



## FISH & FISHERIES

NEWS LETTER OF  
THE FISHERIES TECHNOCRATS  
FORUM, CHENNAI-600 006

No. 71

January-February 2012

### A GIANT AMPHIPOD FROM DEEP SEA



Large-sized amphipods were collected from a depth of 7,000m in the Kermadec Trench, north west of New Zealand and the largest one measured 260 mm in length. Seven specimens were caught in the metal trap and nine were captured on film by the team of scientists from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, United Kingdom and the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (Niwa), in New Zealand. To identify the species, these large amphipods are being sent to University of Aberdeen. Earlier, the amphipods from Antarctic are known to attain a size of 100 mm. There are 7,000 species of amphipods, of which, 5,500 are classified into one suborder Gammaridea. The size for amphipods varies from 1 to 340 mm.

### GIANT LOBSTER FROM U.S.A.



The common size for Maine lobster or Northern lobster (*Homarus americanus*) ranges between 200 and 610 mm in length/0.45 kg and 4.1 kg. A fisherman from Cushing, Maine caught a lobster measuring 1000 mm/12 kg alive and handed over to Maine aquarium. Still a larger size of *H. americanus* weighing 20.1 kg had been caught from Nova Scotia, Canada.

## GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN - *Platanista gangetica gangetica*

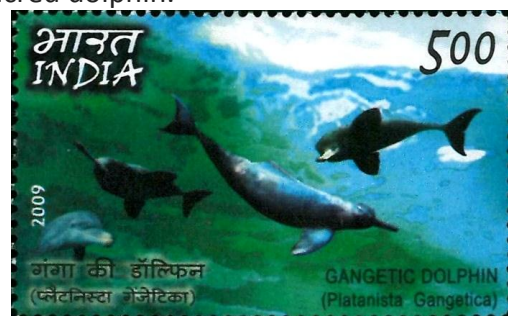


The Ganges river dolphin *Platanista gangetica gangetica* is found in the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and their tributaries in Bangladesh, India and Nepal, while the Indus river dolphin *Platanista gangetica minor* is found in the Indus River in Pakistan and its Beas and Sutlej tributaries. From the 1970s to 1998, they were regarded as separate species. However, in 1998, their classification was changed from two separate species to subspecies of a single species by using modern techniques such as molecular sequencing. The Ganges river dolphin has been recognized by the Government of India as its National Aquatic Animal and it is also known as blind river dolphin or side swimming dolphin or gangetic dolphin or *Ganges susu* or *Shushuk*. The species does not have a crystalline eye lens and hence it is blind. Nevertheless, it may still be able to detect the intensity and crystalline eye lens and hence it is blind. direction of light. Navigation and hunting are carried out using echolocation. They are unique among cetaceans in that they swim on their sides. The body is a brownish color and stocky at the middle. The males grow to a size of 2 to 2.2 meters and females to 2.4-2.6 m. The oldest recorded animal was a 28-year old male, measuring 1.99 m in length. It feeds on a variety of shrimp and fish including, carp and catfish.

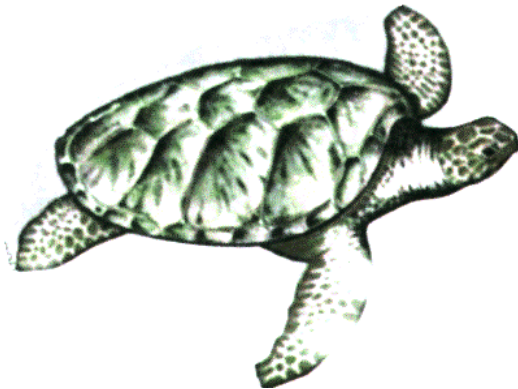
The population of both subspecies have been very adversely affected by human interference (entanglement in fishing, illegal fishing for their oil and meat and as bait for catfish) and environmental degradation (pollution from industrial and agricultural chemicals and construction of more than 50 dams along many rivers, causing the segregation of populations).

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has prohibited the international trade on this species. Further, the species is protected under the Wildlife Act of the Government of India. Both the subspecies are listed by the IUCN as endangered on their Red List of Threatened Species in 2008.

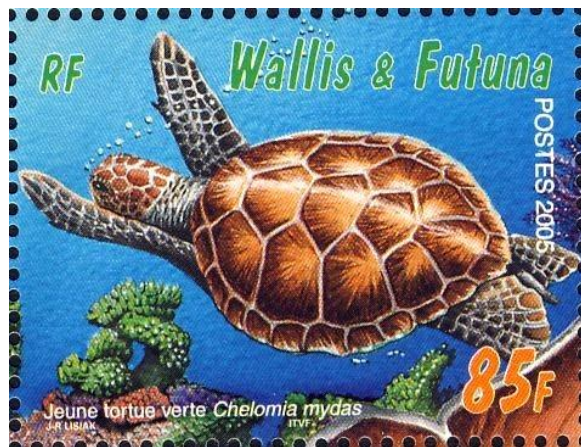
The Census data collected in 1982 estimate indicated 4,000-5,000 Gangetic dolphins in India, which declined to 1,600 in 2005, of which 600 were reported in Uttar Pradesh. In October 2012, the number rose to 671 in Uttar Pradesh. The Government of Uttar Pradesh is bringing up ancient Hindu puranas to raise the community support for saving the Ganges River dolphin. One of the lines being quoted from Valmiki's Ramayana related to the force by which the Ganges emerged from Lord Siva's locks and along with this force came many animals including fish and the Shishumaar-the dolphin. Such puranas are enacted in street corner play along the banks of Ganges river to create an awareness in protecting the sacred dolphin.



