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POLYCHAETES (ANNELIDA) FROM GREAT NICOBAR ISLAND, INDIA : I. FAMILY : NEREIDAE

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INTRODUCTION

Polychaetes have a worldwide distribution, living on the bottom or burrow into the sediments from the intertidal zone to the greatest depths and also the pelagic systems of the oceans. Nereidae is a very important family of the phylum Annelida with highly specialized morphology and comparatively complex structure. The nereidae is also of fairly great economic significance. Diversity of polychaetes has been studied from several regions along the Indian peninsula (Southern, 1921; Fauvel, 1930, 1953; Parulekar, 1971; Rao, 1981, 1992, 1993, 1998, 1999 & 2001; Sunder Raj and Sanjeeva Raj, 1987; Misra, 1995; Sunil Kumar, 1997, 1999, 2001 & 2002). There is no complete assessment of polychaete diversity from the Great Nicobar region, though there are a few reports from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands (Tampi and Rangarajan, 1963 and 1964; Daniel and Ghosh, 1964;; Soota and Rao, 1977a; Soota *et al.*, 1980).

Great Nicobar has a unique and extraordinarily diverse fauna, which is still little exposed. The difficulty in accessing this Island, which is situated 1755 km away from the mainland may be the reason for the lack of such studies. Hence the present study on the polychaetes was undertaken from this comparatively pristine environment. Only the polychaetes of the family Nereidae are dealt with at present.

METHODS

Great Nicobar Island, the southern most Island of this archipelago, in fact the southern most land piece of India, is situated between 6°45'-7°15'N lat. and 93°38'-93°55' E long (Fig. 1). The island lies about 482 km. south of Port Blair and 145 km north of the northern tip of Sumatra. The total geographical area approximates to 1044 sq. km.

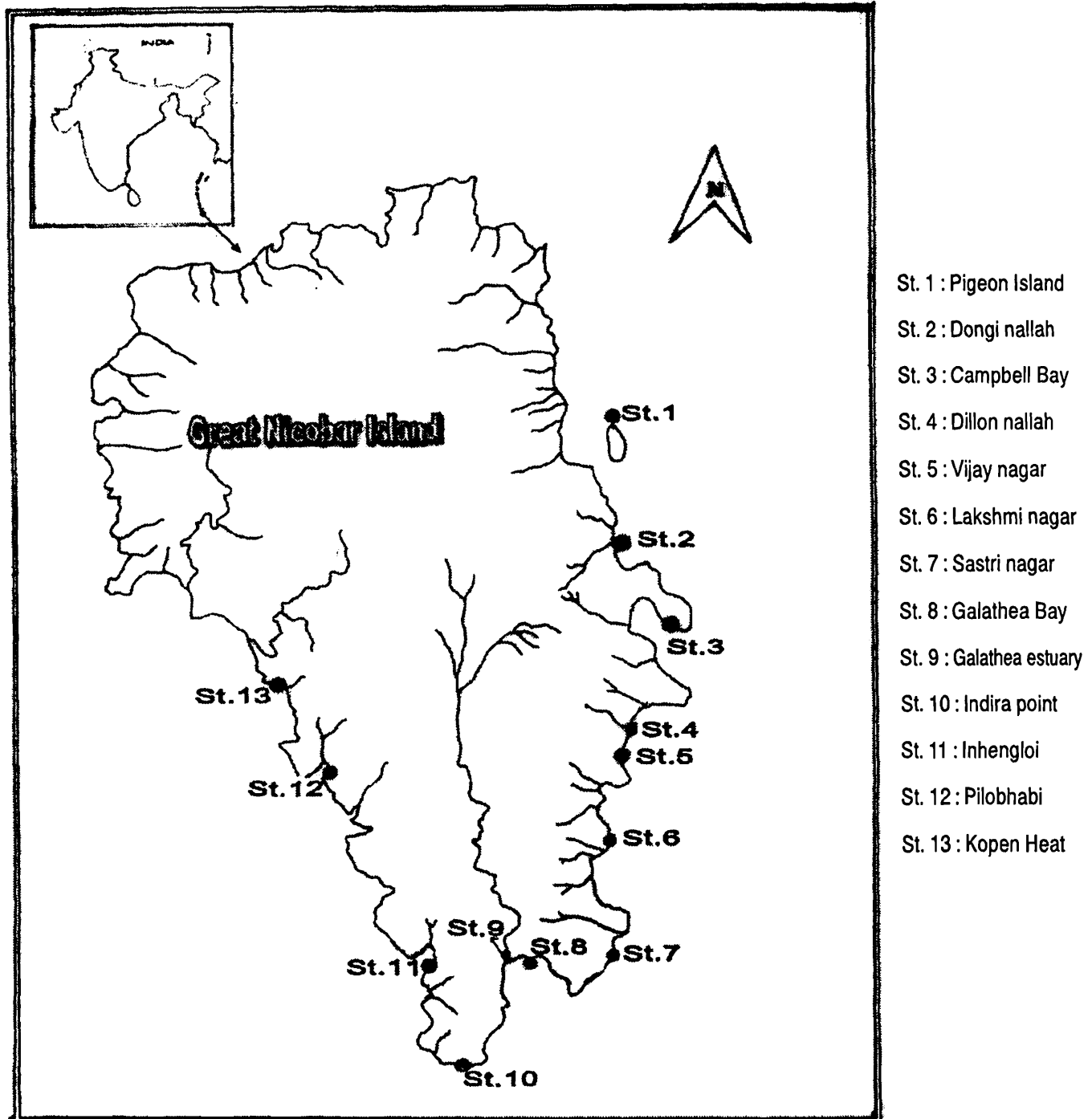


Fig. 1. : Map of the Great Nicobar Island showing different collection stations.

