

Largest recorded ridge-back lobsterette, *Nephropsis carpenteri* Wood-Mason, 1885 from Chennai coast

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Deepsea catches landed on 10-02-2011 by larger trawlers at Kasimedu Fishing Harbour, comprised deepsea penaeid shrimps (15% - *Aristeus alcocki*, *Metapenaeopsis andamanensis*, *Solenocera hextii*), pandalid shrimp (25% - *Heterocarpus woodmasoni*), nephropid lobster (40% - *Nephropsis carpenteri*) and fishes (20%). These larger trawlers were operating in the depth range of 200-400 m off Chennai. The size range (total length) for *N. carpenteri* was 45-110 mm

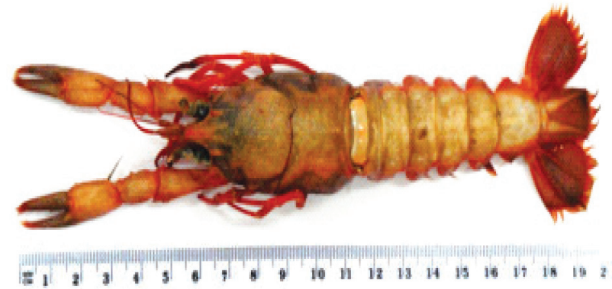


Fig. 1. *Nephropsis carpenteri* from Chennai coast

for males and 61-154 mm for females. According to Alcock (1901), the size of type specimen of Wood-Mason, 1885, who described *N. carpenteri* from the south-east of Chennai (lat. 13° 51' 12" long. 80° 28' 12"E) was 101.5 mm in total length and 33.5 mm in carapace length, which was an egg-laden female. George (1966) recorded 113 mm for an egg-bearing female off Alappuzha, south-west coast, while Holthuis (1991) reported a maximum size of 120 mm for the species. Thirumilu and Rajan (2003) recorded size range of 62 to 124 mm total length for *N. carpenteri* caught off Puducherry and Tamil Nadu coasts. The present record of 154 mm total length and 48 mm

carapace length for an egg-bearing female appears to be the largest size recorded so far for *N. carpenteri*. The colour of fresh specimens of *N. carpenteri* is generally light grayish yellow, while the integument at joints of chelipeds are with red bands. The pereopods and pleopods are reddish. The lower border of abdominal segments on both sides and telson are also red in colour. *N. carpenteri* can be identified from the closely related species such as *Nephropsis stewarti* by the presence of middorsal carina in 3rd to 6th abdominal segments in the former (*N. carpenteri*) and its absence in the latter (*N. stewarti*).