

Recent landings on *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis* from southwest coast of India



Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis Leene, 1938 collected from by-catch landings in Munambam mini harbour

A significant number of *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis* were collected from by-catch landings at Munambam during November-December 2024. A larger quantity was procured in December, with approximately 12 kg of specimens being handpicked from the landings.

Charybdis (Archias) omanensis has two known subspecies, i.e., *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis septentrionalis* previously reported from India and *C. (A.) omanensis omanensis*. The latter subspecies has been recorded in Indian waters for the first time. Hence detailed studies were carried out on morphometric and diagnostic characters and found the species descriptions were similar to those given by Türkay & Spiridonov (2006). The carapace is light brown in colour and anterolateral border bears with

six teeth on either side, and among them sixth is the longest. Chelipeds are almost similar in size and bear granular reddish-brown patches. Second to fourth ambulatory legs are slender and the tips of the dactylus narrower than the other subspecies. Swimming legs with propodus and dactylus flattened and bear numerous fine setae along the borders. The identification of this species is confirmed through several morphological traits, which includes the most distinctive characters which separate from the closely related sub-species. They are, the pointed tips of the median frontal teeth, the twisted downward distal tip of gonopod 1 (a part of the male crab's reproductive system, which helps in transfer of sperms during mating) and the ratio of carapace width to carapace length. Earlier records

on its distribution showed that the species is confined to the western Indian Ocean, specifically the Gulf of Oman and Gulf of Aden. Male and female specimens of the species have been deposited in the Designated National Repository (DNR) of ICAR-CMFRI, Kochi (ED: 5.5.1.10.2). This finding marks a significant addition to India's marine biodiversity and highlights the rich, yet unexplored diversity of the region's marine life

Despite its small size when compared to other portunid crabs in the region, *C. (A.) omanensis omanensis* holds an important role in the ecosystem, especially as a prey species in the food web. However, due to its small size, it currently holds no significant commercial value in the consumer market other than it being used for fishmeal preparation.



A closer view of *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis* Leene, 1938.



Adult male *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis* Leene, 1938.

Based on the samples collected, size range and maturity were recorded in the male and female crabs as given below.

Table 1. Details of *Charybdis (Archias) omanensis omanensis* Leene, 1938.

Sex	Carapace width (mm)	Carapace length (mm)	Total weight (g)	Mature %
Male	21.0 - 44.5	10.0 - 30.0	1.39 -12.89	94.0
Female	24.0 - 40.0	16.0 - 27.0	2.24 - 11.15	93.2

Jose Josileen*, M.T. Vijayan, T. Retheesh, V. Akhil Babu, K.T. S. Sunil, M. A. Jishnudev, Livi Wilson and A. P. Dineshababu | ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Kerala