

ANOTHER NEW SPECIES OF *NICHOLLSIA* (CRUSTACEA : ISOPODA : PHREATOICOIDEA)

By KRISHNA KANT TIWARI, *Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta*

A few months back my colleague, Shri A. G. K. Menon, collected several amphipods and a few isopods from an abandoned well at Monghyr in Bihar. The isopods, on examination, proved to belong to the subterranean phreatoicoid genus *Nichollisia* Chopra and Tiwari,¹ so far known by a single species, *N. kashiense* Chopra and Tiwari, from wells at Banaras and Lahagara in Uttar Pradesh. In general appearance and structure of mouth-parts, peraeopods and pleopods, the specimens from Monghyr resemble *N. kashiense*, but due to certain salient differences in the head and telson, I propose to accommodate these in a new species.

As a very complete description of the general body structure and the structure of appendages is already available for *N. kashiense*, I shall, in the following paragraphs, enumerate only such features in which the present species differs from the only other known species of this genus.

Order ISOPODA

Suborder PHREATOICOIDEA

Family NICHOLLSIDAE

*Nichollisia menoni*², sp. nov.

This species differs from *N. kashiense* in the following characters :

The angular projection of the fronto-lateral corner of the head is much shorter and less conspicuous (text-fig. 1*b*, *c*). The subocular incisure is represented by a small indentation. The suborbital notch is inconspicuous. The genal groove is present.

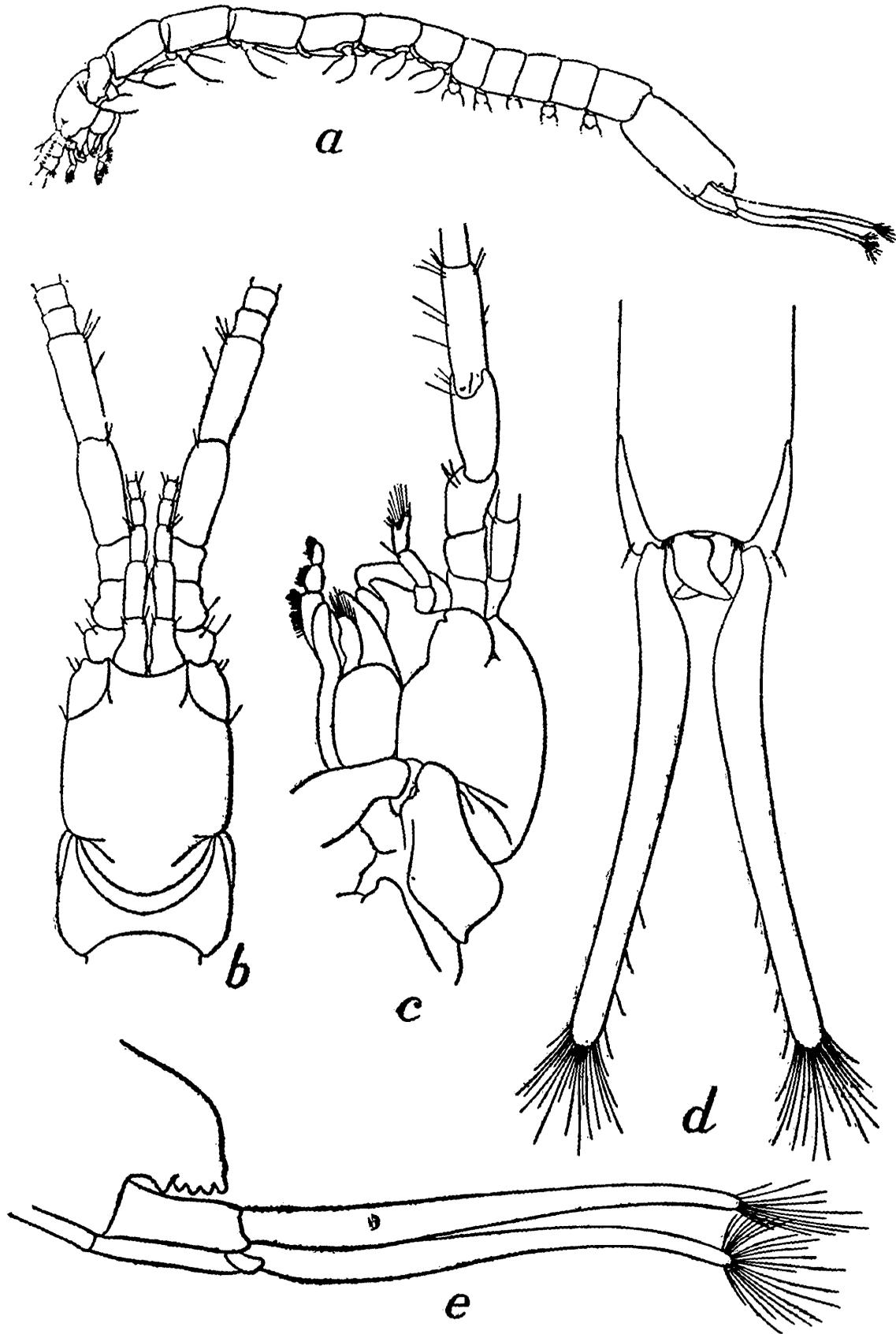
The postero-lateral edge of telson is convex and smooth in its upper half, but the lower part is crenulate (text-fig. 1*e*). In dorsal view the posterior margin of the telson, therefore, appears smooth and does not show bidentate angles (text-fig. 1*d*). The inner ramus of uropod is shorter than in *N. kashiense*, more stout with a broader basal region and more strongly curved apical half.

