

Recent landings of portunid crab *Monomia gladiator* at Cochin Fisheries Harbour



Adult male crab of *Monomia gladiator*

A good landing of *Monomia gladiator* (Fabricius, 1798) was recorded at Cochin Fisheries Harbour on 5th April 2023. Approximately 30 kg of the species was landed along with *Charybdis natator*. In the regular field visits to different landing centres in Kerala, *M. gladiator* generally observed only in very few numbers or

in stray catches. This marine crab has good landings along the east coast; major contribution is from Tamil Nadu, where, good seasonal fishery exists in different coastal areas.

M. gladiator (original name- *Portunus gladiator*) belongs to the family

Portunidae. The carapace is light brown in colour; different regions with distinct patches of reddish brown granules and markings in specific pattern. Carapace is broader than longer, transversely hexagonal with 9 anterolateral teeth and their margins are beset with thick smooth setae; last one is long and stout bearing setae. Frontal margin with four teeth, lateral ones distinctly bigger than the middle two. Chelipeds are stout and robust moderately lined with setae. Second to fourth ambulatory legs are long and gradually decreasing in size from 2nd to 4th and the margins are with tuft of brownish black setae. Fifth one is natatory, posterior border of the propodus is with a clear white band, which is very clear in all the specimens and middle of the dactylus beset with a small white dot. All the ambulatory legs including the natatory are with prominent glabrous longitudinal bands. In males the anterior sternal plates (1-4) are bright orange coloured and granulated, which is very distinct in larger crabs and 5-8 are tomentose covered with brownish black soft setae. Whereas female sternites are white, smooth and granulated; 5-8 sternal plates are non-tomentose.

About 15 kg of sample procured for the sample analysis. The size of the male crabs varied between 51–101 mm (average 80.0 mm) carapace width (CW) and total weight between (TW) 13–101 g (average 53.34 g). In females CW ranged between 49–84 mm (average 68.33 mm) and TW between 14–68 g (average 33.42 g). One male and one female specimens were deposited in the Designated National Repository (DNR) of ICAR-CMFRI with the accession number ED.5.5.4.2.1. The crab is edible, however, in Kerala consumers do not prefer this species unlike other edible portunids.



Monomia gladiator landings (along with *Charybdis natator*) at Cochin Fisheries Harbour

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