

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

REFERENCE

- FAUVEL, P. 1953. *The Fauna of India including Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya*. The Indian Press, Allahabad, 1-507.

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

spine-like apex. Merus of second pereiopod with three denticles. Third pereiopod massive, merus and carpus triangular in cross section, edges spiny, some of the spines large. Propodus oblong, with pustulose surface and a high dorsal crest with spiny border. Dactylus curved, slightly longer than the fixed finger and with two teeth closing on either side of a single tooth on the fixed finger. Fourth and fifth legs

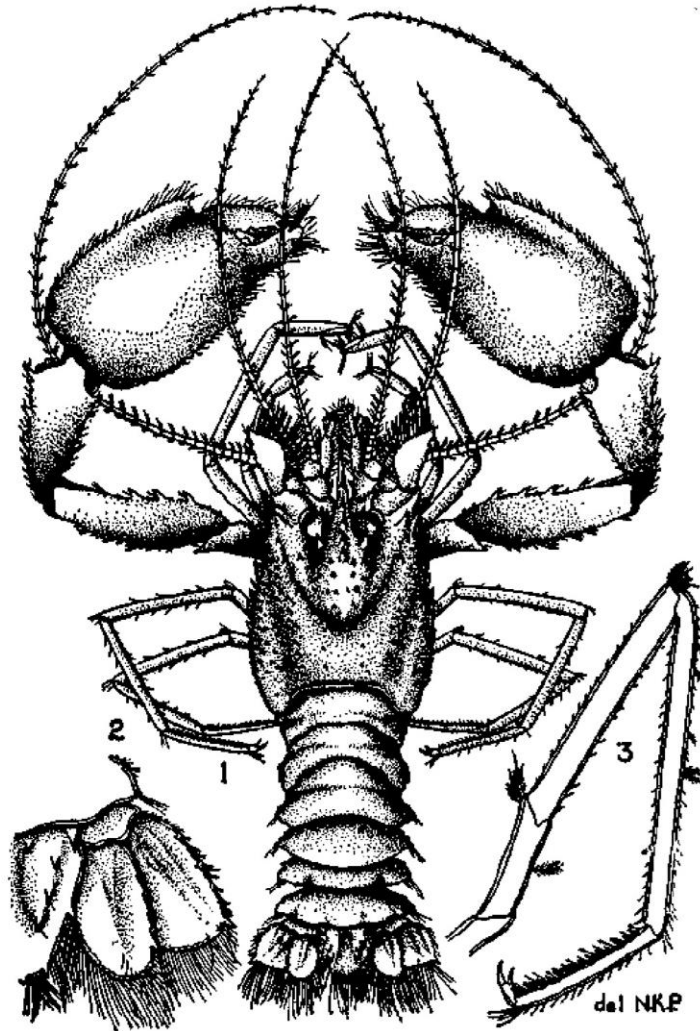


FIG. 1. *Microprosthema validum* Stimpson. 1. male, dorsal view; 2. uropod and telson; 3. penultimate leg.

subsimilar, propodus with a ventral row of fourteen to fifteen spines, carpus not divided, dactylus prominently biunguiculate. Exopod of uropod broader than endopod, its outer border with a row of ten teeth, the last tooth enlarged, dorsal

surface with two carinae. Endopod with a single dorsal carina, its outer border with five teeth, fifth tooth large and placed slightly away from the tip.

Total length 14.0 mm., length of carapace 6.0 mm.

Marine Biological Laboratory,
Trivandrum 7.

N. KRISHNA PILLAI

REFERENCES

- BORRADAILE, L. A. 1910. *Trans. Linn. Soc. Zool.*, ser. 2, 13 : 257-264.
GRAVELY, F. H. 1927. *Bull. Madras Govt. Mus.*, n.ser. 1, pt. 1 : 135-155.
HOLTHUIS, L. B. 1946. *Temminckia*, 7 : 1-178.
———. 1955. *Zool. Verhand.*, no. 26 : 1-157.

A RECORD OF *PANULIRUS PENICILLATUS* (OLIVIER) FROM THE INSHORE WATERS OFF QUILON (KERALA)*

Panulirus dasypus Latreille (Gravely 1927), *P. ornatus* Fabricius (Rai 1933 ; Chopra 1939 & 1943) and *P. polyphagus* Herbert (Chopra 1939 & 1943) and *P. burgeri* de Haan are the common species of lobsters recorded from the catches of the Indian coasts. In addition *P. versicolor* Latreille is not altogether uncommon along the Kerala coast. Alcock in 1901 described *P. angulatus* and indicated its availability in the Gulf of Mannar. This species is probably synonymous with *Peurulus sewelli* referred to in the scientific reports of the John Murray Expedition (Ramadan 1938). During the recent lobster gear investigations conducted from this Station with specially designed bottom-set gill nets along the south-west coast of India, in one net operated off Tangassery point (Quilon), a single large sized lobster, which is distinctly different from all others obtained at this place as well as from other fishing centres namely Varkala, Vizhinjam and Colachel-Muttam, was caught. On identification, it has been found to be *Panulirus penicillatus* (Olivier). So far the availability of this species and its occurrence along the Indian coasts have not been indicated in any of the published records.

The present note embodies a short description of the specimen collected at Quilon. According to the accounts of Barnard (1950), Sheard (1941) and especially de Man (1916), the general distribution of this species is throughout the whole of the Indo-Pacific from Gulf of Akaba to Fusan (Korea), Hawaii and Gambier Islands, New Hebrides, East Indies, North coast of Australia, Pacific Islands and Red Sea.

Topography of the place of capture :—One unit of bottom set gill nets of length 250 meshes, depth 10 meshes and 6" mesh made of nylon was set in the evening of 19-1-1960 at a place situated $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile off Tangassery point (8° 53-54' N Latitude and 76° 34' E Longitude). The depth of water was between 3 and 3½ fathoms and bottom was sandy with patches of laterite rocks, covered predominantly with a weedy vegetation. A second unit of net was laid parallel about 100 yards away in depth between

* Contribution No. 35 from the Central Fisheries Technological Research Station (Craft and Gear Wing), Cochin.