

DASYATIDAE

Himantura fai Jordan and Seale, 1906 (Plate XI, 75)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / *Himantura jenkinsii* (Annandale, 1909).

FAO names: En - Pink whipray.

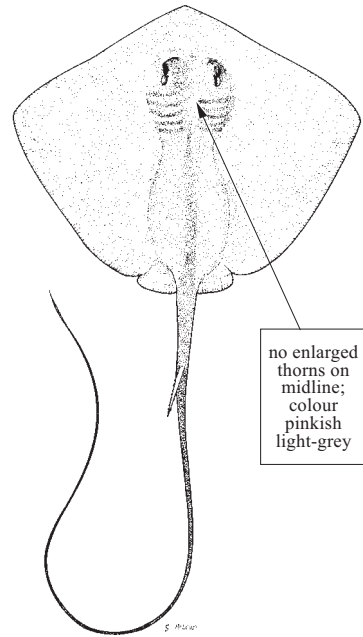
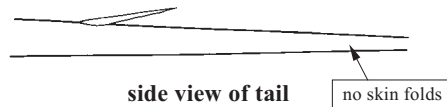
Local names: Rouketah.

Size: To at least 500 cm total length and more than 150 cm disc width.

Habitat and biology: Occurs in the inner continental shelf, often in aggregations over soft substrates. Biology poorly known.

Importance to fisheries: Caught as a bycatch with bottom trawl nets, and presumably utilized for human consumption but details unknown.

Distribution: Poorly known due to confusion with *H. jenkinsii*. Likely widespread in the Indian and western Pacific Oceans, from South Africa to Micronesia including Australia. Found in the Red Sea.



no enlarged thorns on midline; colour pinkish light-grey

Himantura gerrardi (Gray, 1851) (Plate XI, 76)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: *Himantura macrurus* (Bleeker, 1852) / None.

FAO names: En - Whitespotted whipray.

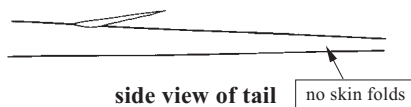
Local names: Al-Rouketah Al-safraa.

Size: Total length to at least 200 cm; maximum disc width 90 cm or more.

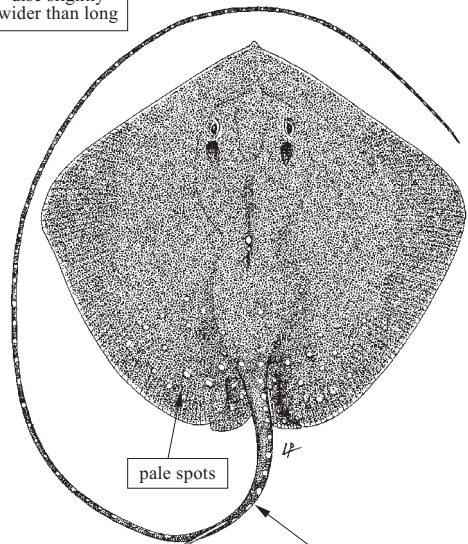
Habitat and biology: Depth distribution limits unknown, but likely to be confined to inner continental shelf.

Importance to fisheries: An important commercial stingray in some areas and the most regularly landed. Meat used for human consumption salt-dried, the skin also used to produce leather.

Distribution: Widespread in the Indo-Pacific from the Red Sea to New Guinea, north to Taiwan (Province of China). Reported from the south and east African coasts, but records need to be validated.



disc slightly wider than long



pale spots

tail banded and several times longer than disc; without upper or lower folds

Himantura imbricata (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)

(Plate XI, 77)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:
None / None.

FAO names: En - Scaly whipray.

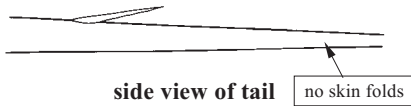
Local names: Rouketah.

Size: Maximum total length about 65 cm;
maximum disc width 22 cm.

