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# ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change

## CNIDARIA: HEXACORALLIA: ANTIPATHARIA

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# FAUNA OF INDIA CHECKLIST



# CNIDARIA: HEXACORALLIA: ANTIPATHARIA

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**Introduction:** Antipatharia belongs to the Subclass Hexacorallia, Class Anthozoa and Phylum Cnidaria. This faunal community is distributed throughout the world's oceans from tropical to the polar region from the depth of 2 m to greater abyssal region. The order is commonly known as black corals or horny corals. The fauna form upright and bushy growth forms and mimic gorgonians. A few black corals are known as the longest-living and slowest growing animals on Earth. Black corals

are carnivorous in nature and feeds on mostly zooplanktons.

**Global diversity:** The order comprises of only 301 valid species world-wide.

**Diversity in India:** A total of 25 species of order Antipatharia has been reported from the Indian waters belonging to 4 families.

**Diversity in States:** Presented in table 1.

**Table 1:** Antipatharians of India, State-wise distribution

Sl. No.	State / Union Territory	No. of Species
1.	Tamil Nadu	10
2.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	16
3.	Puducherry	04
	<b>INDIAN TOTAL</b>	25

**Endemism:** No endemism has been recorded from India.

**Habitat:** Antipatharians are benthic marine faunal communities, found from intertidal to deep sea floor. The faunal group can be found in reef habitat as well as outside the reef areas.

**Ecological Significance:** Antipatharians are providing a habitat for crustaceans, bivalves, crinoids, sea anemones, ascidian, polyclads, fish, etc. besides this, a few molluscs predate on the antipatharians.

**Human Significance:** Antipatharians are believed to have mystical and medicinal properties and exploited in Indonesia, China and Hawaii. However, recent harvest is making for jewellery.

**Threatened species:** Among the 25 species reported from India, *Antipathella subpinnata* (Ellis & Solander, 1786) is classified under Near threatened and all others are under Not Evaluated category of IUCN Red List.



**Protected Species as per WPA:** All the 25 species of Antipatharia are protected under the Schedule-I of Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

**Species under CITES:** All the 25 species of Antipatharia are enlisted under the CITES Appendix II.

**Invasive alien species:** No Antipatharia species is reported from India as an invasive.

**Gap areas:** Works on antipatharians are very scanty from Indian waters and the group itself is representing very few species due to lack of taxonomic experts. Comprehensive taxonomic studies on Indian antipatharians are required to be conducted.

**Systematic list:** Species list cited below (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Antipatharians of India

Sl. No.	Species
1.	<i>Antipathella subpinnata</i> (Ellis & Solander, 1786)
2.	<i>Antipathella strigosa</i> Brook, 1889
3.	<i>Cupressopathes abies</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
4.	<i>Cupressopathes gracilis</i> (Thomson & Simpson, 1905)
5.	<i>Cupressopathes pumila</i> (Brook, 1889)
6.	<i>Myriopathes antocrada</i> (Opresko, 1999)
7.	<i>Plumapathes pennacea</i> (Pallas, 1766)
8.	<i>Tanacetipathes hirta</i> (Gray, 1857)
9.	<i>Antipathes dendrochristos</i> Opresko, 2005
10.	<i>Antipathes elegans</i> (Thomson & Simpson, 1905)
11.	<i>Antipathes gallensis</i> Thomson & Simpson, 1905
12.	<i>Antipathes grandis</i> Verrill, 1928
13.	<i>Pseudocirripathes mapia</i> Bo et al., 2009
14.	<i>Cirripathes anguina</i> (Dana, 1846)
15.	<i>Cirripathes contorta</i> van Pesch, 1910
16.	<i>Cirripathes spiralis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
17.	<i>Stichopathes ceylonensis</i> Thomson & Simpson, 1905
18.	<i>Stichopathes contorta</i> Thomson & Simpson, 1905
19.	<i>Stichopathes echinulata</i> Brook, 1889
20.	<i>Stichopathes gracilis</i> (Gray, 1857)
21.	<i>Stichopathes solorensis</i> van Pesch, 1914
22.	<i>Stichopathes papillosa</i> Thomson & Simpson, 1905
23.	<i>Cladopathes plumosa</i> Brook, 1889
24.	<i>Trissopathes tetracrada</i> Opresko, 2003
25.	<i>Dendrobathypathes isocrada</i> Opresko, 2002



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