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## NOTE ON THE PRESENCE OF PSEUDORCA CRASSIDENS IN AZORAN WATERS

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With 2 tables and 4 figures

**RESUMO.** Uma Falsa Orca, *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen, 1846), foi capturada no Banco Princesa Alice, Açores (37°50'W, 29°17'W), a 6 de Maio de 1984. Trata-se de um macho com 408 cm de comprimento total. São dadas medidas externas e craniométricas. O conteúdo estomacal era constituído por bicos de cefalópodes não identificados e vértebras de tunídeos, bem como nemátodes parasitas.

**ABSTRACT.** A False Killer Whale, *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen, 1846), was captured on the Princess Alice Bank, Azores (37°50'N, 29°17'W), on 6 May 1984. The specimen was a male of 408 cm total length. External and cranial measurements are given.

The stomach contained unidentified cephalopod beaks and tuna vertebrae as well as parasitic nematodes.

### INTRODUCTION

The Odontocete species *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen, 1846) is generally found in tropical and temperate waters of all oceans (see Slijper, 1939 ; Nobre, 1935 ; Morales, 1936 ; Van Bree, 1972 ; Mörzer Bruyns, 1969 ; Reiner, 1981, 1984 ; Duguy & Robineau, 1982). The species has

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been reported from the Azores on two previous occasions, Richard (1936) and Reiner *et al.* (1984).

#### MATERIAL AND METHODS

In the present note the capture of a further specimen is recorded, this time from the Princess Alice Bank, SW of the island of Faial (37°50'N ; 29°17'W) on 6 May 1984. It was harpooned by a local fisherman. According to the crew, two other False Killer Wales were seen together with the present one, feeding on tuna.

Dissection of the genital area confirmed the sex indicated by the existence of a visible penis (see fig. 2) and showed that we were dealing with an adult specimen weighing 544 kg. Measurements were taken (table I) and photographs (figs. 1 and 2) were made of the animal shortly after death. The skull (figs. 3 and 4) was removed and presented to the National Museum of Natural History — Museu Bocage — in Lisbon (coll. 7686). Skull measurements, based on Ross (1977), are shown in table II. The stomach contained unidentified remains of cephalopod beaks and tuna vertebrae as well as parasitic nematodes of the species *Anisakis simplex* (Rudolphi, 1809).

#### RESULTS

TABLE I. — EXTERNAL MEASUREMENTS (IN CM), AFTER ROSS 1978.

Total length	408
Tip of snout to centre of eye	45
Length of gape	35
Centre of eye to blowhole	35
Tip of snout to blowhole	45.5
Tip of snout to ant. insertion of flipper	68.0
Tip of snout to ant. insertion of dorsal fin	166
Tip of snout to tip of dorsal fin	215
Tip of snout to umbilicus	180
Tip of snout to midpoint of genital slit (male)	230
Tip of snout to anus	270
Projection of snout beyond lower jaw	5
Girth on transverse plane at axilla	180
Girth, maximum	210
Girth on transverse plane at anus	130
Length flipper, ant. insertion to tip	55.5
Length, flipper, axilla to tip	43
Maximum width of flipper	21
Height, dorsal fin	30
Length, dorsal fin	40
Width of flukes, tip to tip	90

Anterior border of flukes to notch . . . . .	28
Depth of notch . . . . .	5
Diam. of eye .. . . .	2.8

TABLE II.—DIMENSIONS (IN MM) OF THE SKULL, AFTER ROSS, 1977.

Condylbasal length . . . . .	64.6
Rostrum length . . . . .	30.5
Basal width of rostrum .. . . .	22.0
Width of rostrum 60 mm anterior to antorbital notches .. . . .	21.8
Rostral width at midlength . . . . .	19.8
Width of premaxillae at midlength of rostrum . . . . .	14.4
Tip of rostrum to anterior border of superior nares . . . . .	39.4
Tip of rostrum to posterior border of pterygoids close to the midline .. . . .	40.7
Breadth of skull across preorbital processes of frontals . . . . .	34.6
Breadth of skull across postorbital processes of frontals . . . . .	37.3
Breadth of skull across centres of orbits . . . . .	35.5
Breadth of superior nares . . . . .	7.8
Breadth of skull across zygomatic processes of squamosals .. . . .	38.7
Maximum width of premaxillae proximally . . . . .	13.6
Width of braincase between posterior borders of temporal fossae . . . . .	16.6
Number of teeth, upper right . . . . .	8
Number of teeth, upper left . . . . .	7
Length of tooth row upper right . . . . .	25.5
Length of tooth row upper left . . . . .	22.4
Posterior end of upper tooth row to tip of premaxillae, right . . . . .	27.0
Posterior end of upper tooth row to tip of premaxillae left . . . . .	26.1
Number of teeth, lower right . . . . .	9
Number of teeth, lower left . . . . .	9
Length of tooth row, lower right . . . . .	23.3
Length of tooth row, lower left . . . . .	23.3
Posterior end of lower tooth row to tip of mandible, right . . . . .	24.0
Posterior end of lower tooth row to tip of mandible, left . . . . .	24.3
Length of mandible . . . . .	50.6
Depth of mandible at coronoid process .. . . .	14.5
Length of mandibular symphysis . . . . .	8.1
Length of temporal fossa . . . . .	20.6
Height of temporal fossa . . . . .	15.3
Width of rostrum at one quarter of rostral length from the tip . . . . .	14.9
Height of cranium between basioccipital and the vertex . . . . .	23.1
Maximum length of tympanic bulla, right . . . . .	0.66
Maximum length of tympanic bulla, left . . . . .	0.63

