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Dead whale washes ashore in Surathkal

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Tragic end: A dead whale which washed ashore in a decomposed state on the shores of the Doddakopla beach in Surathkal

MANGALURU: In a rare phenomenon, a dead [whale](#) washed ashore in a decomposed state on the [Doddakopla beach](#) in [Surathkal](#). “This is the first such incident in the last 15-20 years in the coastal belt of Karnataka,” Yathish Baikampady, CEO, [Panambur](#)

[Beach Tourism Development Project](#), told TOI.

The approximately 40-foot whale washed ashore on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, because of high tide. Fishermen, who saw the carcass early on Wednesday, informed the authorities.

The body was so severely decomposed that experts haven't been able to determine its characteristics such as its breed, weight or age. Yathish predicted the whale may have died because of old age.

“The whale died several days ago. The body has been decomposed in the water long ago,” he said. He said it is safe to say that the carcass took long to be washed upon the beach, as there is no presence of such a creature in the Arabian Sea. “These whales are found in the [Indian Ocean](#). They need deep sea and cold water for survival,” he added. The bones of the whale were, however, intact.

The carcass was buried on the shore with the help of an excavator arranged by the Mangaluru City Corporation. “It had to be buried because it would emit an odour otherwise,” Yathish said.

A whale of this size previously washed ashore at [Hosabettu](#), a few kilometres from Surathkal, some 15-20 years ago. Vijaya College in the city preserved the skeleton of a similar whale, that washed ashore around 50-years-ago.

Apart from these, shark whales – that are smaller in size – have been found on the shores more frequently. A mutilated carcass of a whale washed ashore at Tannirbhavi in July 2015. A dead shark whale washed ashore at Someshwar in April 2016.

The life span of a whale is typically 150 years.