The materials for the present study were collected from December 2000 to February 2004 from live corals, dead corals, beach rocks, seagrass beds and mangrove sediments of the intertidal region of 13 selected stations. The sediment samples collected were sieved through a 0.5mm sieve. Polychaetes associated with dead corals were collected by breaking them with a hammer and chisel. Before fixation, polychaetes were dropped into strong alcohol to have their pharynx everted, as it is helpful in identification of this group. They were fixed in 10% formalin diluted with seawater

and later transferred to 70% ethanol. The proboscis jaws and other structures of the parapodia were examined under a microscope. The features of the polychaetes studied were drawn with a prism type Camera Lucida and the measurements were taken using a micro-occulometer.

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

List of species

Family NEREIDAE Johnston, 1865

1. *Tylonereis bogoyawlenskyi* Fauvel, 1911
2. *Platynereis dumerilii* (Audouin and M. Edwards, 1883)
3. *Ceratonereis mirabilis* Kinberg, 1866
4. *Neanthes glandicineta* (Southern, 1921)*
5. *Perinereis nigropunctata* (Horst, 1889)
6. *Perinereis nuntia brevicirris* (Grube, 1876)
7. *Perinereis nuntia caeruleis* (Hoagland, 1920)**
8. *Perinereis weijhousensis* Wu Boaling, 1984**
9. *Perinereis obfusca* (Grube, 1878)**
10. *Perinereis vancaurica* (Ehlers, 1868)
11. *Perinereis cultrifera* (Grube, 1840)
12. *Perinereis cultrifera typica* Grube, 1840
13. *Pseudonereis anomala* Gravier, 1901
14. *Pseudonereis variegata* (Grube, 1857)

*new record from Andaman & Nicobar Islands

**new record from Indian waters

Family NEREIDAE Johnston, 1865

1. *Tylonereis bogoyawlenskyi* Fauvel, 1911

Tylonereis bogoyawlenskyi Fauvel, 1911 : 373, Fig. 1-7 ; Fauvel, 1953 : 168-169, Fig. 85 e-f ; Wu & Chen, 1963 : 21 ; Kheleboviche, 1963 : 51, plate 11, a-b ; Rao & Soota, 1981 : 76 ; Misra *et al.*, 1987 : 74 ; Rao, 1998 : 202 ; 1999 : 44 ; 2001 : 22.

Material : 23 specimens collected from St. 3 and 11.

Habitat : Burrowing in fine sands of intertidal zone.

Description : Prostomium slightly wider. Longest peristomial cirri extending to setiger 3. Oral and maxillary rings without hard paragnaths, with different shape soft papillae only. Area I has 3 conical; II, III a single row of 8-10 papillae, IV 5 – 8 slender concentrated bundles of papillae; V

none; VI a tapered papillae, basal portions with papillary mattress; VII & VIII 9-12 bluntly conical papillae. From the setiger 7-8, parapodia enlarged, dorsal and ventral cirri short, small, not extending beyond parapodial lobe, supra-notoligule inflated. Neuropodium with acicular lobe and 2 postsetal lobes. Notoetae and neuroserae of all parapodia homogomph spinigers.

Remarks : The present material agree well with the earlier descriptions

Distribution : INDIA : Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Mannar, Krusadai Island, Tuticorin, Kilakarai, Pamban waters, Travancore, Gangetic delta, Chilka Lake, Orissa, Visakhapatnam, Cochin back waters, Pulicat lake and Godavary estuary.

Elsewhere : Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf.

2. *Platynereis dumerilli* (Audouin and Milne Edwards, 1833)

Nereis dumerilii Audouin and Milne Edwards, 1833 : 196.

Platynereis dumerilli : Fauvel, 1923 : 359, Fig. 141 a-f; 1953 : 218, Fig. 111, a-f; Day, 1967 : 306, Fig. 14-4, d-k.

Material : 32 specimens collected from St. 1, 4, 8 and 13.

Habitat : Fine sand beneath seagrass bed of intertidal zone.

Description : Prostomium heart form. Two pairs of eyes in rectangular arrangement. Posterior margin of prostomium has a median notch. Longest peristomial cirri extends back to setiger 8. Proboscis has paragnaths in pectinate rows as follows : area I, II and V none; III 3 cluster, each has 3 rows; IV 3 curved transverse rows; VI 2 curved rows; VII, VIII have 5-7 masses, each has 2 rows. Notoetae of the first pair of parapodia are homogomph spinigers, following parapodia with 1-2 homogomph falcigers besides homogomph spinigers, terminal piece curved. Neuroetae are heterogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers.

Remarks : Living specimen is light green with pearly colour, dorsum of the body with orange red spots; young individual transparent, and almost white. The present materials agree well with the descriptions of Day (1967).

Distribution : INDIA : Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Mannar and Pamban, Madras coast.

Elsewhere : Ceylon, Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Ocean.

3. *Ceratonereis mirabilis* Kinberg, 1866

Ceratonereis mirabilis Kinberg, 1866 : 170; Gravier, 1901 : 172, pl. 11, Fig. 42; Fauvel, 1953; 200, Fig. 103 a-e; Day, 1967 : 324, Fig. 14.10, a-f, Misra & Chakraborty, 1991 : 145.

