

FAUNA OF INDIA CHECKLIST

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ARTHROPODA: CRUSTACEA: MALACOSTRACA: DECAPODA: BRACHYURA (Freshwater Crabs)

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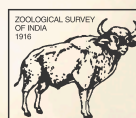
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ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change

ARTHROPODA: CRUSTACEA: MALACOSTRACA: DECAPODA: BRACHYURA (Freshwater Crabs)

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Introduction: The infraorder Brachyura comprises true crabs, which are mainly characterized by the presence of a shield-like carapace covering the cephalothorax; a reduced pleon flexed under the thorax; an epistome fused with the carapace barring some primitive forms; 5 pairs of cephalic appendages; 3 pairs of thoracic maxillipeds; 5 pairs of thoracic pereopods, the first pair often being developed as claws; 2 pairs of uniramous pleopods in males on pleonal somites 1 and 2, which are modified as gonopods and help in copulation; and 4 pairs of biramous pleopods in females on pleonal somites 2–5, which carry the eggs (Schram and Castro, 2015). The majority of brachyurans inhabits marine environment. Brachyuran crabs are also known from freshwater habitats like rivers, streams, waterfalls, inland waters, paddy fields and swamps. They can also occupy semiterrestrial habitats like laterite boulders and tree holes. The life cycle of these brachyurans completes only in freshwater (independent of the marine environment) and includes no free-swimming larval stages, i.e., the large eggs of these freshwater crabs directly hatch into juvenile crabs (Ng, 2017). These brachyuran crabs, excluding families of Hymenosomatidae and Sesarmidae, are referred to herein as “freshwater crabs”.

Global diversity: Globally, the freshwater crabs comprises some 1,700 described species in 293 genera and 7 families occurring in all zoogeographical zones except for Antarctica (Yeo *et al.*, 2008; unpublished data).

Diversity in India: In India, 149 species of freshwater crabs belonging to 42 genera and 2 families (Gecarcinucidae and Potamidae) are known (Mitra *et al.*, 2018, 2020, 2021; Pati and Thackeray, 2018, 2021; Mitra, 2019, 2020; Mitra and Waikhom, 2019; Pati and Vargila, 2019; Pati *et al.*, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b, 2022a, 2022b; Mitra and Pati, 2021; Pati, 2021a, 2022; Raj *et al.*, 2021, 2022; Mandal *et al.*, 2022; Pati and Yeo, 2022) (Table 1; see systematic list).

Table 1. Diversity of freshwater crabs in Indian states and union territories.

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	No. of species	No. of endemic species	No. of threatened species
1	Andhra Pradesh	5	1	1
2	Arunachal Pradesh	20	9	0
3	Assam	21	5	1
4	Bihar	6	0	0
5	Chhattisgarh	2	0	0
6	Gujarat	2	0	0
7	Goa	4	0	0
8	Haryana	1	0	0
9	Himachal Pradesh	7	4	0
10	Jharkhand	3	0	0
11	Karnataka	15	2	1
12	Kerala	39	28	2
13	Madhya Pradesh	3	0	0
14	Maharashtra	35	30	1
15	Manipur	6	4	0
16	Meghalaya	14	2	1
17	Mizoram	16	2	1
18	Nagaland	12	3	1
19	Odisha	4	1	0
20	Punjab	2	0	0
21	Rajasthan	2	0	0
22	Sikkim	8	2	0
23	Tamil Nadu	19	5	0
24	Telangana	5	0	1
25	Tripura	3	0	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	7	0	0
27	Uttarakhand	10	1	0
28	West Bengal	17	2	0
29	Andaman & Nicobar	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0
31	Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu	2	0	0
32	Delhi	1	0	0
33	Jammu & Kashmir	3	1	0
34	Ladakh	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	5	0	0
	INDIA TOTAL	149	137	4

Endemism: As many as 137 species (92%) of freshwater crabs are endemic to India (Table 1). The level of endemism in freshwater crabs is very high in Maharashtra (86%) followed by Kerala (72%), Manipur (67%), Himachal Pradesh (57%) and Arunachal Pradesh (45%) (Table 1). The Western Ghats is currently having the highest level of endemism in freshwater crabs.