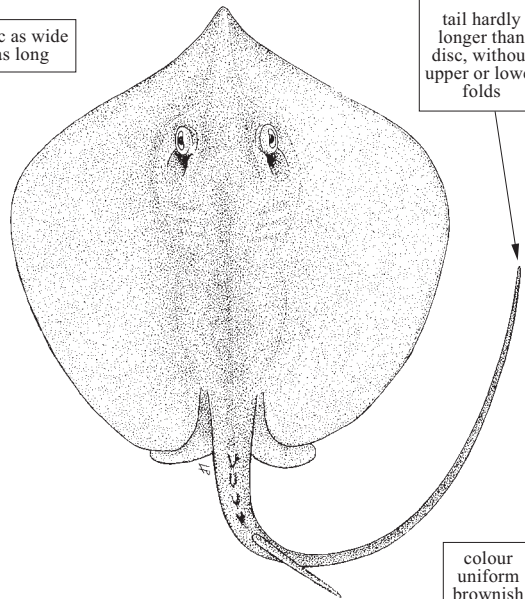
Habitat and biology: Demersal in inshore coastal waters. Ovoviviparous. Feeds on bottom invertebrates.

Importance to fisheries: Caught in bottom trawls. Utilization unknown.

Distribution: Found in the Indo-Malay Archipelago but distribution not well defined. Thought to occur from the Red Sea to Java.



disc as wide as long



Himantura uarnak (Forsskål, 1775)

(Plate XI, 78)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:
Himantura punctata (Günther, 1870); *Himantura* sp. 1 [Gloerfelt-Tarp and Kailola, 1984] / None.

FAO names: En - Reticulate whipray.

Local names: Al-Rouketah Al-bounni; Um Al-Shriet.

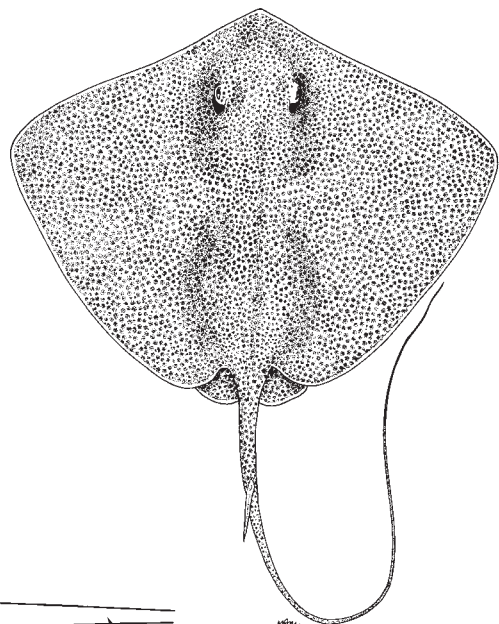
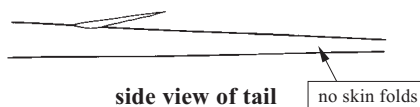
Size: Maximum total length at least 450 cm;
maximum disc width about 150 cm.

Habitat and biology: Occurs inshore on soft substrates; often intertidal but to depths of at least 50 m.

Importance to fisheries: Caught with bottom trawls. Important commercial species through some of its range.

Distribution: Widespread in the Indo-Pacific; from South Africa and the Mediterranean and Red seas, to Australia and Taiwan (Province of China).

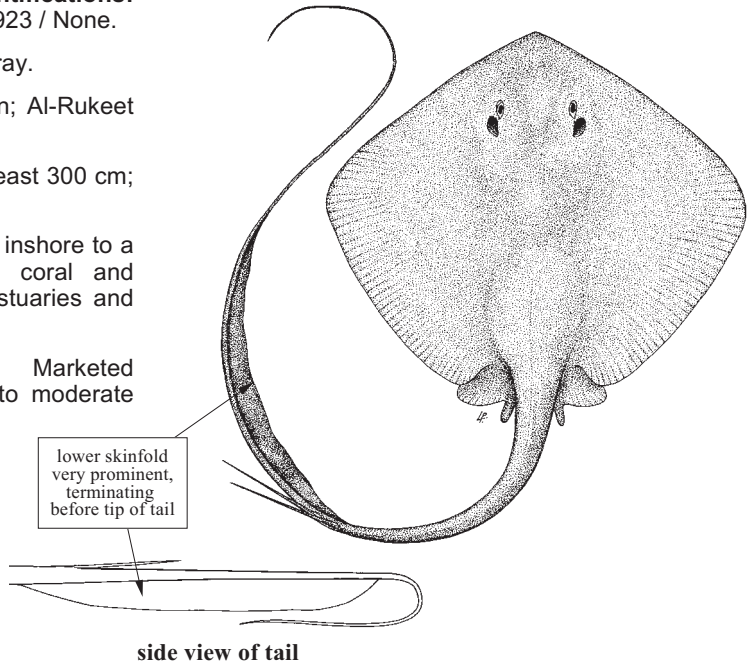
Remarks: Several colour morphs exist, some of which may prove to be distinct species.



