

Indian scientists discover new deep-sea squid species in Arabian Sea



Scientists of the ICAR–Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have discovered a new species of deep-sea squid from the Arabian Sea—only the second confirmed species of the globally rare genus *Taningia*. The species, scientifically named *Taningia silasii* (Indian octopus squid), has been formally described in the international journal *Marine Biodiversity*.

The specimen was collected from nearly 390 metres depth off the Kollam coast.

Measuring 45 cm in length (dorsal mantle length), the squid belongs to the family Octopoteuthidae, whose adults are known for their distinctive absence of tentacles, though they are true deep-sea squids. The research was led by Geetha Sasikumar, Principal Scientist and Sajikumar K K, Technical Officer.

Decade-long study

“We have been studying cephalopods in the Arabian Sea for more than a decade, and this ‘octopus squid’ was something we had never encountered,” said Geetha Sasikumar. Until now, *Taningia danae*—found in Atlantic waters—was the only known species in this genus. Sajikumar said: “Although called the ‘octopus squid’, it is in fact a squid that possesses only eight arms and lacks the two long tentacles typically seen in other squid species.

Honouring EG Silas

The species has been named in honour of the legendary marine biologist E.G. Silas, former Director of CMFRI and former Vice Chancellor of Kerala Agricultural University, and a pioneer of cephalopod research in India. The research scholars Shijin Ameri and Toji Thomas of CMFRI were also part of the team.