Habitat: Freshwater crabs dwell in rivers, streams, waterfalls, mountain plateaus, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, wetlands, swamps, temporary pools, paddy fields, caves, laterite boulders and phytotelmata.

Ecological Significance: Freshwater crabs are omnivores or detritivores, which play important roles in tropical food webs and help in nutrient recycling (Yeo *et al.*, 2008; Cumberlidge *et al.*, 2009). They are prey to a wide range of predators, including fishes, turtles, birds and mammals (Cumberlidge *et al.*, 2009). Freshwater crabs are excellent indicators of good water quality and can be used in biomonitoring of freshwater ecosystems (Cumberlidge *et al.*, 2009).

Human Significance: Freshwater crabs can support aquarium trade and small-scale fisheries (Yeo *et al.*, 2008; Cumberlidge *et al.*, 2009). Some freshwater crab species are considered pests of paddy crops (Pati, 2021b). Freshwater crabs host parasites that cause disease in human beings (Yeo *et al.*, 2008; Cumberlidge *et al.*, 2009). Medicines are also prepared from freshwater crabs (Yeo *et al.*, 2008).

Threatened species: Only four species of freshwater crabs in India have been listed under the threatened category 'Vulnerable' as per the IUCN Red List: *Liotelphusa quadrata* (Alcock, 1909); *Oziotelphusa biloba* Bahir & Yeo, 2005; *Oziotelphusa wagrakarowensis* (Rathbun, 1904); and *Phricotelphusa elegans* (De Man, 1898).

Protected Species as per WPA (2022): None of the freshwater crabs are protected under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act (2022).

Species under CITES: None of the freshwater crabs are listed in CITES.

Invasive alien species: No freshwater crab species are reported to be invasive in India.

Gap areas: Nearly two-fifths of the present freshwater crab species in India have been discovered during the last decade. The high discovery rate in Indian freshwater crabs indicates many areas are yet to be explored, especially the Western Ghats and the Himalayas. Northeast India is a promising region for conducting surveys. Peninsular India should also be explored. The cryptic habitats of freshwater crabs, like phytotelmata, basalt/laterite rocks and limestone/laterite caves, need to be searched for the presence of more unknown species. Apart from survey and exploration, a taxonomic key is needed for the identification of the Indian freshwater crabs. Furthermore, molecular studies have been least attempted on these crabs. Moreover, the information collected over time, whether taxonomical or ecological, will indeed be helpful for the conservation assessment of freshwater crabs.

Systematic list of Indian freshwater crabs:

Sl. No.	Species	Common Name
Family Gecarcinucidae		
1)	<i>Abortelphusa namdaphaensis</i> Mitra, 2020	Namdapha crab
2)	<i>Arcithelphusa cochleariformis</i> Pati & Sudha Devi, 2015	Greater box-shaped crab
3)	<i>Arcithelphusa tumpikkai</i> Pati, Sujila & Sudha Devi, 2019	Lesser box-shaped crab
4)	<i>Baratha peena</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Fat Indian crab
5)	<i>Baratha pushta</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Swollen Indian crab
6)	<i>Barusa choprai</i> (Mandal, Mitra, Laskar, Adimalla & Jaiswal, 2022)	Chopra's semiterrestrial crab
7)	<i>Barusa gracillima</i> Pati & Yeo, 2022	Slender semiterrestrial crab
8)	<i>Barusa guerini</i> (H. Milne-Edwards, 1853)	Guerin's semiterrestrial crab
9)	<i>Barusa mccanni</i> (Chopra & Das, 1935)	Mccann's semiterrestrial crab
10)	<i>Barusa obesa</i> Pati & Yeo, 2022	Stout semiterrestrial crab
11)	<i>Barytelphusa cunicularis</i> (Westwood in Sykes, 1836)	Burrowing heavy crab
12)	<i>Barytelphusa inflata</i> Pati & Yeo, 2022	Swollen heavy crab
13)	<i>Cylindrotelphusa breviphallus</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Highland humped crab
14)	<i>Cylindrotelphusa granulata</i> (Pillai, 1951)	Granular humped crab
15)	<i>Cylindrotelphusa longiphallus</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Lowland humped crab
16)	<i>Cylindrotelphusa steniops</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Narrow-faced crab
17)	<i>Gecarcinucus edwardsi</i> Alcock, 1909	Edwards's land crab
18)	<i>Gecarcinucus jacquemontii</i> H. Milne Edwards, 1844	Jacquemont's land crab
19)	<i>Ghatiana atropurpurea</i> Pati, Thackeray & Khair, 2016	Dark purple ghat crab
20)	<i>Ghatiana aurantiaca</i> Pati & Sharma, 2014	Orange-red ghat crab
21)	<i>Ghatiana basalticola</i> (Klaus, Fernandez & Yeo, 2014)	Basaltic ghat crab
22)	<i>Ghatiana botti</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Bott's ghat crab
23)	<i>Ghatiana durrelli</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2021	Durrell's ghat crab
24)	<i>Ghatiana divivarna</i> Pati, Thackeray, Bajantri & Hegde, 2022	Bicoloured ghat crab
25)	<i>Ghatiana hyacintha</i> Pati & Sharma, 2014	Violet ghat crab
26)	<i>Ghatiana pulchra</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Beautiful ghat crab
27)	<i>Ghatiana rathbunae</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Rathbun's ghat crab

