

COMMUNICATIONS

The bloom of invasive alien comb jelly *Beroe ovata* Bruguière, 1789 in the Bay of Bengal

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The present study documented a bloom of the comb jelly *Beroe ovata* occurring off Devaneri Kuppam in Mahabalipuram, close to Chennai. The abundance of the *B. ovata* bloom was estimated as 342 ± 21 individuals per cubic metre. A negligible number of hydromedusae specimens mixed with the comb jelly were also observed. The abundance of its predatory fish, the black pomfret (*Parastromateus niger*), the hydrozoan jellyfish (*Aequorea pensilis*), and the scyphozoan jellyfish (*Cyanea nozakii*) would be positively correlated with the sudden disappearance of the bloom of *B. ovata* on 10 October 2024. Following the bloom of *B. ovata*, the abundance of *A. pensilis* and *C. nozakii* led to a depletion of copepods, the main predators of dinoflagellates and diatoms, favouring the bloom of *Noctiluca scintillans*.

Keywords: *Beroe ovata*, comb jelly bloom, *Cyanea nozakii*, hydromedusae, *Noctiluca scintillans*.