

Landing of Squat lobsters



Squat lobster

Landing of a deepsea decapod crustacean generally known as ‘Squat lobster’ was reported from landing centres at Sakthikulangara, Kollam and Kalamukku at Cochin.

About 45 kg of squat lobster caught from a depth of 276 m were landed at Sakthikulangara on 13th December 2006. This is for the first time squat lobsters are reported from the Indian coast. Squat lobsters

are decapod crustaceans of the families Galatheidae and Chirostylidae and the most common genera are *Galathea* and *Munida*.

They belong to the infraorder Anomura. They are not true lobsters and are more closely related to porcelain crabs and hermit crabs. There are 57 known species under the family Galatheidae. The present specimen was provisionally identified as *Munida* sp. pending confirmation of the species. Galatheids are mostly deep water crustaceans and are much smaller than legally harvested size of lobsters. Some of the morphometric measurements were:

Carapace length: 30 mm; total length: 57 mm; length of the first clawed pereopod: 56 mm. The specimens were probably juveniles as the secondary sexual characters were not well developed. The body was flattened, the abdomen typically folded under it and the first pereopods were greatly elongated and chelate. The fifth pair of pereopods was slender and usually hidden within the gill chamber. Sexes were separate. Meat of squat lobsters is sold in restaurants as 'langostine lobster'.

(Crustacean Fisheries Division)