Material : 29 specimens collected from St. 2, 3, 10 and 12.

Habitat : Silty sand under coral rubbles and sea grass.

Description : Prostomium with deep cleft and palps elongate. The longest peristomial cirrus extends back to setiger 17. Paragnaths present only on maxillary ring of proboscis : I has none; II 10-13 cones in 2 oblique cluster; III 7-9 cones in one cluster; IV 10-14 cones. The lateral teeth of jaw indistinct. Dorsal cirrus very long. Anterior notoseate homogomph spinigers. Indistinct heterogomph falcigers appear from middle parapodia, end of terminal piece beaked. Some posterior setigers bear homogomph falcigers in which the end of terminal piece bifid. Notopodial and neuropodial falcigers homogomph.

Remarks : The species is characterized by its cleft prostomium and presence of notopodial falcigers on posterior setigers.

Distribution : INDIA : Lakshadweep, Gulf of Mannar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Krusadai island, Pamban, Kilakarai, Maharashtra and Goa Coast.

Elsewhere : Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Honolulu, Australia, Brazil, West Indies

4. *Neanthes glandicineta* (Southern,1921)* (Fig. 2.a-e)

Nereis glandicineta Southern 1921 : 589-593, pl.23 : Fig. 9a-l, text-Fig. 5a-c; Fauvel 1932 : 92-93; 1953 : 181-182.

Neanthes glandicineta Wu *et al.*, 1984 : 150-151, Fig. 84,A-I; Misra,1995 : 111.

Material : 28 specimens collected from St. 9.

Habitat : Muddy sediments around mangroves.

Description : Prostomium sub-pentagonal. Two pairs of black eyes in trapezoidal arrangements on upper region of prostomium; anterior pair broad, bean-like; posterior pair hemispherical. Two palps extend laterally (Fig. 2.a). Proboscis has paragnaths on all areas of maxillary ring, but none on oral ring except VI. I : 5-13 cones in 2 irregular rows; II 7-10 cones in 2 rows; III 20-28 unequal cones in 3 rows : IV 6-10 cones in 2 curved rows; V none, VI 1 cone. The jaws are golden with 5-6 lateral teeth (Fig. 2.b). Neuropodium has 2 presetal lobes and one postsetal lobe carrying setae between the lobes. The dorsal cirrus is shorter than notoligule. In posterior region the parapodium about 100th becomes smaller, the neurosetal lobe becomes a supra-and infra-piece (Fig. 2c). All notosetae are homogomph spinigers (Fig. 2.e). Neurosetae are homogomph and heterogomph spinigers (Fig. 2d). Dorsum of body, especially the notopodium is brown. Body color is pale yellow or milky-white. *Neanthes glandicineta* mostly inhabits estuaries.

Remarks : This is the first record of the species from Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Distribution : INDIA : Gangetic delta, Hugli Malta estuary, Chilka lake and Godavary estuary.

Elsewhere : China.