Pastinachus sephen (Forsskål, 1775)

(Plate XI, 79)

DASYATIDAE

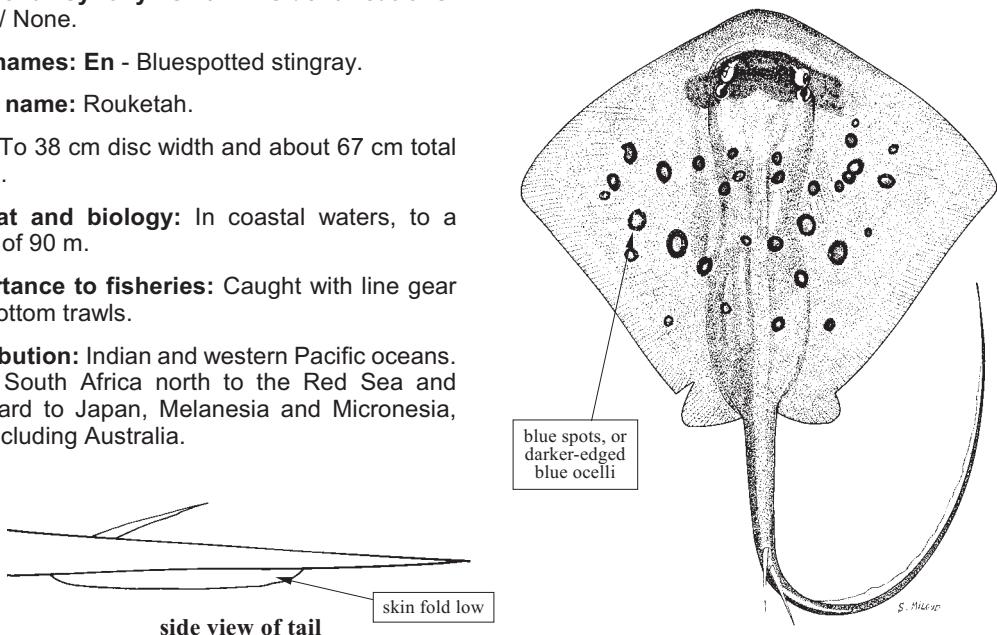
Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:*Dasyatis grueveli* Chabanaud, 1923 / None.**FAO names:** En - Cowtail stingray.**Local names:** Saphan; Daffaan; Al-Rukeet Abu-reshah.**Size:** Maximum total length at least 300 cm; maximum disc width 180 cm.**Habitat and biology:** Common inshore to a depth of 60 m or more in coral and sedimentary habitats. Enters estuaries and fresh water.**Importance to fisheries:** Marketed throughout its range in small to moderate quantities.**Distribution:** Widespread in the tropical Indo-Pacific from the Red Sea, north to Japan, east to Australia, including Melanesia and Micronesia. Also reported from South Africa.***Dasyatis kuhlii*** (Müller and Henle, 1841)

(Plate XI, 80)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:

None / None.

FAO names: En - Bluespotted stingray.**Local name:** Rouketah.**Size:** To 38 cm disc width and about 67 cm total length.**Habitat and biology:** In coastal waters, to a depth of 90 m.**Importance to fisheries:** Caught with line gear and bottom trawls.**Distribution:** Indian and western Pacific oceans. From South Africa north to the Red Sea and eastward to Japan, Melanesia and Micronesia, and including Australia.

***Taeniura lymma* (Forsskål, 1775)**

(Plate XII, 81)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.

FAO names: **En** - Bluespotted ribbontail ray; **Fr** - Pastenague queue à ruban; **Sp** - Raya latigo rabo cinta.

Local names: Rukeetet Sheab; Shafane; Um Salem; Um Qurbaj.

Size: To at least 70 cm total length and about 30 cm disc width.

