

A NOTE ON ABNORMALITY IN CRAB LARVA

ABSTRACT

An abnormality in the telson of the IVth zoea stage of *Ethusa investigatoris* Alcock is reported. The specimen collected off Cochin was found to have a poorly developed telson fork.

Abnormalities in adult crabs have been reported by several authors. Sankarankutty (1959) recorded the total absence of a walking leg from the right side in *Thalamita integra* (Dana) and also the absence of some of the antero-lateral teeth in certain specimens of the same species. Noble (1964) has described an abnormality in the left chela of *Portunus sanguinolentus* (Herbst). James (1966) also reported an anomaly in the cheliped of *Portunus pelagicus* (Linnaeus). But records of abnormalities in their larval stages are very few. Hence an abnormality noticed in the zoea of a crab is reported here. The material was obtained from a plankton sample collected off Cochin on 19-5-'72, during the U. N. D. P. Pelagic Fishery Project Survey Cruises, along the South West coast of India.

The specimen at hand has all the characters excepting the telson which resembles with the IVth zoeal stage of the dorippid crab *Ethusa investigatoris* Alcock, described by Menon (1937). The nature of the telson makes it clear that it is only an abnormality of this particular zoea. A comparison of the telson with the normal telson of IVth zoea of *E. investigatoris* (Fig. 1 a & b)

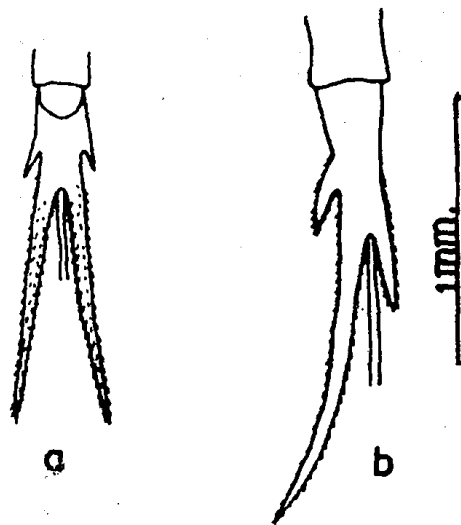


Fig 1 (a) Telson of the IVth zoeal stage of *Ethusa investigatoris*, Alcock. (After Menon, 1937).

(b) Abnormal telson of the same. IVth zoeal stage.

shows that one half of the telson fork is not developed properly and is only one quarter of the length of the other fork. The lateral spine on that side is also lacking. The two long setae in the middle of the telson fork are present in both, thereby giving more evidence to the fact that the condition of the telson in the present specimen is only an abnormality.

REFERENCES

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