## LARGEST GREEN TURTLE FROM THE PHILIPPINES



Recently, a large-sized green sea turtle, *Chelonia mydas*, weighing more than 200 kg has got entangled in a fishing net on 12-3-2009 at Bantay Dagar area in Tanauan, Leyte, the Philippines. The captured green turtle measured 105 cm long and 94 cm broad and the age may be more than 100 years. Since the turtle is so heavy, the personnel from Protected Areas and Wildlife Coastal Zone Management of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources helped the fisherman to release the turtle back into the sea, after tagging.



Stamp source: WoRMS

## OLIVE RIDLEY NESTING IN INDIA



| Maritime State            | 2003     | 2004     | 2005     | 2006     | 2007     |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Gujarat                   | 732      | 1200     | 0        | 95       | 0        |
| Maharashtra               | 50       | 35       | 31       | 36       | 21       |
| Goa                       | 45       | 29       | 20       | 37       | 0        |
| Tamil Nadu                | 67       | 50       | 62       | 0        | 53       |
| Andhra Pradesh            | 1551     | 1302     | 0        | 1279     | 978      |
| Orissa                    | 4,44,000 | 3,23,000 | 4,65,000 | 1,46,000 | 1,80,000 |
| Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 1173     | 0        | 1333     | 1027     | 0        |

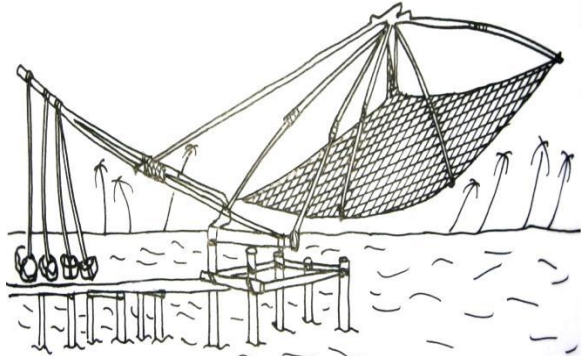
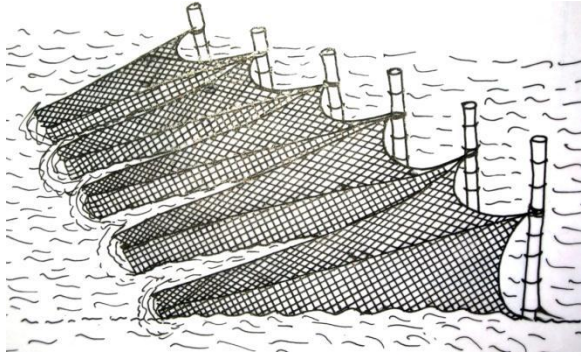


## BAN ON FISHING ALONG ORISSA COAST

The Orissa government has announced the annual ban on fishing along the 480 km coast line from April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> 2012. Every year a 45-day ban has imposed in order to allow fish to breed. The mechanised trawlers and country boats should not be operated during the ban period. This type of 'fishing holidays' are promulgated due to the over-exploitation of fish stock and the resultant dwindling catch in the recent years.



## UNAUTHORISED FISHING IN VEMBANAD BACKWATERS



The postlarvae and the juveniles of finfish and shellfish are known to immigrate into the backwater system during the spring or high tide, utilize these areas as nursery for 3 to 6 months and emigrate to the sea during ebb or low tide, for attainment of adulthood. The licensed fishermen are permitted to operate stake net and Chinese dip net during the ebb or low tide in the Vembanad backwaters.

| District            | No. of units | Percentage |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Kollam              | 918          | 7.12       |
| Alappuzha           | 2,758        | 21.38      |
| Kottayam            | 759          | 5.88       |
| Ernakulam           | 6,293        | 48.78      |
| Thiruchur           | 812          | 6.29       |
| Malapuram           | 39           | 0.3        |
| Kozhikode           | 157          | 1.22       |
| Kannur & Kasaracode | 1,164        | 9.02       |
| Total               | 12,900       |            |

Recently, some fishermen tried to operate the stake nets/Chinese dip nets during the spring or high tide, which will capture mostly small-sized fish or shrimp and preventing them to grow further, which will ultimately affect the economic of the backwater fisheries.

## MEDUSA EATING A CRAB- A RARE INSTANCE



Sea anemone eating a red cancer crab at Challam Bay, Washington

## TRASH FROM OCEAN



Plastic garbage



Goose barnacles on plastic bottles

\*\*\*\*\*

