

A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS *PARACTAEA* GUINOT 1969,
(CRUSTACEA : DECAPODA : XANTHIDAE) FROM ANDAMANS

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ABSTRACT

A new species of a recently described genus *Paractaea* Guinot 1969, from Andaman is described. The new species is closely related to *A. remota* Rathbun 1907, but clearly differs from it in the morphological detail.

INTRODUCTION

While studying the unnamed collection lying in the section, the author came across with an interesting crab from Andaman. This is an unique new species of the genus *Paractaea*. Members of the subfamily Actaeinae Alcock 1898, are well represented in India with the exception of *Paractaea indica* n. sp.

Genus *Paractaea* Guinot

Paractaea Guinot 1969 : 241.

The carapace of the crab broadly oval in shape, moderately convex in both the directions. The entire dorsal surface is divided by broad, deep, grooves into convex, regional and subregional lobules. All these lobules are in turn covered with small, uniform, pearly granules, imbedded in between the short, thick, light coloured fur. The grooves that separating the regional lobules are also covered with similar fur. Outer surfaces of the chelipeds and the leg joints

granular and may or may not adorned with granular lobules, sometimes these lobules on appendages are obsolete. Front may be prolonged and vertically deflexed (in *rufopunctata* group) or only slightly convex (in *retusa* group). Outer corner of front separated from the inner supra orbital angle. The antero-lateral sides of carapace cut into five lobes (in *rufopunctata* group) or into four lobes (in *retusa* group). In *Paractaea* the basal antenna segment is more robust and wider than in *Actaea*.

Chelipeds equal or subequal, wrist of palm very swollen and more prominent than palm, outer surfaces of both the segments and leg joints may or may not be nodular.

Male abdomen five jointed, 3-5 joints fused.

Remarks : A group of species of the genus *Actaea* were redesignated as *Paractaea* by Guinot because of their very clean and clearly visible lobular carapace sculpture. Outer surfaces of these lobules and appendages are covered closely with small, uniform,

pearly granules, which are very clearly imbedded into the thick, short, brown fur. This carapace sculptures are very species specific and it is very easy to distinguish even the most juvenile and smallest by this character.

Paractaea indica n. sp.

(Pl. IV, Fig. 1)

Holotype: One male, width-11 mm, Length-7 mm. Front-2 mm collected from Sta. 625, Andamans, date of coll. March, 1914. Z. S. I. Reg. No. C2172/2. Paratype 1 male, Malacca, Car Nicobar, 23-3-1959; Z. S. I. Reg. No. C3576/2.

Description of male: Carapace broad, transversely oval in shape, thick, more strongly convex antero-posteriorly than from side to side. The entire dorsal surface of carapace divided into convex regional lobules by broad, deep, hairy grooves. All the regional lobules are closely covered with pearly granules of uniform size and short, brown, soft hairs. The granules are visible

to the naked eye. The grooves that divided the carapace are covered with thick, short, brown hairs. Lobules IM distinct from the inner lobe of divided 2M. Mesogastric area, i.s. 3M is very distinctly three lobed. Other lobules such as 4M, IP, 2P, 2L-6L all these lobules are very clear. Front bilobed, deflexed downwards, free edge rounded and entire, separated from the inner supra orbital corner by a notch. Outer corner of frontal lobe not recognisable. Orbits small, rounded and surrounded by granular lobules, dorsally.

Long, convex, antero-lateral sides cut into four, broad, shallow granular lobes, excluding the outer orbital corner. Postero-lateral sides short, concave and convergent.

