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***PARACLEPSIS GARDENSI* (HIRUDINEA : GLOSSIPHONIDAE)
A NEW SPECIES OF LEECH FROM WEST BENGAL, INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

A new species of leech *Paraclepsis gardensi* is described from West Bengal, and is known by two species of this genus from India. It is distinguished in possessing the following characters : Eyes three pairs (2nd pair largest) stomach with seven pairs of caeca (Branched), mouth opening almost terminal, a bulb shaped structure on the dorsoventral part of the left anterior portion of the body, 18 greenish brown sub parallel longitudinal lines on the dorsal side 6 mid ventral. Length of a full grown preserved specimen is 10 mm. and width is 4.8 mm. Posterior sucker is 1 mm. in diameter. A living specimen resting in a dish is 28 mm. in length and 3.8 mm. in width.

***Paraclepsis gardensi* sp. nov.**

Holotype : Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 2768/1, 1 ex., Coll. C. K. Mandal, 25.6.1994, King Lake, Botanical Garden, Shibpur, Howrah, West Bengal, India.

Paratypes : Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 2816/1, Coll. C. K. Mandal, 6.6.19-95, 2 exs., Kalikapur field side pond, P.S. Barasat (N), 24-Parganas, West Bengal.

2 exs., Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 2785/1, 2785/2, Coll. C. K. Mandal, 21. 7. 1995, Mechagram, Midnapur District, West Bengal, India.

1 ex., Z.S.I. Reg. No. An 3221/1, Coll. C. K. Mandal, 1.9.2002, Vojerhat, South 24-Parganas, West Bengal.

Diagnosis : ***Colour*** : Raddish brown in living condition and greyish in preserved state.

Body : Ovate, continuous with the head region.

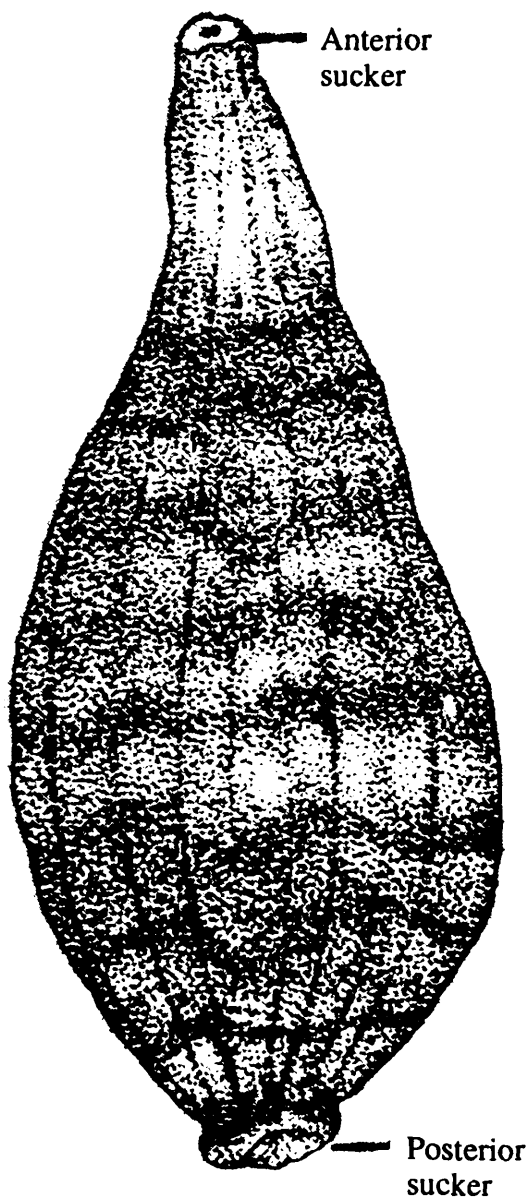
Length : The total length of *Paraclepsis gardensi* 10 mm. (in preserved state), 28 mm. in living.

Distribution : India : West Bengal (Howrah, Midnapur, North and South 24-Parganas).

