

New Distributional Records of *Placuna ehippium* (Reizius 1788) Family: Placunidae from Mandapam Area -South East Coast of India

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Abstract: The new occurrence of bivalve species of *Placuna ehippium* is recorded for the first time from Mandapam area, based on a few shells collected from the fish landing centers. The common name of the species is Saddle Oysters. In Anomiidae family, the only one species of *Placuna placenta* was recorded so far. The present paper described the taxonomic status and the description of the new record of *Placuna ehippium* under the family of Placunidae.

Key words: *Placuna ehippium* % Placunidae % Mandapam area % India

INTRODUCTION

In Gulf of Mannar and Lakshadweep area, 428 and 424 species of mollusks have been recorded, respectively. Eight species of Oysters, 2 species of Mussels, 17 species of Clams, 6 species of Pearl Oysters, 4 species of Giant Clams and One species of Window pane Oysters of *Placuna placenta* was recorded [1]. During a regular survey at Mandapam fish landing centers Lat 8° 47' - 9° 15'N and Long 78° 12' - 79° 14'E (Map. 1), the shells of *Placuna ehippium* (Reizius 1788) were collected, 2 right valves and 3 left valves of different individuals for identification, which have not been recorded by earlier workers from this area. One specimen of each valves of this species has been deposited in the Zoological survey of India at Chennai (Reg. no 149).



Mandapam Study Area Map:

Systematic Position:

Phylum : Mollusca
Class : Bivalvia
Order : Ostreoida
Family : Placunidae Gray 1842
Genus : Placuna

Species:

Placuna Lightfoot, 1786
Placuna ehippium
Placuna lobata
Placuna placenta Linnaeus, 1758
Placuna sella Gmelin, 1791

General Characters of the Family Placunidae:

Placunidae, or the Windowpane shells are a family of marine bivalves, related to oysters and scallops. The family is closely to Anomiidae (saddle oysters) one of the main differences being that the Placunidae do not attach themselves to a hard surface - instead they are a mud - living family. Window pane shells are suspension feeders, living on shallow, muddy- bottomed waters. The usually lie with the right valve downwards. The ligament is internal and forms a shallow V-shape. The sexes are separate and the larval stage is free-swimming. Species in the family Placunidae are extensively collected in the Indo- west Pacific and are cultivated or farmed in several areas.



Fig. 1: *Placuna ehippium*

***Placuna Ehippium* (Reizius 1788):**

Size : 7.8cm
Locality : Fish landing centers
Common name : Windowpane Shells
Status : Uncommon
Distribution : Mandapam - Gulf of Mannar,
Philippines (145 mm)

Description: Shell upto 7.8 cm in length, thin, fragile and flat. Moderately large, outer surface of the shell slightly rough, concentric lines widely developed. Shell almost transparent. Inner surface of the shell smooth and glossy. Umbo small, two hinge teeth well developed. Adductor muscle scar present at center of valve. Light brown in colour with black patches are present on both side. Shiny and silky appearance. Uncommon (Figure 1).

Remarks: The shells were found on the fish landing centers at Mandapam area during the discarding of trawl catches from the Gulf of Mannar. The shells were originally used as a glass substitute in glazing, but nowadays they are mainly used in the manufacture of trays, lampshades and numerous decorative items. In coastal areas the flesh is eaten.

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