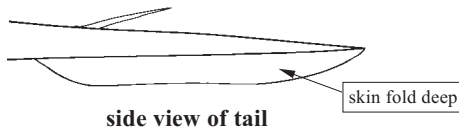
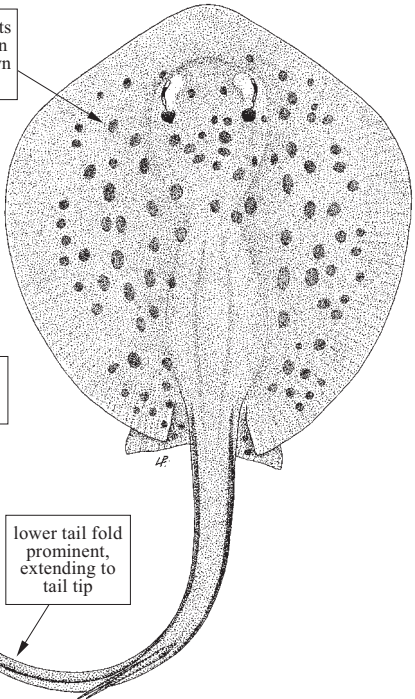
Habitat and biology: In coastal waters over sandy bottoms and specially on coral reefs, to depths of at least 20 m. Feeds mainly on molluscs, worms, shrimps and crabs.

Importance to fisheries: Caught with line gear.

Distribution: Widespread in the Indian and western Pacific oceans. From South Africa north to the Red Sea and eastward to the Philippines, Australia, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

bright blue spots and blotches on yellowish brown background

tail hardly longer than disc



side view of tail

***Taeniura meyeni* Müller and Henle, 1841**

(Plate XII, 82)

DASYATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: *Taeniura melanospilos* Bleeker, 1853 / None.

FAO names: **En** - Blotched fantail ray; **Fr** - Pastenague eventail.

Local names: Rouketah.

Size: To at least 3.3 m total length and 1.8 m disc width.

Habitat and biology: Found in coral reefs and offshore on soft bottoms. Most common between depths of 20 and 60 m, but known to occur in a depth of 450 m.

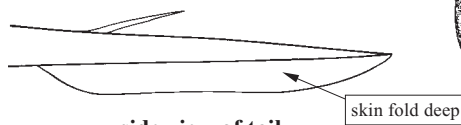
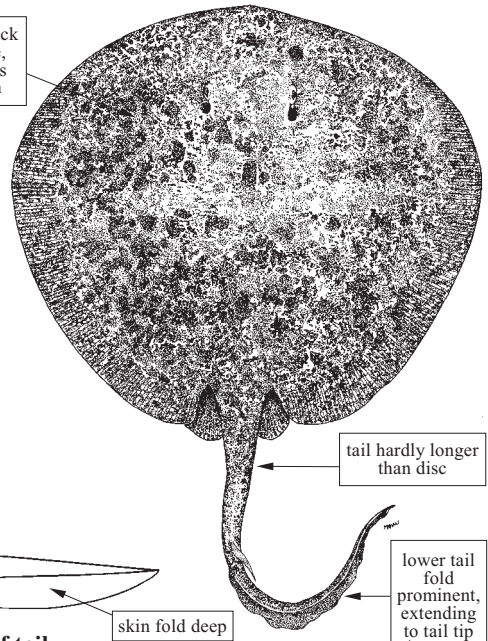
Importance to fisheries: Caught with line gear and bottom trawls. Utilization unknown.

Distribution: Known from the Indian and western Pacific oceans. From South Africa north to the Red Sea and eastward to Japan, Australia, New Guinea, Lord Howe Islands and Micronesia.

mottled black and white, sometimes brownish

tail hardly longer than disc

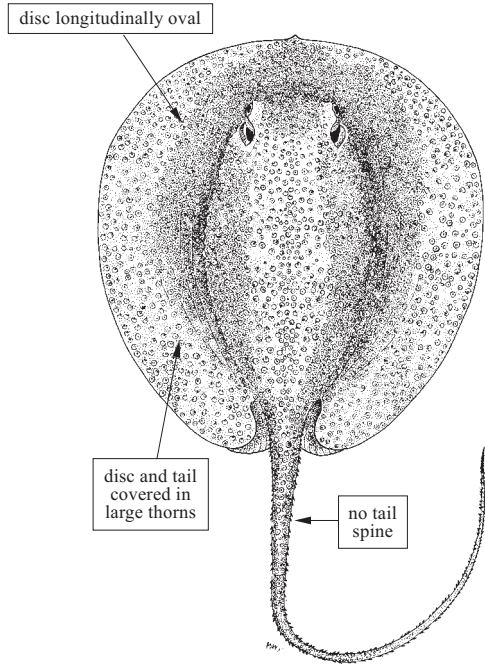
lower tail fold prominent, extending to tail tip



