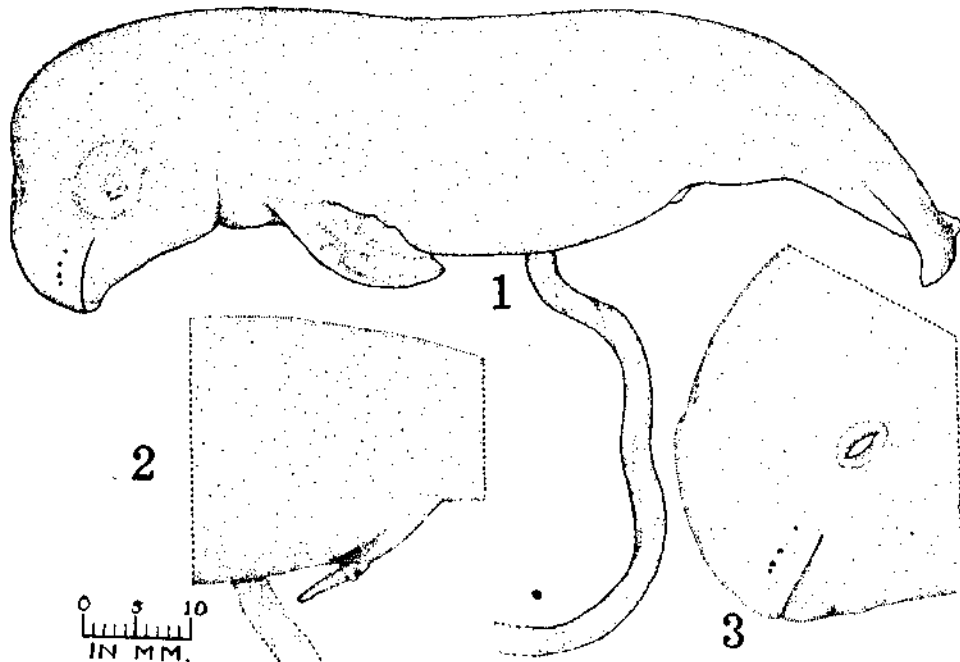


FIG. 1. Lateral view of 93 mm. embryo.

FIG. 2. A portion of the 98 mm. embryo showing the everted condition of the penis.

FIG. 3. Part of the head of 155 mm. embryo showing the papillae of the upper lip and the rounded condition of the snout.

Between the embryos themselves, it is to be noted (see figs. 1 and 3) that the snout is more or less beak-like in the 93 and 98 mm. embryos, while it is already rounded in the embryo of 155 mm. length, approaching the shape of that of adult.

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