Chelipeds are equal in male, thickly covered with short, brown, soft fur and granules, which continues upto the 2/3 of the base of both the fingers. Outer surfaces of very swollen wrists and rather compressed palms not at all dimpled or lobular. Fingers short, curved and light brown in colour, tips of fingers are broad, fluted, bare, and white in colour. Leg joints rather short, compressed,

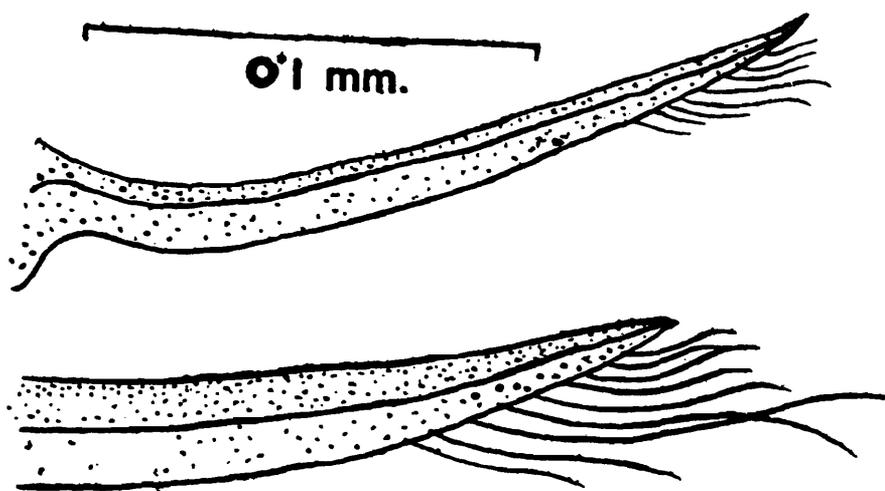


Fig. 1. Anterior male pleopod

covered with sharp granules and thick brown hairs, below the hairs granules are concealed. No indications of nodules present on leg joints. Under surface of the crab is also scantily hairy but not as valvate as the upper surfaces and appendages.

Anterior male pleopod is straight, grooved, tubular process, apex not very acute in shape. Inner subapical area adorned with a cluster of long setae.

Remarks : *Paractaea indica* Deb is a smooth, clean appearing species. Its lobular textural pattern of carapace are very nicely visible and distinctness of this design is not same or similar with the other known species of the genus. The lobular pattern of carapace of *P. indica* Deb has got some similarity with the *A. remota* Rathbun 1907, but the former does not fully correspond with the later because of the shape of mesogastric area i.e. 3M, which is distinctly separated into 3 lobules in *P. indica* and its anterior lobe is very small and narrow, unlike the *A. remota*. In *P. indica* Deb the inner lobule of proto-gastric areolae i.e. 2M is continuous with the 1M anteriorly, like *P. monodi* Guinot 1969, P. 259, but the lobular textural pattern of the rest of the carapace and chelipeds are very specific which do not correspond with the *P. monodi*.

Dr. Guinot comments that "It is an unique new specimen, it is neither present in Odhner's 1925 nor in my revision of this genus."

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DEB

PLATE IV

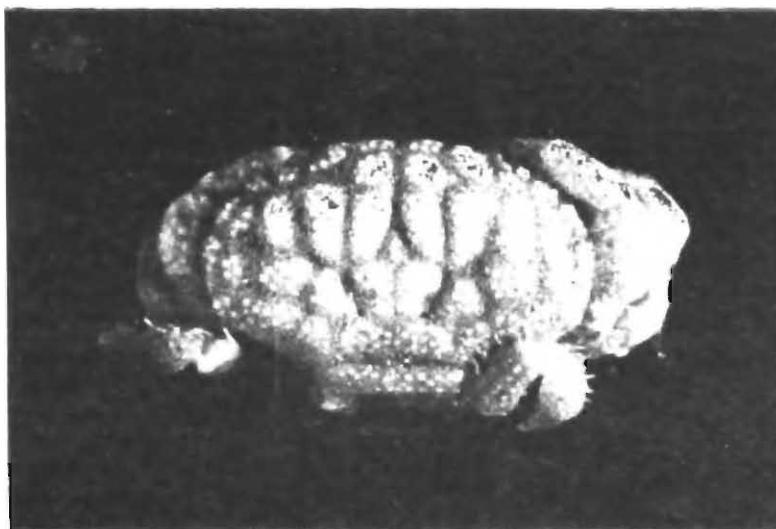


Fig. 1. *Paractaea indica* Deb.