side view of tail

***Urogymnus asperrimus* (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)**

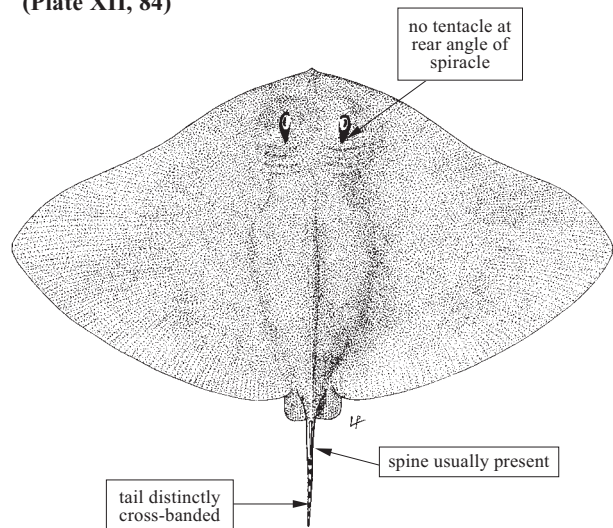
(Plate XII, 83)

DASYATIDAE**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:***Urogymnus africanus* (Bloch and Schneider, 1801); *U. rhombeus* (Klunzinger, 1871) / None.**FAO names:** En - Porcupine ray.**Local names:** Rouletah.**Size:** Up to at least 1 m disc width.**Habitat and biology:** Demersal in shallow inshore waters, associated to coral reefs and also found in brackish waters and sandy bottoms, often in caves. Feeds on polychaetes, bottom crustaceans and some bony fishes.**Importance to fisheries:** Of very little or no importance to fisheries but often caught in trawls and beach seines. Utilized seasonally for its liver in some localities in the Red Sea (Farasan Islands, KSA).**Distribution:** Coast of East Africa and Red Sea eastward to Marshall Islands and Fiji, and south to northern Australia; also known from central western Africa.**GYMNURIDAE*****Gymnura poecilura* (Shaw, 1804)**

(Plate XII, 84)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:

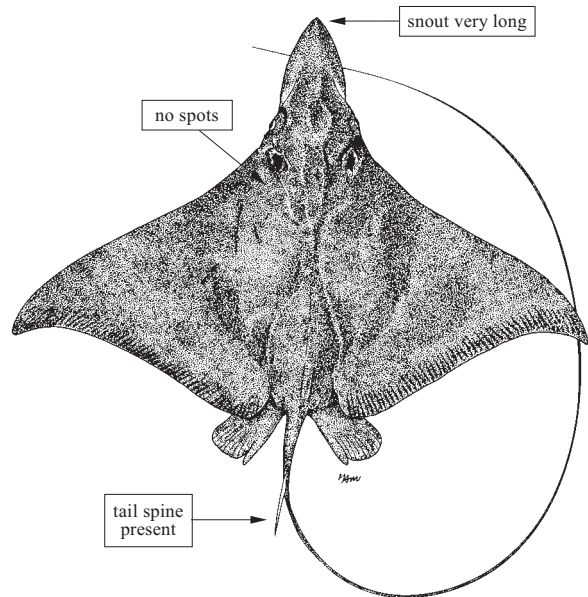
None / None.

FAO names: En - Longtail butterfly ray.**Local names:****Size:** To a total length of at least 66 cm and width of at least 82 cm.**Habitat and biology:** Locally common, found in shallow inshore waters over sandy and muddy bottoms. Ovoviparous. Feeds mainly on crustaceans and clams.**Importance to fisheries:** Caught as bycatch in bottom trawls and sometimes by hook-and-line. Utilized for human consumption in some parts of its range.**Distribution:** From the Red Sea eastward to the Society Islands, China, and southern Japan.

MYLIOBATIDAE

Aetobatus flagellum (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:**

None / None.