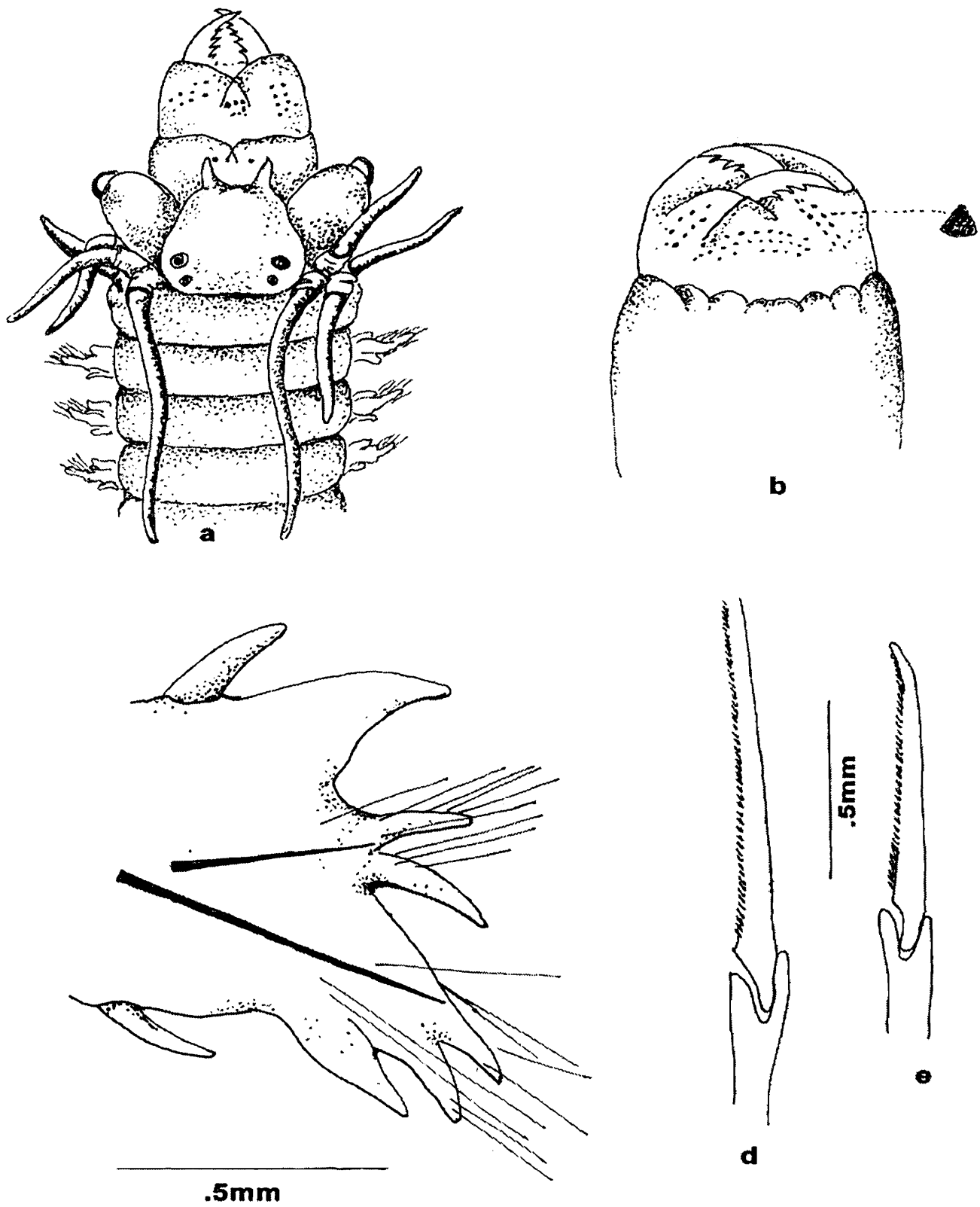


Fig. 2. : *Neanthes glandicineta* (a) Anterior end and dorsal view of proboscis, (b) Ventral view of proboscis, (c) Anterior foot, (d) Neuropodial homogomph spiniger, (e) Notopodial homogomph spiniger.

5. *Perinereis nigropunctata* (Horst, 1889)

Nereis nigro-punctata Horst, 1889 : 171.

Perinereis marjorii Southern, 1921 : 595;

Perinereis nigropunctata Fauvel, 1932, 107; 1953 : 210; Day, 1967 : 337, Fig. 14.13, r-v; Parulekar, 1971 : 741; Nageswara Rao & Soota, 1981 : 77, Nageswara Rao, 1995 : 325, 1998 : 202.

Material : 41 specimens including 2 heteronereids collected from St. 2-5, 8, 10 and 12.

Habitat : Found among oysters and dead coral crevices at low tide.

Description : Body 50-60 mm long with three rows of brown marks and a V on the prostomium. Tentacular cirri short. Prostomium trapezoidal with deep median furrow anteriorly. Palps with robust, short palpophores and globular palpostyles. Antennae short, triangular. Peristomium relatively long. Jaws robust. Pharynx with conical paragnaths on both rings and smooth bars on areas VI, arranged as follows : I 7, II 12 –18 in 3 curved rows; III 20-25; IV 25-35, V 3 in a triangle VI I stout bar, VII-VIII 30-40 in 2 rows. Notosetae homogomph spinigers only. Neurosetae homogomph spinigers with 1-3 robust heterogomph falcigers.

Remarks : The present materials agree well with the earlier descriptions.

Distribution : INDIA : Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chilka lake, Orissa, Gujarat coast, Tuticorin, Cape Comorin, Gangetic delta, Madras coast and Bombay coast.

Elsewhere : Malay Archipelago, Great Barrier Reef.

6. *Perinereis nuntia brevicirris* (Grube, 1876)

Nereilepas brevicirris Grube, 1876 : 19.

Perinereis mictodonta var. *mictodontoides* Augener, 1913 : 117.

Perinereis nuntia var. *brevicirris* Fauvel, 1932 : 110; 1953 : 214; Parulekar, 1971 : 742.

Material : 46 specimens including 22 heteronereids collected from St. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11.

Habitat : Found among barnacles and oysters and in dead coral crevices at low tide-tide.

Description : The largest specimen is 100 mm long and 6 mm wide, for 108 setigers. Longest peristomial cirrus extends back to setigers 7. The paragnaths on proboscis have the following arrangement : I 3 cones, II 12-15 cones in 3 oblique rows; III 13 cones in 3 longitudinal rows; IV a dense triangular group; V 3 cones in a triangle; VI a transverse row of 5 to 8 flattened broad paragnaths; VII and VIII 30-40 cones in 3 irregular rows. Notosetae with homogomph spinigers and neurosetae with heterogomph falcigers.

Remarks : The present material agree well with the description of Fauvel (1953).

Distribution : INDIA : Gulf of Mannar, Tuticorin, Cape Comorin, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Maharashtra and Goa Coast.

Elsewhere : Japan, Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Malay Archipelago, Indian Ocean, Saint Paul Island, Red Sea.

7. *Perinereis nuntia caeruleis* (Hoagland, 1920)**

(Fig. 3a-h)

Nereis (Heteronereis) caeruleis Hoagland, 1920 : 608-610, pl. 47 Fig. 13-16, pl. 48 Fig. 1-4.

Perinereis nuntia caeruleis Wilson & Glasby, 1993 : 261-262.

Material : 22 specimens including 5 heteronereids collected from St.2, 5, 11, 12 and 13.

Habitat : Boring into dead corals.

