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## Occurrence of *Panulirus ornatus* Fabricius from Coastal Waters of Karachi

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**Abstract:** The present study reports the occurrence of the spiny lobster, *Panulirus ornatus* (Fabricius) in coastal waters of Karachi and thus extends its known distribution for Northern Arabian Sea. Information on size of eggs and egg mass is also reported.

**Key words:** Lobster, *P. ornatus*, rare species

### Introduction

Five species of spiny lobster belonging to two families Palinuridae and Scyllaridae have so far been recorded from Pakistan (Hussain, 1978; Tirmizi and Ahsanullah, 1965; Hussain and Amjad, 1978; Tirmizi, 1980).

An ovigerous spiny lobster has been collected from Buleji beach of Karachi coast on 17th July 1999. It was identified as *Panulirus ornatus* Fabricius (Fig. 1) As Bianchi (1985) has described the *P. ornatus* from coastal waters of Pakistan, the present study is the second record of the occurrence of this species from Karachi coast. Whereas, Williams (1988) has mentioned the distribution of *P. ornatus* in the Western Indo-Pacific covering coastal regions from south Africa to Red Sea and Okinawa, Japan., Indonesia and Western Australia excluding coastal areas of Pakistan, India and Burma. The present report supports the observation of Bianchi (1985) mentioning the occurrence of *P. ornatus* in the coastal waters of Pakistan. Total length of the specimen was 26.4 cm, carapace length was 12.2 cm. The antennular plate bears two pairs of spines. Each abdominal segment has a dark band and pale

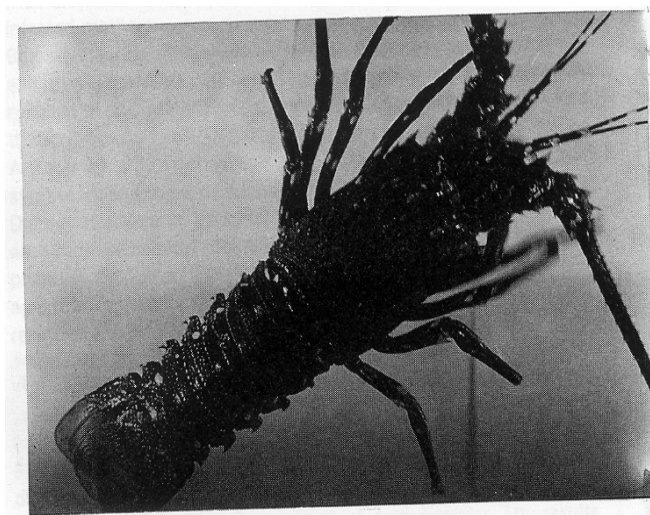


Fig. 1: *Panulirus ornatus*, (modified after Bianchi, 1985).

spots on the sides. The lobster was brought to the laboratory and kept in aerated sea water where it survived for a period of 10 days. The lobster detached the eggs from its body after 4 days of capture. The eggs were removed from the aquarium and kept in separate glass bowls with aerated seawater. The egg mass was found to consist of 80,000 eggs. The egg measured 0.5 mm in diameter and their colour was orange (Fig. 2).

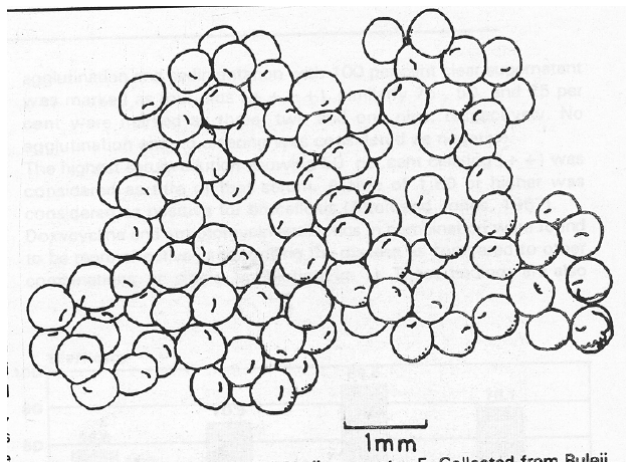


Fig. 2: The egg mass of *Panulirus ornatus* F. Collected from Buleji, Karachi.

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