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An assemblage of marine ornamental shrimp, *Rhynchocinetes durbanensis* off Karnataka coast

Rhynchocinetes durbanensis, commercially known as ‘hinge-beak shrimp’, ‘candy shrimp’, ‘camel shrimp’ or ‘dancing shrimp’ is a highly sought after ornamental shrimp. Studies by CMFRI revealed the details of a



Fig. 1. Camel shrimp

coral reef ecosystem existing around ‘Netrani’ island off Murdeswar. During the survey, a significant assemblage of marine ornamental shrimps, *Rhynchocinetes durbanensis* was observed around the island along with many rare ornamental fishes. The ‘dancing shrimp’ is distinguished by its red body with white stripes and a moveable rostrum (beak) that is

usually angled upwards (Fig. 1). It is often seen moving around with sudden stops, as if dancing and therefore gets the common name ‘dancing shrimp.’ It is reported to have a variable pattern of red and white stripes on its body and grows up to 2 to 3". The species prefers to congregate with other shrimp of its kind in rock crevices, or in the coral rubble. In international market, a shrimp of size 3/4" to 1-1/2" is worth around 6 US dollars.

‘Dancing shrimp’ is often termed as an associated fauna of ‘giant clam’ *Tridacna* spp. and incidentally ‘giant clams’ also were found to occur along the coral reef around Netrani island and this is the first record of the species from the west coast of India. It was reported to be a coral reef associated species and conservation of the coral reefs is therefore essential for the survival of the species.

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