

**A NEW RECORD OF *PANULIRUS LONGIPES* (MILNE EDWARDS)  
FROM THE SOUTHWEST COAST OF INDIA**

The lobster fishery of the southwest coast of India, in the rocky coast, south of Trivandrum, mostly contributed by the species *Panulirus homarus* (Linnaeus) has gained considerable importance due to the increasing demands for frozen lobster tails for export. During a regular sampling of this species for biological studies, on 12-12-1963, a specimen which was found to differ in several characteristics from *P. homarus* was obtained and identified as *Panulirus longipes* (Milne Edwards).

Although several species of *Panulirus* have been recorded as occurring along the Indian coasts by various authors, Alcock (1901), Gravely (1927), Rai (1933), Chopra (1939 & 1943), Prasad and Tampi (1957 & 1959), Miyamoto and Shariff (1961), Balasubramanyan *et al.* (1960 & 1961), Satyanarayana (1961) and George (1965), *P. longipes* has never been recorded before from this area. This species has a distribution in the Indian Ocean reef areas, being recorded from Zanzibar, Mauritius and Western Australia. Recently De Bruin (1960 & 1962) recorded this species in Ceylon (as *P. japonicus*). A great deal of confusion exists at present regarding the *P. japonicus*—*P. longipes* complex of Palinuridae, a revision of which is needed, as expressed by George (1962). Such a revision is being published by Dr. L. B. Holthuis and R. W. George in collaboration (personal communication). Meanwhile, the present specimen is found to agree with *P. longipes* in all diagnostic features in comparison to *P. japonicus* (Van Seibold) and *P. cygnus* George and hence reported as a new record from the area.

**Material:** 1 female specimen in total length 185 mm. and carapace length 64 mm. collected from a lobster trap catch off Muttom on the southwest coast of India from a depth of 10 m. (Lat. 8° 10' N., Long. 77° 11' E.).

The antennular plate has 8 spines, four on each side, posterior to the principal pair of spines. A few smaller spines and tufts of setae are also present on this plate. The two sharp spines on the posterior margin of the thoracic sternum pre-

sent, though one is slightly blunt. The triangular plate 'D' of the plueron of the first abdominal segment is not divided by a vertical hairy groove. A clear band of setae is present across the posterior half of the first abdominal segment between the transverse groove and the posterior margin. Such bands are also evident in the succeeding two segments although the setae are scarce.

Dr. R. W. George is of opinion that *P. longipes* could be separated into two probable sub-species—a spotted legged form (ref. De Bruin *op. cit.*) in the Indian Ocean and a striped legged form in the Western Pacific (personal communication). The former has spots at the distal region of the merus, carpus and propodus with two more spots, one in the middle and the other in the proximal region of the merus, interrupting the thin white stripes on the dorsal surface of the legs, and the latter without these spots on the merus interrupting the white stripes. The colour markings on the legs of the present specimen agree with the spotted legged form of the Indian Ocean.

Central Marine Fisheries Research Sub-station,  
Ernakulam-6.

M. J. GEORGE  
P. VEDAVYASA RAO

#### REFERENCES

- ALCOCK, A. 1901. *A descriptive catalogue of the Indian Deep-Sea Decapoda (Macrura and Anomala) in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.* 286 pp.
- BALASUBRAMANYAN, R., SATYANARAYANA, A. V. V. AND SADANANDAN, K. A. 1960. *Indian J. Fish.*, 7 : 407-422.
- . 1961. *Ibid.*, 8 (1) : 269-285.
- CHOPRA, B. N. 1939. *J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.*, 41 (2) : 221-234.
- . 1943. *Proc. Indian Sci. Cong.*, 30 (2) : 153-173.
- DE BRUIN, G. H. P. 1960. *Fish. Res. Stat. Dept. of Fish Ceylon. Bull. No. 9.*
- . 1962. *Ibid. Bull. No. 14.*
- GEORGE, M. J. 1965. 'Symposium on Crustacea.' *Mar. biol. Assn. India.* (under publication).
- GEORGE, R. W. 1962. *J. Roy. Soc. W. Aust.*, 45 (4) : 100-110.
- GRAVELY, F. H. 1927. *Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., Nat. Hist. Ser.*, 1 (1) : 135-155.
- MIYAMOTO, H. AND SHARIFF, A. T. 1961. *Indian J. Fish.*, 8 (1) : 252-268.
- PRASAD, R. R. AND TAMPI, P. R. S. 1957. *Proc. Nat. Inst. Sci. India*, B. 23 : 48-67.
- . 1959. *J. Mar. biol. Assn. India*, 1 (2) : 143-164.
- . 1959. *Proc. Indian Acad. Sci.*, B. 49 (6) : 397-401.
- RAI, H. S. 1933. *J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.* 36 : 884-897.
- SATYANARAYANA, A. V. V. 1961. *J. Mar. biol. Assn. India*, 3 (1 & 2) : 269-270.