



## New Species of Estuarine Crab

### Why in News?

Recently, researchers have discovered a new species of **Estuarine Crab** at the [Mangroves of Parangipettai](#) near the **Vellar River estuary** (an area where river meets the ocean) in **Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu**.

- The species has been named '**Pseudohelice Annamalai**' in recognition of **Annamalai University's 100 years** of service in education and research.

### What are the Key Facts about Pseudohelice Annamalai?



- **About:**
  - This is the first ever record of this genus, **Pseudohelice**, collected from high intertidal areas in front of the **Centre of Advanced Study (CAS)**.
    - Till date, **only two species**, namely "**Pseudohelice Subquadrata**" and "**Pseudohelice Latreilli**" have been confirmed within this genus.
- **Geography:**
  - The species discovered is distributed around the **Indian subcontinent and the eastern Indian Ocean**.
- **Features:**
  - **Pseudohelice annamalai** is distinguished by **dark purple to dark grey colouring**, with irregular light brown, yellowish brown, or white patches on the posterior carapace with light brown chelipeds.
  - The new species is **small** and has a maximum width of up to 20 mm.

- This species is **not aggressive** and can move fast like other intertidal crabs.
- **Habitat:**
  - The species inhabits **muddy banks of mangroves**, and the **burrows were located near the pneumatophores of Avicennia mangroves**.
  - Burrows have a depth of 25-30 cm and are branched, with larger pellets around the entrance.
- **Significance:**
  - The occurrence of Pseudohelice in India **links the distribution gap between the western Indian Ocean and the western Pacific Ocean**.
  - The new species provides additional **evidence of the geographic isolation of the eastern Indian Ocean** for some marine organisms

[Source: TH](#)

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