



OCCURRENCE OF RARE BROWN PAPER NAUTILUS *ARGONAUTA HIANS* LIGHTFOOT, 1786 (CEPHALOPODA: OCTOPODA: ARGONAUTOIDEA) FROM THE SOUTHWEST COAST OF INDIA

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Abstract: In India the rare brown paper nautilus *Argonauta hians* Lightfoot, 1786 was recorded from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Mannar and Maharastra. This paper records the occurrence of *A. hians* for the first time from the southwest coast of India.

Keywords: Argonaut, paper nautilus, Lakshadweep Sea

The Genus *Argonauta* Linnaeus, 1758, comprises four valid species (Gofas, 2013) and widely distributed in the tropical and temperate waters worldwide (Finn, 2014). Two species (*Argonauta argo* and *A. hians*) were recorded from various part of the Indian coastal waters (Devi, 2015). The paper nautilus was previously recorded from Andaman and Nicobar islands (Comber, 1906; Massy, 1916; Tikader *et al.*, 1986; Rao and Dey, 2000; Sukhsangchana *et al.*, 2009; Ramakrishna and Dey, 2010; Tripathy *et al.*, 2013; Devi, 2015) Tamil Nadu (Crichton, 1940; Vaitheeswaran *et al.*, 2014), northwest coast of India and Lakshadweep Sea (Silas, 1968; Sundaram and Sushant, 2015). We record the rare occurrence of *Argonauta hians* Lightfoot, 1786 from the southwest coast of India.

One specimen was collected by bottom trawlers at an average depth of 30 m off the Kerala coast (9°38'2 N and 75°43'2 E), India. The specimen was identified based on Norman (2000), Finn (2013) and Lee *et al.* (2015).

Order: Octopoda Leach, 1818

Superfamily: Argonautoidea Cantraine, 1841

Family: Argonautidae Cantraine, 1841

Genus: *Argonauta* Linnaeus, 1758

***Argonauta hians* Lightfoot, 1786** (Fig. 1 a-d)

Synonyms: *Argonauta boettgeri* Maltzan, 1881; *Argonauta crassica* Blainville, 1826; *Argonauta hians f. aurita* Martens, 1867; *Argonauta hians f. obtusangula* Martens, 1867; *Argonauta kochianus* Dunker, 1852; *Argonauta nitidus* Lamarck, 1822; *Argonauta owenii* A. Adams & Reeve, 1848; *Argonauta politus* Conrad, 1854; *Argonauta rarica* Blainville, 1826 and *Ocythoe cranchii* Leach, 1817

Material Examined: One; shell length 38 mm; maximum shell breadth 23 mm; collected on 11 October 2017; off Kollam coast, Kerala; depth 30m; coll. Vishnuraj, R.S., deposited in the museum collections of the Department of Aquatic Biology and Fisheries, University of Kerala, India (DABF-UOKCEP 26).

Description: Shell small and thin, aperture wide and rather inflated; lateral side ribs smooth and continuous; keel tubercles rounded and relatively large; color of the shell white with brownish black tint; adjacent ribs to light brown with black pigmentation of surface of the shell.

Argonauta hians was originally described from Ambon, Indonesia (Lee *et al.*, 2013) and is widely distributed in the Indian Ocean (Finn, 2015). This record confirms its occurrence in the southwest coast of India.

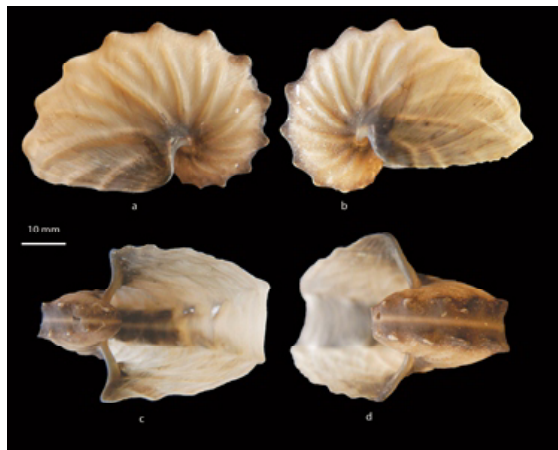


Fig. 1. *Argonauta hians* Lightfoot, 1786; a-b. Dorsal view
c. Ventral View

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