



Sand Lobster

Thenus unimaculatus (Burton and Davie 2007)

- ◆ Sand lobster is distributed in Indian Ocean from West to East and is one of the most promising candidates for lobster aquaculture in India.
- ◆ Breeds all along the Indian coast from December to March. Captive maturation and breeding can be successfully done in FRP and concrete tanks of 3-20 tonnes.
- ◆ Sexes are separate. Mature males are identified on the basis of bright coloured genital opening at the base of the 5th walking legs and general yellowish pigmentation with oranges pleopods and uropods in females.
- ◆ Females mature in a rearing system with 12:12 D:L photoperiod at 26-28°C.
- ◆ Mating occurs during morning and fertilized eggs get attached to the pleopodal setae for incubation, where they incubated for a period of about 5 weeks with change of colour from orange to blackish. A 60-102 mm CL female lays 20,000-60,000 eggs.
- ◆ Late stage ovigerous females are shifted to hatching tanks of 200-300 L capacity, with a filter gun and flow-through to separate hatched phyllosoma stage larvae.
- ◆ Day-one hatch phyllosoma larvae starts feeding in 3 h time and fed with live feeds or particulate diets (clam meat) ranging from 400-2000 microns in sizes as per the molt stages at 6 h interval. There are four phyllosomal stages and each stage takes nearly 4-5 days to moult and grow.
- ◆ Fourth phyllosomal stage changes to post-larval nisto stage before it metamorphoses to a seed. The cycle is completed in 26 days in the lab conditions in water salinity 35-37 ppt.
- ◆ The seed production technology is yet to be adopted at commercial level.



Compiled by: Dr Joe K. Kizhakudan

More information: Director, ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Kerala
Email: director.cmfri@icar.gov.in