Sl. No.	Species	Common Name
28)	<i>Ghatiana rouxi</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2021	Roux's ghat crab
29)	<i>Ghatiana splendida</i> Pati, Thackeray & Khair, 2016	Splendid ghat crab
30)	<i>Globitellphusa bakeri</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Baker's globe crab
31)	<i>Globitellphusa cylindrus</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Cylinder Crab
32)	<i>Globitellphusa pistorica</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Rugose globe Crab
33)	<i>Globitellphusa planifrons</i> (Bürger, 1894)	Flat-fronted globe Crab
34)	<i>Gubernatoriana gubernatoris</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Chief waterfall crab
35)	<i>Gubernatoriana longipes</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Long-legged waterfall crab
36)	<i>Gubernatoriana marleshwariensis</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Marleshwar waterfall crab
37)	<i>Gubernatoriana wallacei</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Wallace's waterfall crab
38)	<i>Inglethellphusa fronto</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Ingle's crab
39)	<i>Kani maranjandu</i> Kumar, Rajesh & Ng, 2017	Kani tree crab
40)	<i>Karkata ghanarakta</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Maroon Kerala crab
41)	<i>Karkata kusumbha</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Orange-red Kerala crab
42)	<i>Lamella lamellifrons</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Flat crab
43)	<i>Liotellphusa campestris</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Lowland smooth crab
44)	<i>Liotellphusa gageii</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Gage's smooth Crab
45)	<i>Liotellphusa laevis</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Real smooth crab
46)	<i>Liotellphusa quadrata</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Squarish smooth crab
47)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa edentula</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Toothless northern crab
48)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa falcidigitis</i> (Alcock, 1910)	Curve-fingered northern crab
49)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa harpax</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Rapacious northern crab
50)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa lugubris</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Common northern crab
51)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa masoniana</i> (Henderson, 1893)	Wood-Mason's northern crab
52)	<i>Maydelliathellphusa napaea</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Northern valley crab
53)	<i>Oziotellphusa aurantia</i> (Herbst, 1799)	Orange swamp crab
54)	<i>Oziotellphusa biloba</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2005	Bilobed swamp crab
55)	<i>Oziotellphusa bouvieri</i> (Rathbun, 1904)	Bouvier's swamp crab
56)	<i>Oziotellphusa ganjamensis</i> Pati & Sharma, 2012	Ganjam swamp crab
57)	<i>Oziotellphusa kerala</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2005	Kerala swamp crab
58)	<i>Oziotellphusa naga</i> Pati & Vargila, 2019	Nagercoil swamp crab
59)	<i>Oziotellphusa ravi</i> Raj, Kumar & Ng, 2017	Ravi's swamp crab
60)	<i>Oziotellphusa wagrakarowensis</i> (Rathbun, 1904)	Vajrakarur swamp crab
61)	<i>Pavizham gavi</i> Raj, Kumar & Ng, 2022	Gavi smooth crab
62)	<i>Phricotellphusa elegans</i> (De Man, 1898)	Elegant crab
63)	<i>Pilarta amuka</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Little hairy crab
64)	<i>Pilarta aroma</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Hairless crab
65)	<i>Pilarta punctatissima</i> Pati, Rajesh, Raj, Sheeja, Kumar & Sureshan, 2017	Punctate crab
66)	<i>Rajathellphusa ala</i> Raj, Kumar & Ng, 2021	Burrowing princess crab
67)	<i>Rajathellphusa brunnea</i> Raj, Kumar & Ng, 2022	Dark brown princess crab
68)	<i>Rajathellphusa muni</i> Raj, Kumar & Ng, 2021	Saint princess crab
69)	<i>Sahyadriana alcocki</i> (Pati in Pati, Thackeray & Khair, 2016)	Alcock's ghat crab
70)	<i>Sahyadriana billyarjani</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Billy Arjan's ghat crab
71)	<i>Sahyadriana inopinata</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2021	Unexpected ghat crab
72)	<i>Sahyadriana keshari</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2021	Orange ghat crab

