

Ornamental shrimps collected from Kovalam, Chennai coast

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During routine fishing operations with the hooks and line by catamarans off the Kovalam coast, fishermen lookout for floating debris, particularly drifting woods and planks from river drainages during floods, as these floating objects are associated with large fish shoals of carangids, rainbow runners, tunas and breams. These objects normally have algal growth, *Lepas* colonies, barnacles, sponges, ascidian colonies, sea spiders, amphipods and several other associated fauna. A regular assessment of floating debris helps to understand changes induced due to climate change since it provides a profile of faunal distribution along temperature regimes. A sample of such driftwood collected from a depth zone of 40 fathoms provided live specimens of rare but highly valued marine ornamental shrimps. Nearly twelve numbers of white spot anemone shrimp, *Periclimenes brevicarpalis* (Schenkel, 1902) and two numbers of marbled shrimp, *Saron marmoratus* (Olivier, 1811) were collected.



Fig. 1. White spot anemone shrimp *Periclimenes brevicarpalis*

White spot anemone shrimp (11-24 mm TL), *Periclimenes brevicarpalis* (Infra order: Caridea, Family: Palaemonidae) also known as the five spot anemone shrimp or glass anemone shrimp, is transparent along the entire body length providing a clear view of the internal organs. The colour of hepatopancreas keeps changing with the status of nourishment and gonad maturation. Violet colouration at the joints on the legs and 5 spots on the uropod and telson are typical of this shrimp. These anemone shrimps are also known for their “sideways dancing” in aquaria and symbiosis with sea anemones, corals and sea cucumbers. Trade prospects are very high and they are valued at ₹ 1000-1200 per piece.

Marbled shrimp (15-17 mm CL), *Saron marmoratus* (Infra order: Caridea, Family: Hippolytidae) has typical tuft of cirri on the back, greenish to light brown in body color with yellowish and whitish speckled spots, turns more reddish in the night and nocturnal in habit. These shrimps are highly priced in the marine aquarium trade (₹ 400-500 per piece).

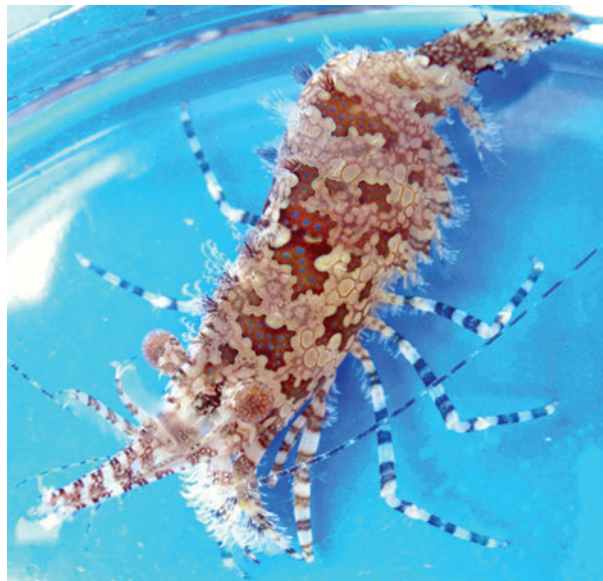


Fig. 2. Marbled shrimp, *Saron marmoratus*