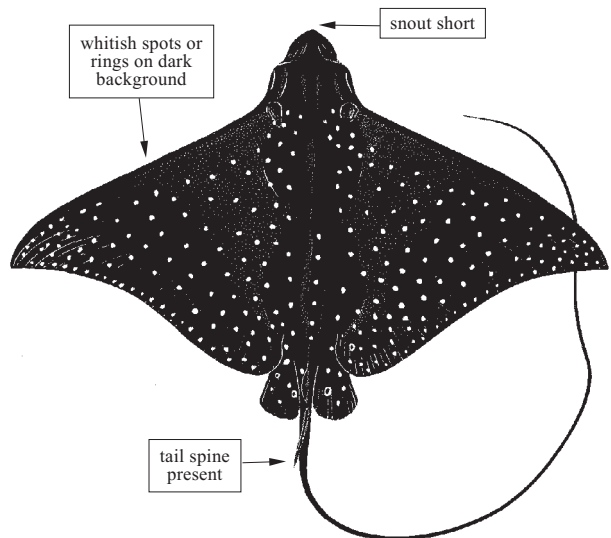
FAO names: En - Longheaded eagle ray.**Local names:****Size:** To at least 126 cm in total length, width to 47 cm.**Habitat and biology:** An inshore species. Biology not well known.**Importance to fisheries:** Details of utilization unknown, but it is regularly landed in the fish markets of Jakarta.**Distribution:** From the Red Sea, India, Indonesia and southern China; records from the eastern Atlantic and Hawaii need validation.***Aetobatus narinari*** (Euphrasen, 1790)

(Plate XII, 85)

MYLIOBATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:

None / None.

FAO names: En - Spotted eagle ray; Fr - Aigle de mer leopard.**Local names:** Maylan; Abu-rweis.**Size:** To at least 8.8 m total length when tail undamaged and 3.3 m disc width.**Habitat and biology:** Inshore semi-pelagic found in coral reefs, estuaries, off beaches, and enclosed bays; to a depth of 60 m. Can form large schools and can leap out of the water. Number of young usually 4. Feeds mainly on bivalves, but also on shrimps, crabs, octopi and worms.**Importance to fisheries:** Caught with hook-and-line and harpoons. Flesh edible but seldom utilized. Ideal for display in Aquaria.**Distribution:** Apparently found in all tropical and subtropical seas of the world, but records from the Atlantic Ocean might be an undescribed species.

Aetomylaeus milvus (Valenciennes, 1841)

MYLIOBATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:
None / None.

FAO names: En - Ocellate eagle ray.

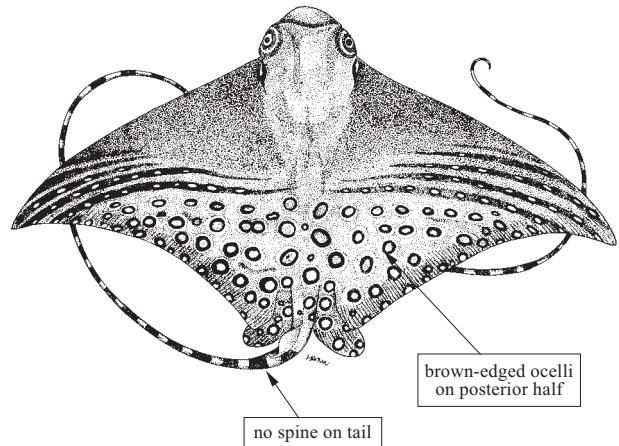
Local names:

Size: To at least 37 cm disc width.

Habitat and biology: An inshore eagle ray, with biology poorly known.

Importance to fisheries: Details of utilization sketchy; utilized for human consumption in some parts of its range.

Distribution: Thought to occur in the Indo-West Pacific from the Red Sea, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, the Philippines, and China. May be the juvenile of either *Aetomylaeus maculatus* or *A. vespertilio*.

***Aetomylaeus vespertilio*** (Bleeker, 1852)

MYLIOBATIDAE

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:
Aetomylaeus reticulatus (Teng, 1962) / None.

FAO names: En - Ornate eagle ray.

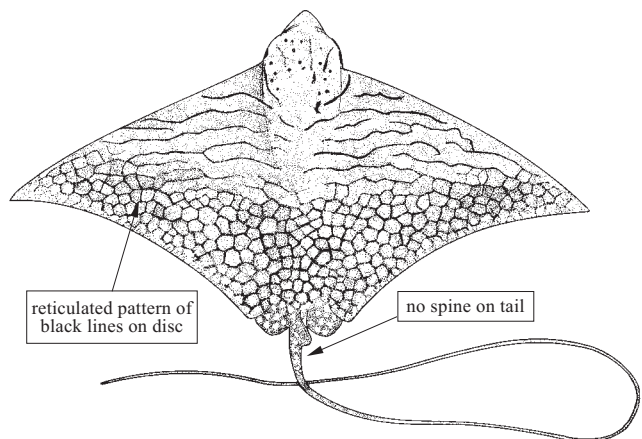
Local names:

Size: To 160 cm disc width and 385 cm total length.

