

The characters mentioned above agree very closely with those of the family Philometridae of the order Filarioidea, as given by Baylis (1939). The presence of a funnel shaped mouth, a short oesophagus and bluntly rounded short tail show that this form belongs to the genus *Philometra*, the adults of which are known to occur, 'in the body cavity, genital glands or connective tissues of fishes' (Baylis, 1939).

In all cases where the adult males have been recorded they are known to be much smaller than the females. No adult males of this parasite were obtained and hence it was not possible to ascribe it to any known species under the genus *Philometra*.

It may be of interest to note here that larval forms of *Porrocaecum* spp. have been recorded from *Otholithus maculatus* (Cuvier) as cited by Baylis (1936).

The presence of parasite in the gonads is undoubtedly harmful to the host fish as has been evidenced by the atrophy of the major part of the ovaries except the apical regions where alone a few but very immature eggs were found in the specimen examined.

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Central Marine Fisheries Research Unit,
Bolar, Mangalore-1.

G. G. ANNIGERI

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A NOTE ON AN ABNORMAL *LEONNATES JOUSSEAUMEI* GRAVIER (FAMILY NEREIDAE—POLYCHAETA)

The power of regeneration of lost or damaged parts in polychaetes is very well known. In most of the Nereidiform polychaetes new segments replace the lost segments and they can be generally recognised by being smaller than the rest at first. Moreover, not only can new segments arise at the hind end, but a new head can be formed at the anterior end. These regenerated heads are smaller at first than the rest of the body, but soon grow to a normal size. This extensive power of regeneration generally remains latent till injury provides the stimulus and is of extreme value to the polychaetes.

On 14-10-1961, a worm measuring 75 mm. (97 setigers) was collected by breaking open a dead coral stone taken from Palk Bay near Mandapam at a depth of 1 metre and was identified as *Leonnates jousseumei* Gravier. Plate I shows the anterior end of the animal which exhibited an interesting type of abnormality. A dorso-lateral split has occurred at the anterior end affecting the first three setigers only, as a result of which it is divided into two unequal members. The smaller member on the right side carries four tentacular cirri and a single poorly developed palp. The

ventral portion is chitinized and all the mouth parts, except the soft paragnaths in the form of soft conical papillae, are missing. The larger member on the left side is more or less normal, slightly shifted towards the left from the median axis of the worm and carries a prostomium with four eyes, a single poorly developed palp, and a tentacular cirrus. The remaining three tentacular cirri are missing and their positions are indicated by three short cirrophores. The tentacles are also missing from the prostomium. The small horny paragnaths on the maxillary and the



soft conical papillae on the oral rings of the proboscis, which carries a pair of curved horny jaws, are normal. The ventral side of the proboscis is not chitinized. The parapodia on either side of the affected segments are normal. From the 4th setiger onwards the animal is normal with a parapodia carrying a dorsal bundle of homogomph spinigerous setae and a ventral bundle of falcate homogomphs with the terminal pieces hooked at the apex and serrate on the convex border. The colour of the animal is dark brown with a brownish horizontal red line on each segment on the dorsal side. There is a dark spot also at the base of the dorsal rami in each segment.

We have not come across such a type of abnormality in Nereids so far and it is quite clear that an injury has occurred to the worm at the dorso-lateral angle

affecting the first three anterior segments above the base of the parapodia and the healing has not united the damaged parts.

We wish to express our thanks to Mr. P. R. S. Tampi for the photograph.

Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute,
Mandapam Camp.

K. RANGARAJAN
C. SANKARANKUTTY

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ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *MICROPROSTHEMA VALIDUM* STIMPSON IN INDIAN WATERS

Gravely (1927) recorded this species under the name *Stenopus robustus* and observed that it 'is not uncommon under stones on the reef south of Krusadai Island and in similar situations on Shingle Island'. Even though there is no reason to question the validity of the above observation, it is surprising that this species has not been recorded since then. I collected a single male from under the Adams bridge, Pamban, in 1959. The animal was found lurking in a depression on a submerged piece of rock, the colour of its translucent body harmonising very well with that of the stone. Scarcely was the animal touched with the tip of a forceps when it simply dropped its large chelipeds giving one the impression that it does not care the loss of such a formidable weapon. Autotomy is widespread among decapods, but it is generally resorted to as a means of escape. Here there was hardly sufficient provocation.

Holthuis (1946) has given a detailed description of this species emphasising its synonymy and intra-specific variation. In his subsequent publication (1955) he has reproduced Borradaile's (1910) figure which is not quite satisfactory. To my knowledge this species has not been satisfactorily figured. I give below a short illustrated description of this species so that the animal, if come across, could be easily distinguished by the successive batches of students who visit this locality every year.

Rostrum straight, reaching well beyond the antennular peduncle, with five dorsal spines, ventral or lateral spines absent. Dorsal surface of carapace spiny, lateral borders, especially its anterior half, with large spines. Cervical groove deep and arched forwards. Dorsal carina of first two abdominal segments very prominent, that of third indistinct. Telson as long as uropods, with a pronounced basal constriction, lateral border with two teeth, one median and the other distal, distal border of telson with a median spine, the border between the spines setose. Dorsal side of telson with two pairs of basal spines and two oblique longitudinal carinae, each with three sharp teeth.

Peduncle of the eye with three or four spines. Basal joint of antennular peduncle with a prominent stylocerite, second joint with a large outer and two small inner spines. Antennal scale broad, its outer border with three sharp spines behind the