

STRANDING OF A BLACK RIGHT WHALE AT KUMOMI, SOUTHWESTERN COAST OF IZU PENINSULA

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On 15 April 1977 a black right whale was stranded on the coast of Kumomi, southwestern coast of Izu peninsula (Fig. 1). We received the information of this stranding at about 2000 hours of that day and went there in haste. After arriving the town of Kumomi and while we were on the way to the beach where the whale stranded we heard several moans of animal, which was sounded as if they were emitted from bottom of a manhole.

After arriving the beach we saw the whale in the shallow water of the beach and still alive. The sound we heard on the way were the respiration sound which were produced while outgoing air passes through the blowholes. We are quite familiar with respiration sounds of dolphins kept in our aquarium, but this sound was quite different from these and very impressive.

The whale went agrounded on the shallow bottom of the beach, nosing the head towards the beach and moving its tail flukes very gently (Fig. 2). On the previous day it was announced by press that a whale came quite close to the beach of Numazu city (see Fig. 1). We thought this was the same whale and it moved from there down to here along the coast and finally stranded. There is an evidence, however, to think that the whale was pursued by several fishing boats on the way.

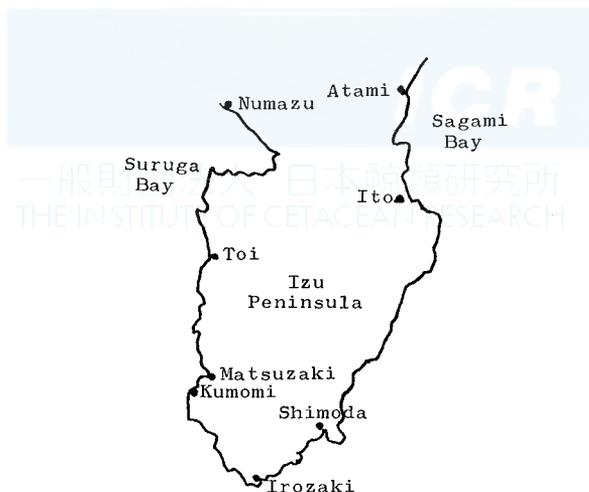


Fig. 1. Location of Kumomi and Numazu (see text).

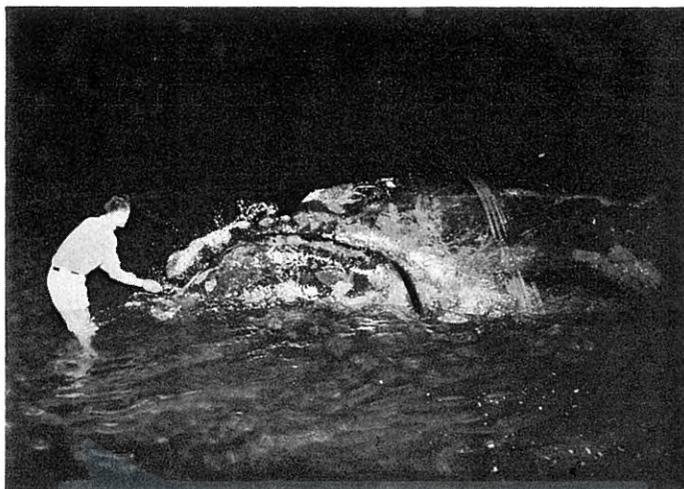


Fig. 2. The black right whale stranded at Kumomi.

TABLE 1. BODY PROPORTION OF THE BLACK RIGHT WHALE STRANDED ON 15 APRIL 1977 AT KUMOMI, IZU PENINSULA

Measurements	Length in cm	% against total length
1. Total length	1,150	100
2. Tip of snout to center of eye	270	23.5
3. Tip of snout to blowholes	225	19.6
4. Tip of snout to angle of gape	277	24.0
5. Tip of snout to anterior insertion of flipper	297	25.8
6. Tip of snout to tip of flipper	410	35.7
7. Center of eye to center of ear	60	5.2
8. Notch of flukes to center of anus	290	25.2
9. Notch of flukes to center of umbilicus	480	41.7
10. Flipper, tip to anterior insertion	204	17.7
11. Flipper, tip to posterior insertion	175	15.2
12. Flipper, greatest width	118	10.3
13. Tail flukes, total spread	415	36.1
14. Tail flukes, tip to notch	210	18.3
15. Tail flukes, anterior insertion to notch	240	20.9
16. Tail flukes, anterior insertion to tip	105	9.1

The whale was left whole the night as it was, because there was no means to move the whale.

On the following day we heard that the whale died early in the morning. We went to Kumomi again in a hope to obtain whole of the skull and other bones for osteological specimen. But this was not possible because people of Kumomi had already decided other way of treating. We made some observation of the whale and measured body proportions which are shown in Table 1.

In Fig. 3 arrangements of the bonnet and other carosities are shown. These

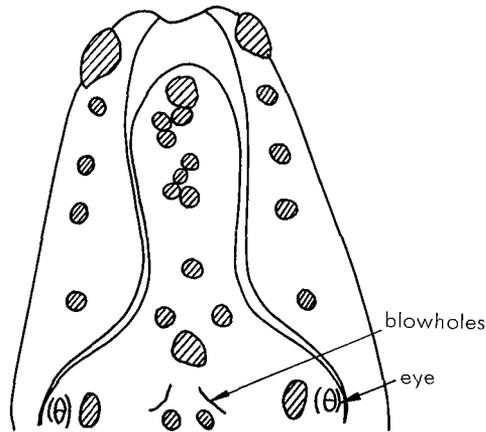


Fig. 3. Arrangement of bonnet and other carosities of the black right whale stranded at Kumomi.

are very hard in structure and like miniature of ranges of mountains, each top being pointing. Cyamids were infested heavily on these carosities. Further there present bristles in the region of bonnet and other carosities as well as a number was noted on the surface of mandibles.

This whale was a young male of 11.5 m in length and all black in color and no white patch was observed on ventral surface of the body.

This whale was dismembered on the third day and when we arrived there the treating was already begun and went rather hurriedly. We only could make some observations. The sex of the whale was ascertained by the presence of a long and slender penis of 110 cm in length. Thickness of blubber was measured at several points around anus and the average thickness of these was 20 cm. The color of baleen plates was grayish black and they numbered 227 on one side. We could not examine internal organs nor stomach contents.

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