



Parhyale Odian

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Why in News?

Researchers from **Odisha's Berhampur University** discovered a new species of **marine amphipod** in **Chilika Lake**. It has been named **Parhyale Odian** after Odisha's native language, Odia.

What are Amphipods?

- Amphipods are a diverse group of **malacostracan crustaceans**, meaning they share some features with **crabs, lobsters, and shrimp**.
- They have a laterally compressed body, meaning they are flattened from side to side, and a curved body shape.
 - The **whale lice** found on the bodies of whales and dolphins are actually a type of amphipod.
- Amphipods, including those of the **genus Parhyale**, play a vital role in the marine ecosystem.
 - They contribute to the marine food chain and serve as indicators for studying the **impact of climate change** and the health of coastal ecosystems.
- In 2023, researchers discovered three new marine amphipods: **Quadrivisio chilikensis** and **Demaorchestia alanensis** in Chilika Lake and **Talorchestia buensis** on the West Bengal coast.

What are the Characteristics of Genus Parhyale and Parhyale Odian?

- **Genus Parhyale:**
 - The genus Parhyale, first reported **in 1899** from the **Virgin Islands (US)**, comprises 15 species globally.
 - The present contribution has added one more species to the genus *Parhyale*, raising the global species number in the group to 16.
 - These amphipods inhabit both **marine and brackish water** environments.
 - They are cosmopolitan, found in **intertidal and littoral environments** across tropical and warm temperate regions.
 - They are commonly found **underneath stones with attached vegetation** or in the burrows of isopods.
- **Parhyale Odian:**
 - It is a shrimp-like **crustacean** of the genus **Parhyale**.
 - It is brown in colour, approximately 8 millimetres in length, and possesses **13 pairs of legs**.
 - The first pair of legs is specialized for **capturing prey and feeding**.
 - Unlike the other 15 known species in the genus, Parhyale Odian stands out due to a **stout robust seta**- a spine-like structure on the surface of the male gnathopod (first pair of legs).



Note: [Chilika Lake](#) is the **largest brackish water lagoon** in Asia and the **second-largest coastal lagoon in the world**.

- It is located on the east coast of India, at the mouth of the **Daya River**, which flows into the Bay of Bengal.
- Due to its rich biological diversity, Lake Chilika was the **first Indian wetland of international importance** to be designated under the [Ramsar Convention in 1981](#).
- The unusual hydrological diversity gives Lake Chilika the characteristics of a **lake, estuary and lagoon**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Q. Which one of the following is the correct sequence of a food chain? (2014)

- (a)** Diatoms-Crustaceans-Herrings
- (b)** Crustaceans-Diatoms-Herrings
- (c)** Diatoms-Herrings-Crustaceans
- (d)** Crustaceans-Herrings-Diatomsol

Ans: (a)