NOTES AND NEWS

AUTHENTIC RECORD OF A PALAEMONID PRAWN, MACROBRACHIUM SCABRICULUM (HELLER, 1862) (DECAPODA, PALAEMONIDAE), FROM MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Of the 770-800 species of freshwater Caridea (Decapoda) (De Grave et al., 2015), the genus Macrobrachium Spence Bate, 1868, comprises about 243 species (De Grave & Fransen, 2011), with a high diversity in the Oriental Region. Of these 243 species, 59 are known from India at present (De Grave & Fransen, 2011; Radhakrishnan et al., 2012), of which 10 from Maharashtra (Pati & Sharma, 2012) and 37 from the Western Ghats of India (Raghavan et al., 2015).

Macrobrachium scabriculum (Heller, 1862) [type locality Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)] is a widespread species known from some places in south India and from Southeast Asian countries, with the Philippines being its eastern limit (Henderson & Matthai, 1910; Wowor & Choy, 2001; Cai & Ng, 2002; Cai & Shokita, 2006). To our knowledge, only a single record of this species exists in the ‘Maharashtra State Gazeteer — Fauna’ checklist (Kunte, 1974) that does not include taxonomic information. A recent checklist of palaemonids from Maharashtra by Pati & Sharma (2012) does not include this species. Also, to date no detailed photographic illustrations have been provided for this species from India.

The aim of this note is, therefore, to present a brief taxonomic diagnosis of M. scabriculum from Pune and illustrate diagnostic characters. We comment on the morphological differences between the specimens studied and the closely related Macrobrachium lanatum Cai & Ng, 2002, described from Myanmar [= Burma], citing reasons for this comparison later.

Observations and photographs were taken under a Leica stereomicroscope with a Canon PowerShot S50. For some parts, specimens were dissected or lightly

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stained with Methylene Blue for contrast. Several images were taken at different levels and stacked with Combine ZP/ZM freeware. Live images were taken with a Canon PowerShot only. Adobe Photoshop CS3 student edition was used for photo-editing. For the major part of the description the taxonomic terms of Short (2004) were followed.

**BRIEF REDESCRIPTION**

**Family PALAEOMONIDAE** Rafinesque, 1815  
**Genus Macrobrachium** Spence Bate, 1868  
**Macrobrachium scabriculum** (Heller, 1862)

Material examined.— Five specimens (3 males and 2 females) were collected from Ramnadi River at Baner, Pune, Maharashtra, in June 2006, by H. V. Ghate and Nilesh Rane. Specimens were brought to the laboratory, photographed to note live coloration and later preserved in 70% ethanol.

Total length of males 44, 47 and 52 mm, and females 44 mm (from tip of rostrum to end of telson). Carapace length of two males 14 mm, and females 11 and 12 mm. Live coloration of male and female is shown in fig. 1A; note the blue-green on the brownish body: a median pale brown band, flanked on either side with blue-green patches and bluish-green circular bands on the pereiopods. Male with a modified, sexually dimorphic second pereiopod (on the right-hand side in this case), which is longer and stouter than the left second pereiopod, and has dense matt-velvety pubescence on palm or manus; approximately one-third proximal part of fingers (pollex and dactylus) bearing several teeth; visible part of fingers dark-blue to black, with whitish tubercles in male, while in female both fingers have 2 blue rings each. Tips of fingers are light brown in both male and female. This coloration is lost after preservation and the prawn becomes dull yellow-brown. In the pair shown here the male is as long as the female. Since detailed morphology and variations of this species are known, we are giving only a brief note on some characters, with respect to the sexually dimorphic second pereiopod in the male.

Diagnostic characters observed in one male of our specimens are: moderately long, about 52 mm; whole palm and proximal one third of fingers of major second pereiopod covered by dense velvety pubescence (figs. 1A, 2A); carpus (10.5 mm) shorter than palm (or manus, 15 mm) and almost equal to merus (10 mm); major second pereiopod with fingers (15.1 mm) about equal to palm length (fig. 2B), with 14 distinct and a couple of very indistinct teeth on dactylus; pollex or fixed finger with a single, proximal, large tooth, fitting between third and fourth teeth of dactylus, and with a total of 17 distinct teeth (fig. 2C-D); length of scaphocerite almost three times its maximum width (fig. 1B); rostral formula: 14 teeth (last three widely separated) dorsally (6 post orbital) and 2 teeth ventrally, area in-between