Description : Body 120-125 mm long, eyes black. Antennae one-third as long as prostomium. Tentacular cirri extends back 2-4 setigers (Fig. 3.a). Jaws heavy, dark brown with no teeth (Fig. 3.b). Paragnaths I 0; II 0; III 60-90 in central group; IV 80-100 cones, bars absent; V 1 large cone

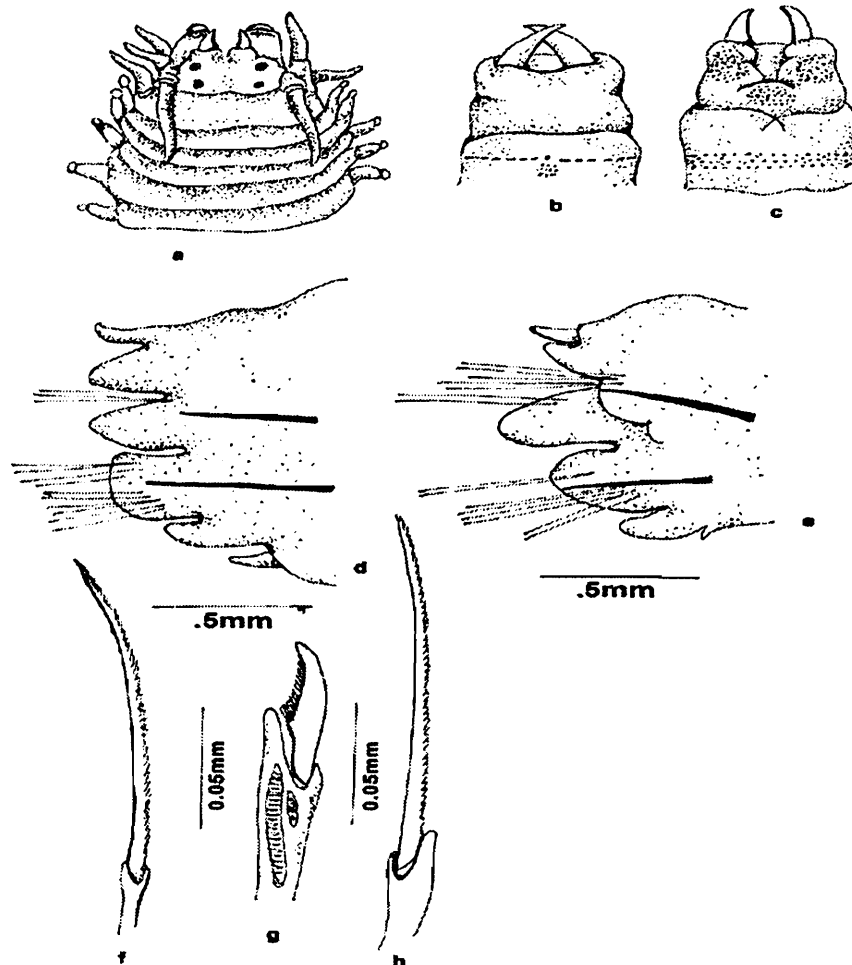


Fig. 3. : *Perinereis nuntia caeruleis* (a) Anterior end, (b) Dorsal view of proboscis, (c) Ventral view of proboscis, (d) Anterior foot, (e) Posterior foot, (f) Homogomph spiniger, (g) Hetergomph falciger, (h) Hetergomph spiniger.

plus 10-15 small cones; VI 8-12 bars; VII-VIII about 100-150 very small cones, with 3-4 large cones on each side close to area VI (Fig. 3.c). Parapodia of setigers 1 and 2 directed anteriorly. All notosetae are homogomph spinigers (Fig. 3.f). Neurosetae are heterogomph spinigers (Fig. 3.h) and heterogomph falcigers (Fig. 3.g). Neuropodial heterogomph spinigers absent from anterior most 24-35 setigers. Anal cirri as long as posterior most 4 setigers.

Remarks : The present materials agree well with the description of Wilson & Glasby (1993). This is the first record of the species from Indian waters.

Distribution : Elsewhere : Australia and Philippines.

8. *Perinereis weijhouensis*, Wu Boaling, 1984**
(Fig. 4a-h)

Perinereis weijhouensis Wu Boaling *et al.*, 1984 : 201-204, Fig. 114 a-k.

Material : 5 specimens collected from St. 2 and 12.

Habitat : Boring into dead corals.

Description : Prostomium pentagonal. Palps thick. Longest cirrus extends backward to setiger 6-7 (Fig. 4a). Proboscis has conical paragnaths expect for area VI which has short bars (Fig. 4b) :