The filiform antennule consists of 14 joints, being a shade shorter than in *N. kashiense*. The antenna has a five-jointed peduncle and a flagellum consisting of 36 segments. In *N. kashiense* the antennal

¹ Chopra, B. N., & Tiwari, K. K., *Rec. Indian Mus.*, XLVII, pp. 277-290, pls. xvii-xx (1950).

² Named after Shri A. G. K. Menon, who collected the specimens.

flagellum is shorter, having only 30 joints. When stretched back, the antenna extends as far back as the posterior margin of the fourth pereon segment.



TEXT-FIG. 1.—*Nichollisia menoni*, sp. nov.

a. Entire animal (holotype), lateral view: $\times 5$; b. Head, dorsal view: $\times 17\frac{1}{2}$; c. Head, lateral view: $\times 17\frac{1}{2}$; d. Tailpiece, dorsal view: $\times 17\frac{1}{2}$; e. Tailpiece, lateral view: $\times 17\frac{1}{2}$.

The largest male is about 16 mm. long. The three females measure 12.6, 12.5 and 8.7 millimetres in length. The shortest specimen is a male measuring only 7.9 millimetres, in which the penes are absent, but the appendix masculina on the endopod of second pleopod is developed.

Type-specimens.—Holotype ♂, Regd. No. C3521/1, Z. S. I.

Paratypes 4♂, 3♀ Regd. No. C3522/1, Z. S. I.

Type locality.—Well in the Dak Bungalow, Monghyr (Bihar). Coll. A. G. K. Menon, dated 22-11-1955.

Remarks.—While describing *N. kashiense*, Chopra and Tiwari (*loc. cit.*) had hinted at the possibility of a rather wider distribution of *Nichollsia* in the Gangetic Plains. The occurrence of the present species from Monghyr in Bihar was thus not wholly unexpected.

So far no phreatoicoids have been recorded from surface waters in India, or any other part of the world excepting Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand and Cape Province of South Africa.

The Indian genus, which now contains two species, is subterranean and is so far known to occur in wells only.

It is interesting to observe that though not separated by a big geographical gap, the forms from U. P. and Bihar are different specifically. This is probably due to their specialised subterranean habitat which does not apparently permit free mixing of populations from the two regions.