

**OCCURRENCE OF THE CRAB *CALAPPA LOPHOS* (HERBST)  
IN TRAWLER LANDINGS AT SASSOON DOCKS, BOMBAY**

**M. ARAVINDAKSHAN AND K. S. SUNDARAM**

*Bombay Research Centre of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute.*

**ABSTRACT**

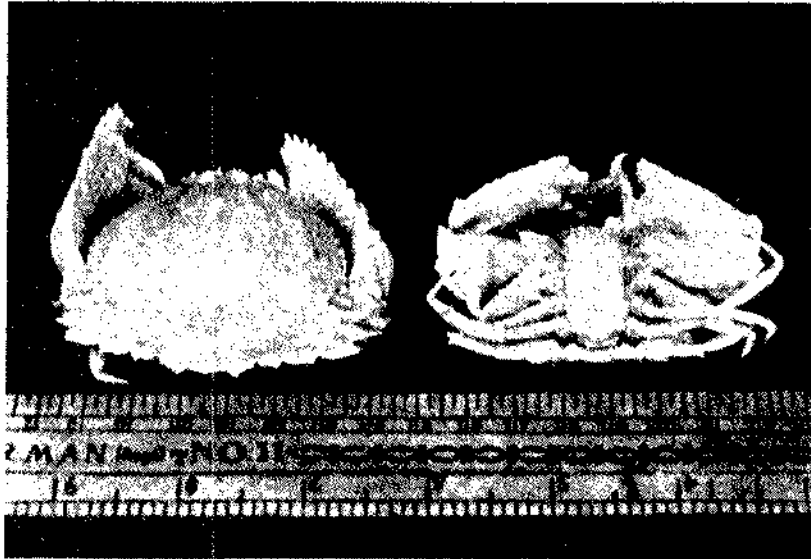
An instance of the crab *Calappa lophos* suddenly appearing in commercial quantities in the trawl catches at Sassoon dock, successively in two years, is reported.

Although crabs belonging to the genus *Calappa* have been recorded by many authors from Indian waters, these records are of systematic importance, their occurrence in commercial quantities have not been reported. However, Sekharan et al (1963), collecting *C. philargius* from Mangalore market, indicated that they are edible.

*Calappa lophos* (Fig. 1) popularly known as "shame face crab" and locally called, in marathi, "Khekada" is an Indo-Pacific species and has been reported from both the coasts of India. This crab was landed in noticeable quantities at Sassoon dock in June of both 1980 and 1981, amounting to 1 and 0.5 tonnes respectively in the two years. Its occurrence was regular during the entire month though not in all the trawlers. The catch rate was 20 kg/unit in 1980 and

31 kg/unit in 1981 with 50 and 16 trawlers, respectively, in operation in the two years. They operated at a depth range of 10-20 m off Bombay coast using 18 m trawls.

The crabs were of medium size ranging between 42-53 mm in carapace length. The sex ratio was 2 : 1, females dominating. The average weight of crabs in the catches was 48 g; berried females constituted about 40% of the landings. The crabs were priced at 50 paise per specimen.



Crabs, especially portunids, are generally edible and larger varieties are in good demand. But calappid crabs are not known to be of any fishery value. The decorative colour and pattern of the shell, coupled with edible nature of the meat, might make *Calappa lophos* esteemed and hotels may prefer this species for serving shell-on preparations. Considering the quantity landed and the consumer acceptance noticed, the need has arisen for further exploration of the area fished, to assess the resources of this species along Maharashtra coast.

The authors are grateful to Dr. M. J. George, Senior Scientist, for kindly going through the manuscript and suggesting suitable modifications.

SEKHARAN, K. V., M. J. PRADHAN AND K. P. MENON. 1953. J. mar. biol. Ass. India IV (1 & 2) 238-39.