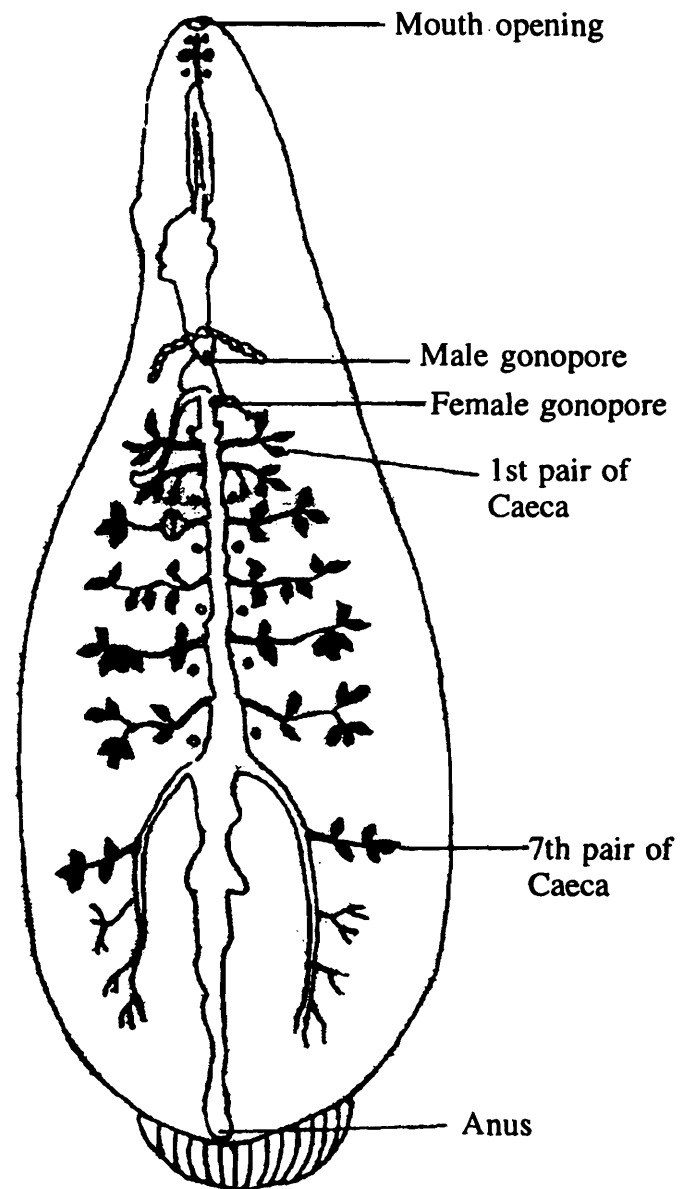
Breeding Season : April to August. During this time they form eggs and bear on the ventral side of the body. 5–7 eggs are found in the jelly like brood, within 20–25 days offsprings came out from the brood, taking rest for few hours leave the mothers body in search of food.

Remarks : The specific name is proposed according to the name of the place where from the first example was collected.

Comparision : *Paraclepsis gardensi* differs from other two species of the genus, so far recorded from Indian region. Dimention of eyes of the *Paraclepsis gardensi* varies from *Paraclepsis praedatrix* and *Paraclepsis vulnifera*. Third pair of eyes are largest in the two species where as in *Paraclepsis gardensi* 2nd pair largest. In *Paraclepsis gardensi* stomach is more branched than



Paraclepsis gardensi sp. nov.



Alimentary canal & caecal arrangement in the sp. nov. *Paraclepsis gardensi*

other two species of the genus. In *Paraclepsis gardensi* mouth opening is horse-shoe shaped and terminal in position. In other two species the mouth opening is almost round and sub terminal. Bulb shaped structure is absent in *Paraclepsis praedatrix* and *Paraclepsis vulnifers*. 18 dorsal sub parallel lines and 6 ventral greyish green lines (2 mid ventral) in *Paraclepsis gardensi* but such number of lines are not present in other two species of the genus. Greatest length of *Paraclepsis gardensi* in preserved state is 10 mm. whereas 15.5 mm. in *Paraclepsis praedatrix*, and 14 mm. in *Paraclepsis vulnifera*.

Host and Habitat : It is found in ponds, lakes and canals where tortoises, snakes and frogs abound in.

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