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***PLACOBDELLA HARASUNDARAI* (HIRUDINEA : GLOSSIPHONIDAE) A NEW SPECIES OF LEECH FROM WEST BENGAL, INDIA**

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INTRODUCTION

A new species of leech *Placobdella harasundarai* is described from West Bengal, and is known by six species of this genus from India. It is distinguished in possessing the following characters. One pair round eyes, Green in colour (in living). Three lines dorsal papilla palpable, others are not so. Breeding season is August to September : Eggs seven to ten in number. One mid ventral line. Anterior sucker triangular in shape. Terminal mouth opening; Posterior sucker almost round in shape. Anterior sucker is one fourth of the posterior sucker.

Placobdella harasundarai sp. nov.

(Fig. 1 & 2)

Holotype : Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 3222/1, 1 ex., Coll. C. K. Mandal, 1.9.2002, Harasundarai pond, Vojerhat, South 24-Parganas, West Bengal, India.

Paratypes : Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 3223/1, Coll. C. K. Mandal, 1.9.2002, 1 ex., Harasundari pond, Vojerhat, South 24-Parganas, West Bengal, India.

Diagnosis : *Colour* : Green in colour in living, so beautiful that it is named as Green Queen leech of South 24-Parganas, Harasundari pond. The colour becomes faded in preserved state.

Body : Not transparent, so caeca are not visible. Body bears 60–65 segments.

Sucker : Anterior sucker triangular in shape, posterior sucker almost round in shape.

Length : The total length of *Placobdella harasundarai* 4.5–4.6 mm.

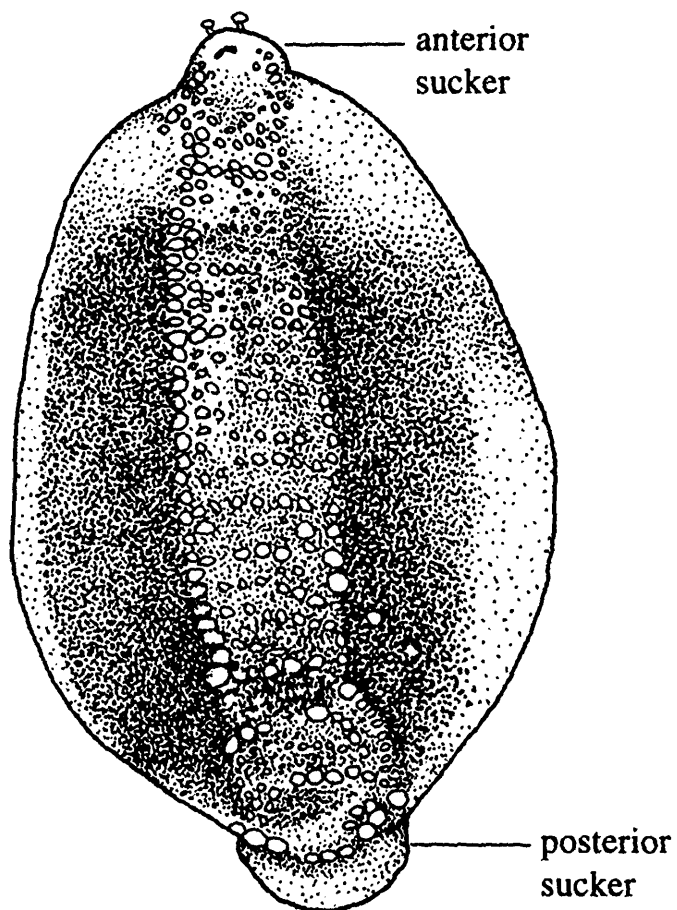


Fig. 1. : Dorsal view of the Leech *Placobdella harasundarai*.

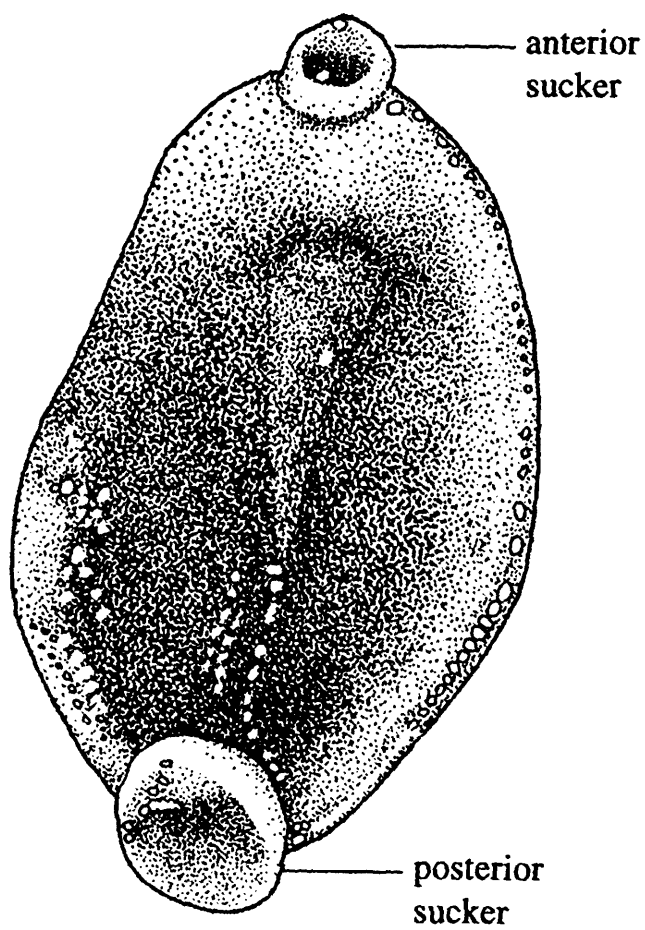


Fig. 2. : Ventral view of the Leech *Placobdella harasundarai*.

Breadth : 2.5 mm. and 3 mm. consecutively.

Distribution : India : West Bengal (Harasundari pond, Vojerhat, South 24-Parganas).

Breeding Season : August to September. During this time they form eggs and bear on the ventral side of the body. They bear 7–10 eggs around the gonopore in jelly like structure.

Remarks : The specific name is proposed according to the name of collection spot.

Comparision : Eyes one pair, round in shape in *Placobdella harasundarai*, coma shaped in *Placobdella emydae*, cup shaped in *Placobdella horai*, *Placobdella indica*, *Placobdella undulata* and three pairs of eyes in *Placobdella ceylanica*. Mouth opening triangular in *Placobdella harasundarai* but almost round in other six species. Posterior sucker is 1/4 of the broadest part of the body in *Placobdella harasundarai* and almost circular in shape. Circular posterior sucker of *Placobdella ceylanica* is 1/2 of the greatest width of the body, in *Placobdella emydae* posterior sucker is narrower than the widest part of the body, less than 1/2 of the body width in *Placobdella fulva*, almost 1/3 in *Placobdella horai* and *Placobdella undulata*. Breeding season in *Placobdella harasundarai* is August to September, May-July in *Placobdella emydae*, June-July in *Placobdella fulva* and *Placobdella horai*, May-July in *Placobdella undulata*. *Placobdella ceylanica* is parasitic on molluscs, frogs and turtles, *Placobdella emydae* on turtles, *Placobdella fulva* on fish and molluscs, *Placobdella horai* on prawn, fishes, *Placobdella undulata* on fishes, *Placobdella indica* on molluscs and *Placobdella harasundarai* on insect larvae and molluscs.

Host and Habitat : It is found in the pond, lakes under the submerged articles at the root of the water hyacinth or on the molluscs shells.

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