Sl. No.	Species	Common Name
73)	<i>Sahyadriana pachyphallus</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Tilari ghat crab
74)	<i>Sahyadriana pilosipes</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Hairy-footed ghat crab
75)	<i>Sahyadriana sahyadriensis</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Real ghat crab
76)	<i>Sahyadriana tamhini</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2021	Tamhini ghat crab
77)	<i>Sahyadriana tenuiphallus</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Raghuvir ghat crab
78)	<i>Sahyadriana thackerayi</i> (Pati in Pati, Thackeray & Khaire, 2016)	Thackeray's ghat crab
79)	<i>Sahyadriana triangulus</i> (Pati & Sharma, 2014)	Mahabaleshwar ghat crab
80)	<i>Sahyadriana wagheri</i> (Pati in Pati, Thackeray & Khaire, 2016)	Wagh's ghat crab
81)	<i>Sahyadriana woodmasoni</i> Pati & Thackeray, 2018	Wood-Mason's ghat crab
82)	<i>Sartoriana spinigera</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Spiny marsh crab
83)	<i>Sartoriana trilobata</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Trilobed marsh crab
84)	<i>Snaha aruna</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Red smooth crab
85)	<i>Snaha escheri</i> (Roux, 1931)	Escher's smooth crab
86)	<i>Spiralothelphusa andhra</i> Pati, Mandal & Jaiswal, 2022	Andhra swamp crab
87)	<i>Spiralothelphusa gibberosa</i> Pati & Sudha Devi, 2015	Humped swamp crab
88)	<i>Spiralothelphusa hydrodroma</i> (Herbst, 1794)	Swamp crab
89)	<i>Spiralothelphusa senex</i> (Fabricius, 1798)	Old swamp crab
90)	<i>Spiralothelphusa wuellerstorfi</i> (Heller, 1862)	Wüllerstorff's swamp crab
91)	<i>Travancoriana charu</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Beautiful Travancore crab
92)	<i>Travancoriana convexa</i> (Roux, 1931)	Convex Travancore crab
93)	<i>Travancoriana granulata</i> Pati & Sharma, 2013	Granular Travancore crab
94)	<i>Travancoriana kuleera</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Small Travancore crab
95)	<i>Travancoriana pollicaris</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Arch-thumbed Travancore crab
96)	<i>Travancoriana schirnerae</i> Bott, 1969	Schirner's Travancore crab
97)	<i>Vanni ashini</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Discoverer forest crab
98)	<i>Vanni deepta</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Golden forest crab
99)	<i>Vanni giri</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Highland forest crab
100)	<i>Vanni malabarica</i> (Henderson, 1912)	Malabar forest crab
101)	<i>Vanni nilgiriensis</i> (Roux, 1931)	Nilgiri forest crab
102)	<i>Vanni pusilla</i> (Roux, 1931)	Tiny forest crab
103)	<i>Vanni travancorica</i> (Henderson, 1913)	Travancore forest crab
104)	<i>Vela carli</i> (Roux, 1931)	Carl's marsh crab
105)	<i>Vela pulvinata</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Swollen marsh crab
106)	<i>Vela virupa</i> Bahir & Yeo, 2007	Brownish marsh crab
Family Potamidae		
107)	<i>Abormon capillosum</i> Mitra, Pati & Ng, 2021	Hairy hill crab
108)	<i>Abormon praecalvum</i> Mitra, Pati & Ng, 2021	Bald hill crab
109)	<i>Acanthopotamon fungosum</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Spongy river crab
110)	<i>Acanthopotamon horai</i> Pati, Mitra & Yeo, 2019	Hora's river crab
111)	<i>Acanthopotamon martensi</i> (Wood-Mason, 1875)	Martens' river crab
112)	<i>Acanthopotamon panningi</i> (Bott, 1966)	Panningi's river crab
113)	<i>Alcomon lophocarpus</i> (Kemp, 1913)	Unarmed crab
114)	<i>Alcomon superciliosum</i> (Kemp, 1913)	Supercilious crab
115)	<i>Aspermon feae</i> (De Man, 1898)	Fea's uneven crab
116)	<i>Badistemon fulvum</i> Mitra, Monica & Waikhom, 2020	Golden yellow walker crab
117)	<i>Badistemon pealianum</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Peal's walker crab
118)	<i>Gurumon gurumayum</i> Pati, 2022	Gurumayum's mountain crab