The limited data from strandings and sightings in this region do not indicate seasonality in occurrence of this species. The apparent rarity



Fig. 1.— Right side seen from front showing row of teeth of lower jaw.



Fig. 2.— Genital slit showing protruding tip of penis.

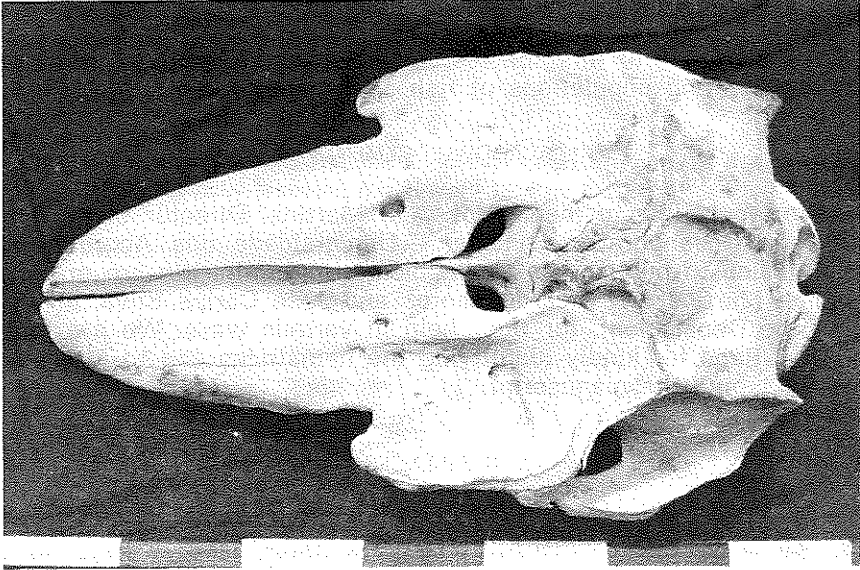


Fig. 3. — Dorsal view of skull.

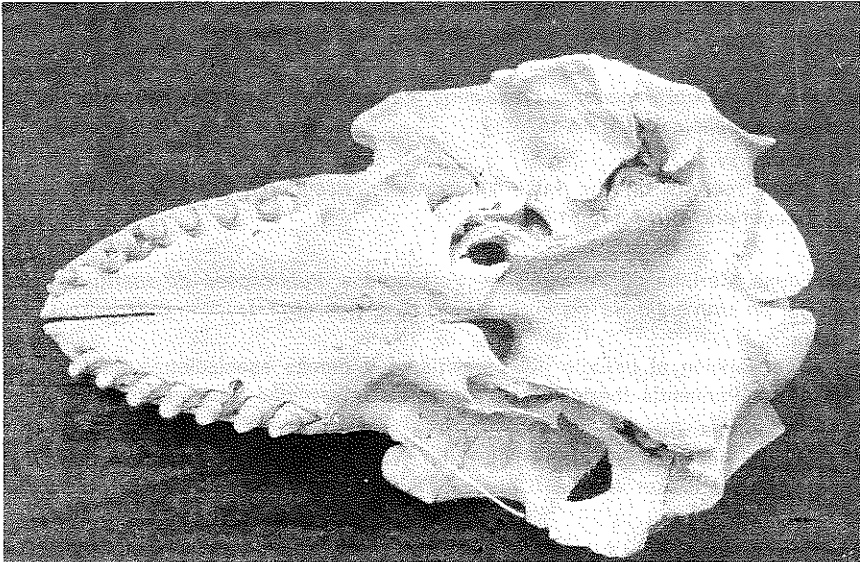


Fig. 4. — Ventral view of skull.

of sight records or strandings could indicate that *P. crassidens* occurs sporadically in this region.

The presence of this species seems connected with sporadic abundance of migrating populations of fish and cephalopods.

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