

XI. DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF
FRESHWATER CRAB FROM
SOUTHERN INDIA

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PARATELPHUSA (LIOTELPHUSA) MALABARICA, N. SP.

Carapace moderately flat, its length about three-fourths the greatest breadth, its depth about half the length. Under a lens the surface is seen to be minutely pitted, and there are fine oblique striae near the lateral borders; the striae are faintest posteriorly, and behind the short antero-lateral border of the carapace they curve downwards and forwards on to the under-surface of the branchial area. The anterior striae are finely crenulated.

Cervical groove limited to a well-defined crescentic depression forming the posterior boundary of the mesogastric area; on either side of this crescent, about quarter of the way back from its tip, is a somewhat ill-defined groove, which passes backwards and outwards for a short distance. The post-frontal mesogastric furrow is well-defined, and faintly bifurcate posteriorly.

Front slightly more than two-fifths the greatest breadth of the carapace, strongly deflexed, and with the margin almost straight. Both the front and the upper orbital margin have a clearly defined elevated edge. Outer orbital angle moderately prominent; lower orbital margin elevated, and finely crenulated.

Antero-lateral borders of the carapace short, but well-defined, and faintly crenulated; lateral epibranchial tooth small and subacute.

Epigastric crests scarcely distinguishable as distinct elevations, but represented by oblique faintly eroded patches on either side of the mesogastric furrow. Post-orbital crests low, but fairly distinct, commencing at a point nearly behind the inner orbital angle.

Sixth segment of the male abdomen with its proximal and distal ends practically of equal width, but the segment slightly narrower towards the middle; the length of the segment is greater than its breadth.

Antennal flagellum very short.

Terminal joint of mandibular palp bilobed.

Exopodite of the external maxillipeds reaching the middle of the merus, and provided with a well developed flagellum. The ischium is smooth and not grooved, a very faint hollow, best seen at the proximal end, being the sole representative of the usual groove. The merus is much broader than long.

The chelipedes are unequal in the adult male, but not markedly so; in the female the disparity is but slight. The merus and carpus, particularly the former, are squamulose on the upper surface, while the hand is practically smooth; the spine at the inner angle of the carpus is well developed. The fingers in adult males are shorter than the palm, and somewhat unevenly toothed; they gape slightly when closed, while their tips are horny and somewhat blunt.

The legs are a little longer than the smaller cheliped, and their joints, particularly the three terminal ones, are beset with rows and tufts of setose hairs. The dactyli are armed, above and below, with yellow setose spines, a few of which are also seen on the propodi.

The colour of recent spirit specimens is bronze green above, with the undersurface and chelipedes yellowish. The distal halves of the fingers are pale brown.

Dimensions of the carapace in a male:—length 13 mm.; breadth 17 mm.; depth 6 mm.; width of front 6.5 mm. Dimensions of carapace in a female (the largest specimen taken):—length 16 mm.; breadth 21 mm.; depth 9 mm.; width of front 8 mm.

This species can be readily distinguished from the other species which Alcock (Catalogue of the Indian Decapod Crustacea in the collection of the Indian Museum, part I, fasciculus II, p. 109, 1910) assigns to his subgenus *Liotelphusa*. In *L. laevis* (Wood-Mason) from Assam, the carapace is more convex, the post-orbital crest is fainter, and the post-frontal groove shallower; the ischium of the external maxillipeds is longitudinally grooved, and the length of the sixth segment of the male abdomen just equals its distal breadth. From *L. austrina*, Alcock, the only species hitherto known to occur in Southern India, with which it agrees as regards the long sixth abdominal segment in the male, it can readily be differentiated. In *L. austrina*, the front is distinctly bilobed, and the post-orbital crest is very faint, while the ischium of the external maxillipeds is longitudinally grooved. In *Phricotelphusa campestris*, Alcock, from Bengal, there is a similar arrangement of the epigastric crests, but in this species the exopod of the external maxilliped has no flagellum.

Locality.—I obtained nine males and eleven females, one of the latter with young in the abdominal pouch, from a stream near Kavalai, in the Cochin State Forests, last October. The locality is situated at an elevation of about 1,000 feet above sea level. They were living under stones at the side of the stream, in comparatively dry places, and few were actually observed in the water.

Paratelphusa (Barytelphusa) jacquemontii, (Rathbun) was common in the same stream, but this crab was only seen in the water.

The type (Crustacea Reg. No. $\frac{7936}{10}$) is preserved in the Indian Museum.