Habitat and biology: Occurs inshore and offshore associated with muddy bays and coral reefs; to a depth of 110 m. Biology poorly known.

Importance to fisheries: Caught with gillnets and probably other gear. Utilized for human consumption in Thailand and probably elsewhere, but details lacking.

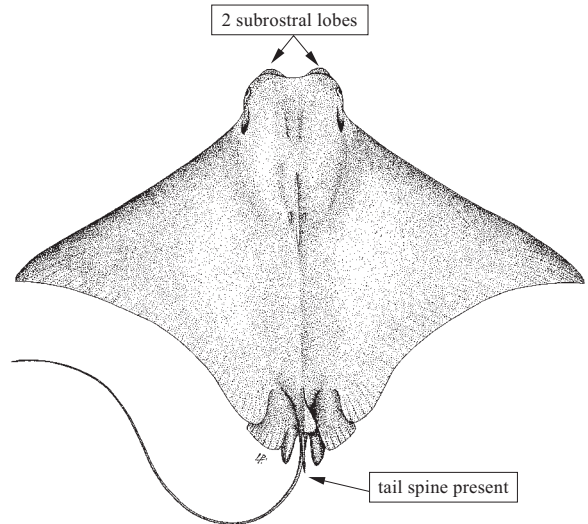
Distribution: Found in Indian and western Pacific oceans; Mozambique, the Maldives, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and northern Australia, the South China Sea and Taiwan (Province of China). Recorded by the author in the Red Sea.



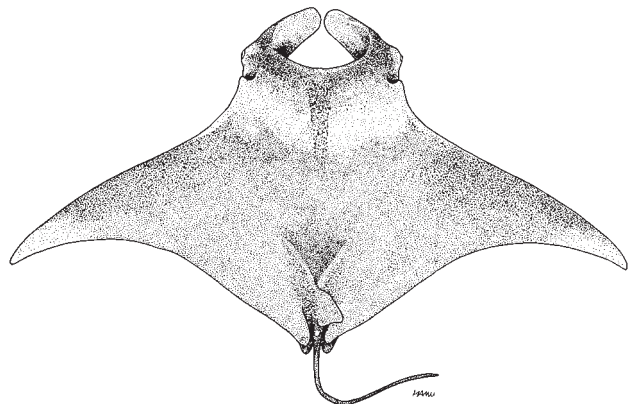
RHINOPTERIDAE

Rhinoptera javanica Müller and Henle, 1841

(Plate XII, 86)

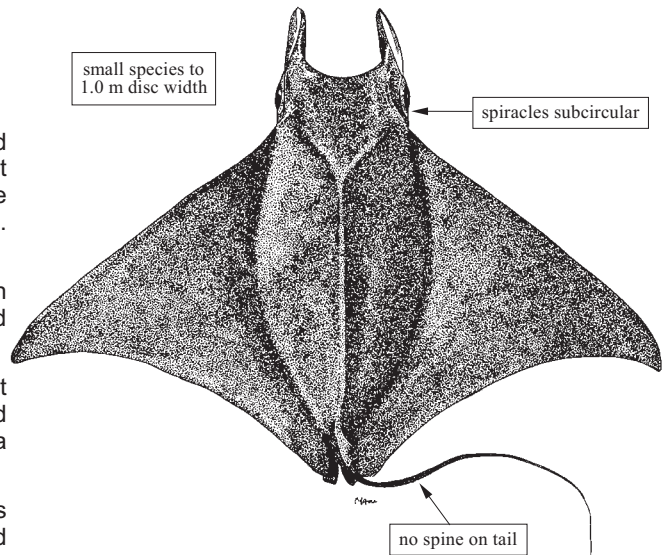
Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:None / *Rhinoptera adspersa* Valenciennes, 1841.**FAO names:** En - Javanese cownose ray;
Fr - Mourine javanaise.**Local names:** Mayla-Cadde.**Size:** To 1.5 m disc width.**Habitat and biology:** In coastal waters. Gregarious, often occurring in large numbers. Ovoviviparous. Feeds mainly on clams, oysters and crustaceans.**Importance to fisheries:** Caught in gillnets, hook-and-line, and beach seines; edible but seldom utilized. Fished by sport fishermen, and also displayed in public aquaria.**Distribution:** Nominally from South Africa and Mozambique and eastward to Southeast Asia and tropical northern Australia; recorded by the author in the Gulf of Aden.