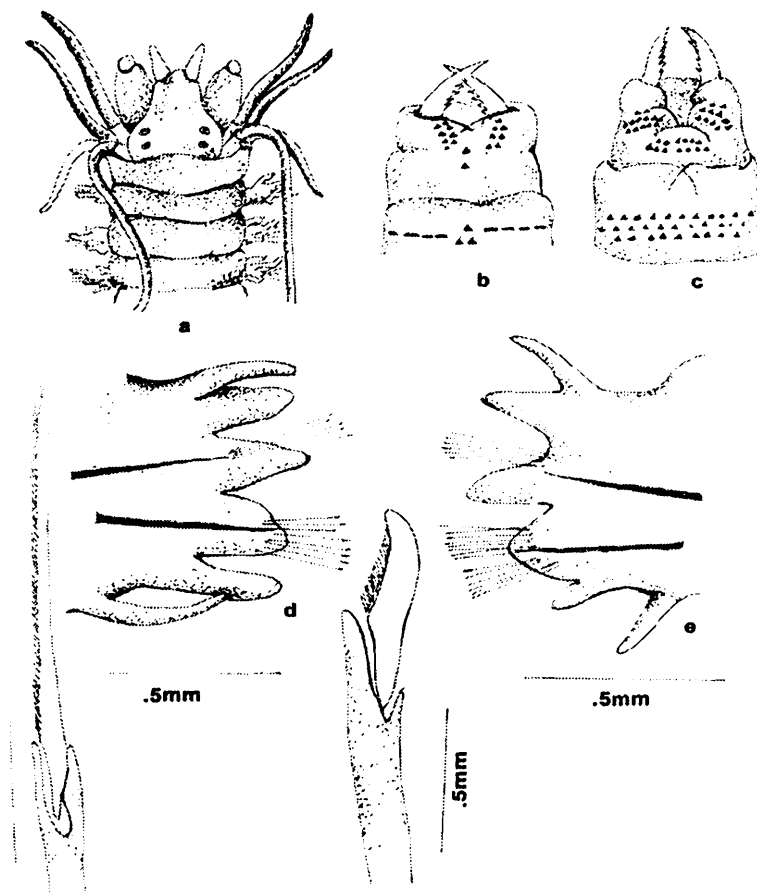


Fig. 4. : *Perinereis weijhouensis* (a) Anterior end, (b) Dorsal view of proboscis, (c) Ventral view of proboscis, (d) Anterior foot, (e) Posterior foot, (f) Homogomph spiniger, (g) Heterogomph falciger.

I has 2 cones; II 4-6 cones in 2 oblique rows; III 10-14 cones in 2 irregular rows; IV 12-15 cones in curved 2-3 rows; V has 3 cones in a triangle; VI 4-8 transversely short bars; VII-VIII have 34-40 cones in 2-3 rows; jaws amber colored, bearing 5-6 lateral teeth (Fig. 4c).

In anterior parapodium (5th), the dorsal and ventral cirri are digitate and of the same length. Noto- and neuroligules conical and almost the same length. Dorsal and ventral cirri as long as notoligule and neuroligule (Fig. 4.d). In the posterior parapodium the notoligule tapers toward the end, pointed. Dorsal cirrus small, digitate, slender and shorter than the notoligule and neuroligule (Fig. 4.e). All notosetae are homogomph spinigers (Fig. 4.f). Neurosetae are heterogomph falcigers (Fig. 4.g) in both supra-acicular and infra-acicular positions.

Remarks : The prostomium and palps have coffee color spots. From the middle parapodium, the notoligule has coffee color spot. The present material agree well with the original description. This is the first record of the species from Indian waters.

Distribution : Elsewhere : Weizhou Island (China).

9. *Perinereis obfuscata* (Grube, 1878)**

(Fig. 5a-g)

Nereis (Perinereis) obfuscata Grube, 1878 : 86-87 ; Horst, 1924 : 173-174, pl.34, Fig. 5. 6

Nereis obfuscata, Ehlers, 1920 : 51.

Perinereis obfuscata, Monro, 1931 : 16-18, Fig. 10a-d ; Hutchings *et al.*, 1991 : 257-258

Material : 9 specimens collected from St. 1, 5 and 11.

Habitat : Boring into dead corals.

Description : Palps with cylindrical palpophores, rounded palpostyles. Longest tentacular cirri extends to setiger 2 (Fig. 5.a). Jaws with approximately 4 teeth (Fig. 5. b). Pharynx with conical paragnaths on both rings, with smooth bars also present on Area VI, arranged as follows : I 7-9, II 15-20 in 2 –3 crescent – shaped rows, III 8-12, IV 10-15, V 1, VI 1 short crescent–shaped bar, VII-VIII 22-30 in 2 rows (Fig. 5. c). Dorsal cirrus slightly longer than dorsal notopodial ligule (Fig. 5.d). Posterior notopodial ligule enlarged and triangular. Dorsal cirrus distally inserted on posterior setigers, extending slightly beyond tip of notopodial ligule (Fig. 5. e). Notosetae are homogomph spiniger (Fig. 25.f). Neurosetae with homogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers (Fig. 5. g).

Remarks : This is the first record of the species from Indian waters.

Distribution : Elsewhere : Australia and Philippines.

