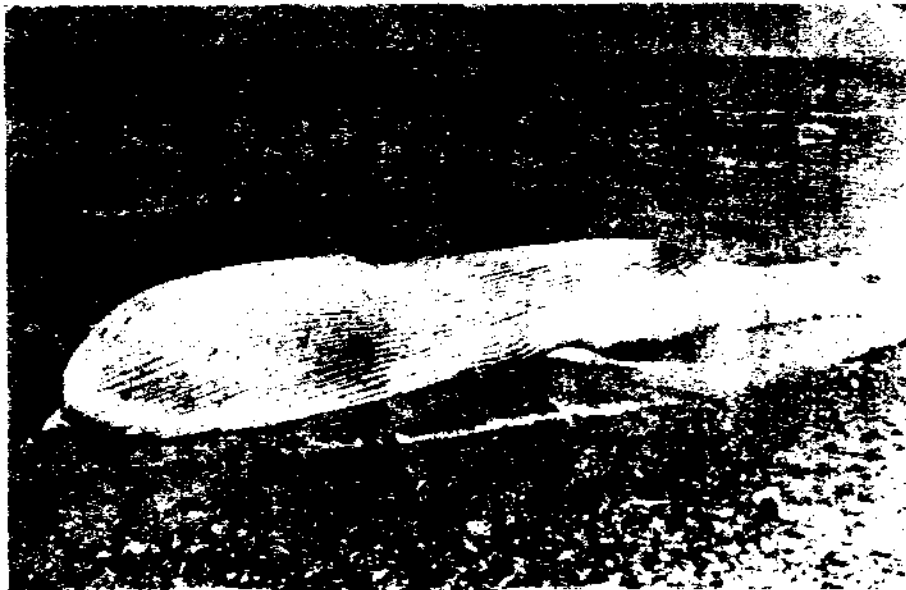


**ON A RORQUAL *BALAENOPTERA PHYSALUS* (LINN.)
WASHED ASHORE ON THE BOMBAY COAST**

It was reported in the morning newspapers of 9th October, 1965 that a whale had been washed ashore off Nepean Sea Road on the Bombay coast. Immediately the authors made a visit to the place and the following observations were recorded. Local inquiries showed that the drifting carcass of the whale was first sighted through binoculars the previous day by some residents of the locality. It appeared like an inverted dug-out canoe, being tossed up and down by the waves. The carcass was washed ashore on the rocky coast off Nepean Sea Road, about four hours after it was first sighted.

At the time the observations were made, some of the softer parts posterior to umbilicus of the whale were found to be in an advanced state of decomposition and the visceral organs protruding out through the wall of abdomen were torn to pieces. The animal was lying on its back with the flippers and the ventral grooves distinctly exposed, while the head and the tail were submerged in the water.



Balaenoptera physalus washed off Bombay coast.

The following measurements could be taken :

Total length : 15.10 m.

Length of right and left flippers : 1.60 m.

Ratio of flipper/total length : $\frac{1}{9}$ (approximate).

Total number of ventral grooves : 70.

(These ventral grooves extended upto the umbilicus far behind the flippers, reaching as far as the anal region.)

The colour of the body and the flippers was grey above and white below.

It will be seen that most of the diagnostic characters agree with those of *B. physalus*, as given by Norman (1937) and Gibson Hill (1950).

It is of interest to note that this is the second positive record of the occurrence of *B. physalus* (Linn.) on Bombay coast within a short interval of about three months. The previous record of stranding of the same species at Arnala (Bombay) on 4th August, 1965, was made by one of the authors (Karbhari).

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