



Zootaxa 3667 (1): 001–089  
www.mapress.com/zootaxa/

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# Monograph

ISSN 1175-5326 (print edition)

**ZOOTAXA**

ISSN 1175-5334 (online edition)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.3667.1.1>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:0A38BF2A-135C-4C57-B291-40C34DD54FB9>

# ZOOTAXA

3667

## An annotated checklist of the Cladocera (Crustacea: Branchiopoda) from India

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Magnolia Press  
Auckland, New Zealand

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**An annotated checklist of the Cladocera (Crustacea: Branchiopoda) from India**

(*Zootaxa* 3667)

89 pp.; 30 cm.

4 Jun. 2013

ISBN 978-1-77557-188-9 (paperback)

ISBN 978-1-77557-189-6 (Online edition)

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 2013 BY

Magnolia Press

P.O. Box 41-383

Auckland 1346

New Zealand

e-mail: [zootaxa@mapress.com](mailto:zootaxa@mapress.com)

<http://www.mapress.com/zootaxa/>

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ISSN 1175-5326 (Print edition)

ISSN 1175-5334 (Online edition)

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## Abstract

Based on a revision of available literature on the Indian Cladocera (Crustacea: Branchiopoda), we present an updated checklist, with taxonomical updates and comments for all taxa recorded since the start of research of this group in the country since 1860. We have listed a total of 137 valid taxa, of which most records belong to species groups that need revision worldwide. The situation in Indian Cladocera taxonomy is, at present, insufficient for realistic conclusions on biodiversity, ecology and biogeography. We list suggestions for an improvement of the current situation.

**Key words:** Cladocera, checklist, systematics, taxonomy, India, Oriental zone

## Introduction

W. Baird (1860) was the first researcher who wrote a paper on the Cladocera (Crustacea: Branchiopoda) from India, describing *Daphnia newporti* Baird, 1860 (Anomopoda: Daphniidae). In the few decades that followed, the Indian Cladocera fauna remained largely a mystery to most of the “classical” zooplankton researchers that were active during the time (from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), such as G.O. Sars. As one of the few, Gurney (1906, 1907) published two papers on Indian Cladocera, with the description of two taxa among which *Daphnia fusca* Gurney, 1906, a peculiar high-altitude species of which the type locality now lies in Pakistan (Michael & Sharma B.K. 1988). The little attention that India received in this period, is in sheer contrast to several other tropical territories (Daday 1908) in the Neotropics, like Brazil (Sars 1901) or in the Oriental Region, where even the adjacent island Sri Lanka, at that time known as Ceylon, was studied more intensively (Daday 1898).