Sl. No.	Species	Common Name
119)	<i>Himalayapotamon ambivium</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Intermediate Himalaya crab
120)	<i>Himalayapotamon atkinsonianum</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Atkinson's Himalaya crab
121)	<i>Himalayapotamon babaulti</i> (Bouvier, 1918)	Babault's Himalaya crab
122)	<i>Himalayapotamon bifarium</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Uncertain Himalaya crab
123)	<i>Himalayapotamon chambaensis</i> Mitra & Valarmathi, 2017	Chamba Himalaya crab
124)	<i>Himalayapotamon emphyseteum</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Western Himalaya crab
125)	<i>Himalayapotamon garhwalense</i> Pati & Singh, 2017	Garhwal Himalaya crab
126)	<i>Himalayapotamon kasaulis</i> (Pretzmann, 1966)	Kasauli Himalaya crab
127)	<i>Himalayapotamon koolooense</i> (Rathbun, 1904)	Kullu Himalaya crab
128)	<i>Himalayapotamon marinellii</i> (Pretzmann, 1963)	Marinelli's Himalaya crab
129)	<i>Himalayapotamon monticola</i> (Alcock, 1910)	Himalaya mountain crab
130)	<i>Himalayapotamon pretzmanni</i> Mitra, 2019	Pretzmann's Himalaya crab
131)	<i>Indochinamon asperatum</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Roughened Indochinese crab
132)	<i>Indochinamon edwardsii</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Edwards's Indochinese crab
133)	<i>Indochinamon manipurens</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Manipuri crab
134)	<i>Krishnamon austenianum</i> (Wood-Mason, 1871)	Godwin-Austen's cave crab
135)	<i>Lobothelphusa woodmasoni</i> (Rathbun, 1905)	Wood-Mason's lobed crab
136)	<i>Potamiscus annandalii</i> Alcock, 1909	Annandale's river crab
137)	<i>Potamiscus chizami</i> Pati, 2021	Chizami river crab
138)	<i>Potamiscus decourcyi</i> (Kemp, 1913)	de Courcy's river crab
139)	<i>Potamiscus mima</i> Pati, 2021	Mima river crab
140)	<i>Potamiscus palelense</i> Mitra & Waikhom, 2019	Palel river crab
141)	<i>Potamiscus takedai</i> Pati, Mitra & Ng, 2020	Takeda's river crab
142)	<i>Potamiscus tumidulus</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Tumid river crab
143)	<i>Quadramon aborens</i> (Kemp, 1913)	Abor squarish crab
144)	<i>Teretamon adiatretum</i> (Alcock, 1909)	Northeastern smooth crab
145)	<i>Teretamon indicum</i> Mitra, 2017	Indian smooth crab
146)	<i>Teretamon kapota</i> Mitra & Pati, 2021	Arunachal Pradesh smooth crab
147)	<i>Teretamon kemp</i> Mitra, Payra & Chandra, 2018	Kemp's smooth crab
148)	<i>Teretamon spelaeum</i> Absar, Mitra & Kharkongor, 2017	Smooth cave crab
149)	<i>Trichopotamon sikkimense</i> (Rathbun, 1905)	Sikkimese hairy crab

Images:

Jacquemont's land crab, *Gecarcinus jacquemontii* H. Milne Edwards, 1844, endemic to the Western Ghats of India.

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