MOBULIDAE

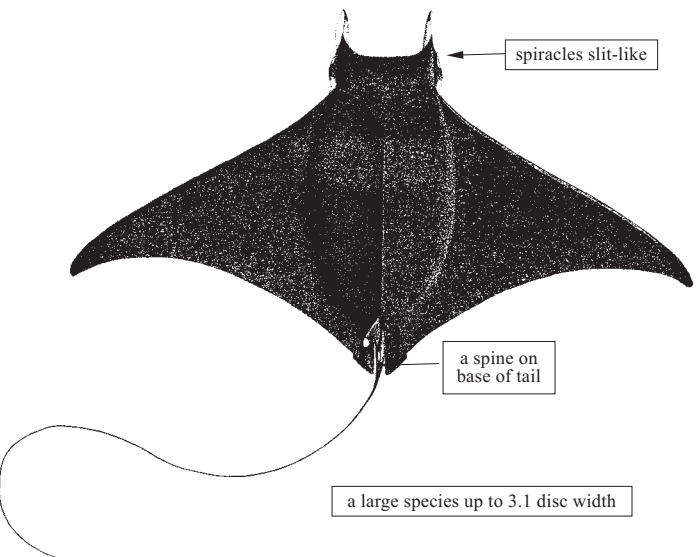
Manta birostris (Donndorff, 1798)**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.**FAO names:** En - Giant manta; Fr - Mante geante; Sp - Manta voladora.**Local names:** Rukeetet Al-Manta.**Size:** Disc width at least 6.70 m, with unsupported citations to 7.63 m and about 9.10 m in width.**Habitat and biology:** A common inshore and offshore inhabitant of all temperate and tropical seas, found in shallow muddy bays and the intertidal as well as river mouths and off coral reefs. Occurs individually, or in groups probably highly migratory. Feeds on zooplankton and small to moderate-sized fishes.**Importance to fisheries:** Caught with harpoons. Utilized for human consumption in some parts of its range. Easy to be approached by divers and willing to investigate them. A preferred species for eco-touristic diving operations.**Distribution:** Found in all warm seas of the world. Recognition of a single species in the genus *Manta* is provisional, and needs to be critically examined.

Mobula eregoodootenkee* (Bleeker, 1859)*MOBULIDAE****Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:**

None / None.

FAO names: En - Pygmy devilray.**Local names:** Al-Meyla.**Size:** Disc width to about 1.0 m.**Habitat and biology:** Lives inshore and offshore in continental coastal waters, not known to penetrate the epipelagic zone and not recorded from oceanic islands. Biology little known.**Importance to fisheries:** Utilization pattern in the area poorly known, marketed in some parts of its range.**Distribution:** Occurs in the Indo-West Pacific from South Africa north to the Red Sea, eastward to Viet Nam, New Guinea and tropical northern Australia.**Remarks:** Use of the species name is provisional, according to Compagno and Last (1999), as Cuvier's original citation in 1829 was binomial.***Mobula japonica* (Müller and Henle, 1841)****MOBULIDAE****Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:**

None / None.

FAO names: En - Spinetail mobula; Fr - Mante aiguillat; Sp - Manta de aguijón.**Local names:** Al-Meyla.**Size:** To 310 cm of disc width, and probably larger.**Habitat and biology:** Occurs singly or in groups inshore, offshore and probably in oceanic waters in warm-temperate and tropical seas. Biology poorly known, birth size about 85 cm.**Importance to fisheries:** Poorly known, but likely to be mostly a bycatch species. Caught incidentally with floating longlines in the Gulf of Aden and presumably utilized there for human consumption.**Distribution:** Probably circum-tropical in all warm-temperate and tropical seas.

Mobula tarapacana* (Philippi, 1892)*MOBULIDAE**

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:
None / None.

FAO names: **En** - Chilean devilray;
Fr - Mante chilienne; **Sp** - Manta comuda.

Local names: Al-Meyla.

Size: Disc width to about 3.7 m

Habitat and biology: An uncommon inshore and offshore species. Biology poorly known, feeds on planktonic crustaceans. Sometimes strands on beaches in temperate areas.

Importance to fisheries: Utilization pattern in the area little known.

Distribution: Probably in all tropical seas of the world, but recorded from scattered localities including the western Atlantic (off Venezuela), eastern Atlantic (Ivory Coast), Atlantic and Indian Ocean coasts of South Africa, the northwestern Red Sea, the western Pacific (Japan, Taiwan (Province of China), and probably tropical Australia), and eastern Pacific (Gulf of California and Chile).