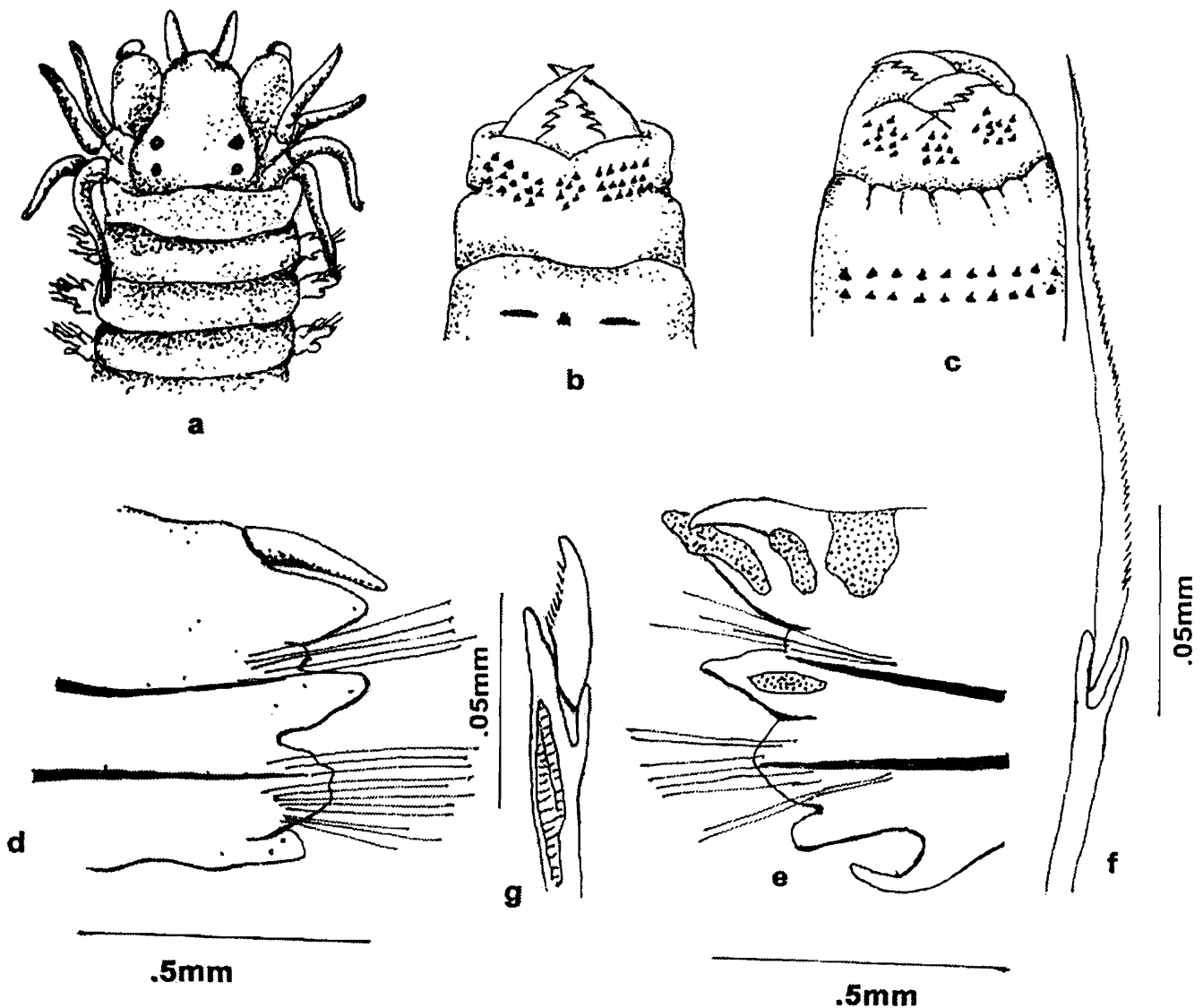


Fig. 5. : *Perinereis obfuscata* (a) Anterior end, (b) Dorsal view of proboscis, (c) Ventral view of proboscis, (d)Anterior foot, (e) Posterior foot, (f) Homogomph spiniger, (g) Hetergomph falciger.

10. *Perinereis vancaurica* (Ehlers, 1868)

Nereis vancaurica Ehlers, 1868 : p. xx.

Perinereis horsti Gravier, 1901 : 182, pl. 11, Fig. 47, text-figs. 182-4.

Perinereis vancaurica Fauvel, 1932 : 103 ; Fauvel, 1953 ; 205, Fig. 105 f-g ; Day, 1967 : 334, Fig. 14.12, k-o ; Parulekar, 1971 : 740 ; Soota *et al.*, 1981 : 96 ; Nageswara Rao & Soota, 1981 : 77 ; Misra & Chakraboorty, 1991 : 146.

Material : 12 specimens collected from St. 2 and 6.

Habitat : Occurs intertidally under oyster and barnacle encrusted coral rocks.

Description : Prostomium broad and square. Longest tentacular cirri extending to setiger 5. Peristomium relatively short. Distal most part of jaw has smooth edge. Proximally cutting edge serrate rather than denticulate. Pharynx with conical paragnaths on both rings and smooth bars on

area VI. Paragnaths arranged as follows : I 1, II 16-20 in triangle, III 32-40, IV 25-45 cones, V 3 cones in a triangle, VI 2 long flattened bars, VII-VIII 58-80 in 3 irregular rows. Paragnaths in VII-VIII in 2 bands, band closest to oral end of pharynx consists of large cone in 2 irregular rows. All notosetae are homogomph spinigers. Neurosetae are heterogomph falcigers in both supra-acicular and infra-acicular positions.

Remarks : The present material agree well with the earlier description

Distribution : INDIA : Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat Coast.

Elsewhere : Philippines, Indo-China, Great Barrier Reef, New Zealand, Singapore, Mergui, Red Sea, Atlantic Ocean, French Guiana.

11. *Perinereis cultrifera* (Grube, 1840)

Nereis cultrifera Grube, 1840 : 74

Perinereis cultrifera : Fauvel, 1923 : 352, Fig. 137, 1953, p.206, fig,a-1. ; Day, 1967 : 337, 14.13, Fig. o-q ; Misra & Chakraborty, 1991 : 146.

Material : 25 specimens collected from St. 3, 4, 10 and 13.

Habitat : Boring in dead corals.

Description : Body 85-90 mm long. Prostomium broadly triangular ; palps large, tentacular cirri rather long and slender. Antennae one thirds as long as prostomium, longest tentacular cirri extend back to 5th setiger. Jaws with about 5 distinct teeth. Paragnaths : I 1-2 ; II 5-9 ; III 9-11 ; IV 9-12 cones ; V 3 cones in triangle ; VI 1 ; VII-VIII 26-30 cones in two regular rows. Notopodia with 2 equal lobes anteriorly. Dorsal cirrus as long as dorsal notopodial ligule anteriorly. Heterogomph spinigers present in ventral neuropodial fascicle from setiger 1. Anal cirri extend back about 7 setigers.

Remarks : The present material agree well with the earlier descriptions.

