



Record Of Freshwater Crab Species *Oziotelphusa Ravi* From Walayar Lake, Kerala State, Southern India.

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CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0	<p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>Field survey in the year of 2019 walayar lake in Kerala state, India. During study period record of one fresh water crab species namely <i>Oziotelphusa ravi</i>, its recently discovered from Nagercoil, in Tamil Nadu state, southern India. This note provided to distribution, Ecological status and conservation of species.</p> <p>Key words; Freshwater crab, <i>Oziotelphusa</i>, Walayar lake ,Southern India.</p>
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Freshwater crabs are one of the most diverse groups among brachyurans with a distribution limited to most of the tropical and subtropical waters (Yeo *et al.*, 2008; Schram and Castro, 2015; Cumberlidge, 2016). *Oziotelphusa* is a genus of freshwater crabs in the family Gecarcinucidae .They occupy almost all freshwater bodies, including streams, rivers, ponds, swamps, and rice fields besides semi-terrestrial or terrestrial habitats like tree holes, leaf axils, and leaf litters (Yeo *et al.*,2008).

Freshwater crabs (Potamidae and Gecarcinucidae) are among the more poorly studied groups of animals because of their secretive habits. Although many new studies have been published and numerous new taxa have been described in recent years, the number of undiscovered species is still high due to the paucity of surveys (Bahir &Yeo 2007; Raghavan *et al.* 2015; Kumar *et al.*, 2017; Pati *et al.*, 2017). Gecarcinucid species of *Oziotelphusa* Müller, 1887, are generally rice field crabs and are widely distributed along the low lying areas of Sri Lanka and India (Bahir & Yeo 2005; Pati & Sharma 2012). Seven species of *Oziotelphusa* are known thus far from India (Pati *et al.*, 2012). *Oziotelphusa ravi* is a new freshwater crab species which is recently described in systematically. The species is known only from its type locality Keeriparai, near Nagercoil, in Tamil Nadu state, southern India. (Smrithy raj *et al.*, 2017).

Walayar Lake is located in the Palghat district of Kerala (Figure 1). It is 25 km away from the Coimbatore district Tamilnadu (10°50'40"N 76°51'7"E). It is one of the major sources of irrigation in the region. Also, many nearby industries this lake for then water requirement. They occupy almost all freshwater bodies, including streams, rivers, ponds, swamps in nearby area. These animals are primarily nocturnal and prefer hidden places for shelter during day time. Freshwater crabs are generally omnivorous, feeding on plant material and live or dead animals such as, fish, prawns, molluscs, etc. and sometimes cannibalism is also seen. Crabs are the chief food source for other animals including fishes, turtles, birds and mammals.

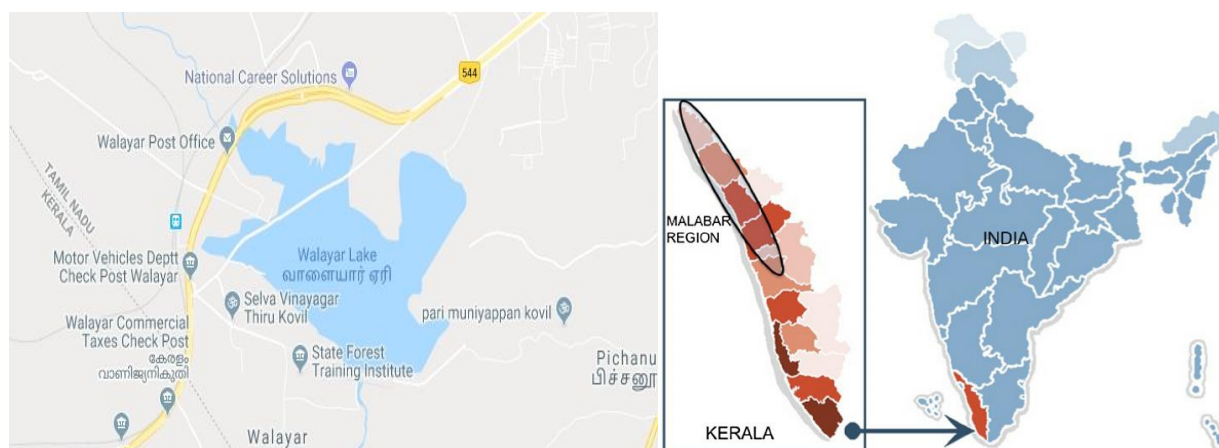


Figure 1. A map showing study area walayar lake, Kerala, India.



Figure 2. *Oziotelphusa ravi* species A, dorsal view; B, frontal view.

Almost all lowland freshwater-swamp habitats in southern India and Sri Lanka have been converted to rice fields, and known species of *Oziotelphusa* usually occupy such disturbed open habitats. These species have survived despite heavy agrochemical application, while doing a biodiversity study we have collected *Oziotelphusa ravi* from walayar lake, Kerala (Figure 2) which belong to Gecarcinucidae family. exploration of likely habitats (lowland marshes and rice-fields).

Nearly half of the Western Ghats species are found in Kerala. descriptions of many more new taxa are awaiting due to its unique geography, including low-lying paddy fields, high mountains, deep valleys, and dense forest. the freshwater crabs of Kerala. This creates an opportunity for further exploration of crab diversity in the state. Furthermore, many endemic genera and species of freshwater crabs survive in Kerala.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are thankful to the management of Rajah Serfoji government college Thanjavur. For providing necessary research facilities and DST (Government of India). For FIST Facility.

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