Distribution : INDIA : Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Travancore, Cape Comorin, Tuticorin, Gulf of Mannar, Orissa coast, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Elsewhere : Cosmopolitan, Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Mediterranean Sea, Israel, Japan, Burma, Diamond Island.

12. *Perinereis cultrifera typica* Grube, 1840

Perinereis cultrifera typica Grube, 1840 : 74; Fauvel, 1923 : 352, Fig. 137; 1953 : 208; Parulekar, 1971 : 740.

Material : 18 specimens collected from St. 5 and 11.

Habitat : Boring in dead corals and under rocks.

Description : The body 80-90 mm long. Prostomium is pyriform, and bears 2 short, small digitate tentacles. Palps are large. The longest peristomial cirrus extends backward to setiger 5-6. Proboscis has paragnaths on both rings : I 2 cones; II 12-18 cones in 3 oblique rows; III 14-20 cones in 3-4 transverse rows; IV 10-20 cones in 3 oblique rows; V 3 cones in a triangle; VI a single flat-triangular cone; VII-VIII 20-30 cones in 2 rows. The jaws have 4-5 lateral teeth. Dorsal cirri located on the dorsum of notoligule. Dorsal cirrus slightly longer than notoligule, but ventral cirrus shorter than notoligule, thus being smallest. Notosetae are homogomph spinigers throughout. Neurosetae are homogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers in supra-acicular position. Heterogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers in infra-acicular position.

Remarks : The present materials agree well with the original description.

Distribution : INDIA : Tuticorin, Pamban waters, Chandipore, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Maharashtra and Goa Coast.

Elsewhere : Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean.

13. *Pseudonereis anomala* Gravier, 1901

Pseudonereis anomala Gravier, 1901 : 191, pl. 12 figs. 50-52, text figs. 194-202; Fauvel, 1953 : 217, Fig. 110 e-g; Day, 1967 : 333, Fig. 14.12, g-j; Nageswara Rao & Soota, 1981 : 77

Material : 26 specimens collected from St. 3, 8, and 10.

Habitat : Boring into dead coral and coralline algae.

Description : Prostomium hexangular, bearing two pairs of eyes in trapezoidal arrangement; tentacles very small, palps large with bulbous tip. Proboscis elongated and large, with both pointed and flat triangular paragnaths; I 1 cone; II 20 cones in 3 regular rows; III 25-35 cones in 4 regular rows; IV 22-30 cones in 4-5 regular oblique rows; V none; VI 10-12 bars in transverse rows; VII and VIII 10-14 flat triangular paragnaths in one regular transverse row.

Anterior parapodium has two equal triangular notoligules. The dorsal cirrus 3 times as long as supra-notoligule. From middle parapodium the supra-notoligule elongated, the dorsal cirrus situated in front of the supra-notoligule dorsally. In posterior parapodia, the supra-notoligule flattened and elongated; the dorsal cirrus at end of the supra-notoligule. The ventral cirrus slender. In anterior parapodia, notosetae are homogomph spinigers. The neurosetal lobes have homogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers.

Remarks : The present materials agree well with the description of Day (1967).

Distribution : INDIA : Gulf of Mannar, Marmugao Bay, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Cape Comorin, Kilakarai and Gujarat coast.

Elsewhere : Australia, Malay archipelago, Indo-china, Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Madagascar.

14. *Pseudonereis variegata* (Grube, 1857)

Nereilepas variegata Grube, 1857 : 164.

Nereis (Mastigonereis) variegata : McIntosh, 1904 : 37, pl. 1 figs. 6-10, pl. 2 figs. 11, 12.

Pseudonereis gallapagensis Kinberg, 1866 : 174 : Fauvel, 1953 : 215, Fig. 110 a-e; *Pseudonereis variegata* Day, 1967 : 331, Fig. 14-12.a-f; Misra *et al.*, 1987 : 74. Soota *et al.*, 1981 : 96, Nageswara Rao & Soota, 1981 : 77.

Material : 45 specimens collected from St. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 13.

Habitat : Burrowing into rocks, dead and live corals.

Description : Body 80-90 mm long. Tentacles small, palps large, with bulbous tip. The longest peristomial cirrus reaches backward to setiger 5. Proboscis is large, paragnaths present on both rings : I 1 cone; II 16-20 points in a regular triangular cluster; III 12-18 points in 3 triangular rows; IV 17-22 points; V 1 cone; VI a single transverse bar; VII and VIII have 30-40 cones in 3-4 irregular rows. The dorsal cirri longer than notopodial lobes, slender toward the end; ventral cirrus very short, situated at the base of infra-neurolegule. Beyond setiger 50 supra-notoligule expands toward posterior end in a rectangular shape, carrying the dorsal cirrus at end. Ventral cirrus very short. The upper margin or the supra-notoligule in posterior parapodia bears gland.

Notosetae are homogomph spinigers throughout. Neurosetae in anterior and middle parapodia homogomph spinigers and heterogomph falcigers. Posterior neurosetal lobes with heterogomph spinigers and falcigers.

Remarks : Present materials agree well with the description of Day (1967).

Distribution : INDIA : Orissa coast, Gulf of Mannar, Marmugao Bay, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Goa and Gujarat.

Elsewhere : Pacific Ocean, Galapagos, Peru, Chile, Megellan, Indo China, Indian Ocean, Madagascar, Brazil.

SUMMARY

The present paper deals with 14 species of polychaetes under family Nereidae, four species is recorded for the first time from entire Andaman & Nicobar Islands of which three are new distributional record to Indian waters.

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