THE POST-LARVAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHORE CRAB **OCYPODA PLATYTARSIS**

M. EDWARDS AND **OCYPODA CORDIMANA** DESMAREST

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PREVIOUS WORK

In the family Ocypodidae the megalopae have been described only in the two genera *Uca* and *Ocypoda*. Say (1817) described a new genus and species *Monolepis inermis* which he referred to Macrura though he was aware of its Brachyuran features. Dana (1852) described and figured
a second species *Monolepis orientalis* from Philippines. Smith (1880) definitely established the identity of the forms described by Say and Dana as the megalopa of *Ocypoda quadrata* after an examination of the young crab within the partially cast skin of one of the megalopæ collected by him at New England and Long Island which buried itself in sand and tried to moult. In 1915 Kemp studied the habits of the megalopæ of *Ocypoda macrocera* in the sandy beach of Ennur near Madras. Rathbun (1924) got a megalopa from Galapagos and identified it as belonging probably to *O. gaudichaudi*. This megalopa was later identified by Crane (1940) as belonging to the genus *Plagusia*. Lebour (1932) referred two megalopæ collected at Philippines provisionally to the family Ocypodidae. Crane (1940) considers one of these as an *Ocypoda*, and the second with seven hairs on the last pleopod and with no hairs between the third and the fourth pair of legs as not an *Ocypoda*. Crane (1940) has also described the zoeæ and megalopæ of *Ocypoda gaudichaudi* Milne Edwards and the megalopa of *O. occidentalis* Stimpson which are different from the megalopa of the common *O. albicans* (Bose) as shown by the number of setæ on the last pleopod.

I. MEGALOPA AND FIRST CRAB STAGE OF *Ocypoda platytarsis*

(Figs. 1–17)

*Megalopa*

Twelve megalopæ of *Ocypoda platytarsis* were collected on Waltair beach on 12-12-1951 while they were in the act of burrowing into sand during high tide (Fig. 1).

Four of these were placed in separate finger bowls with sand and sea water, and fed on crab muscles, shrimps and mantle pieces of bivalves. Three lived for about 3 to 4 days while the fourth moulted into the first crab stage on 18-12-1951. The megalopa skin broke open at the posterior end of the cephalothorax and the first crab stage emerged. On 29-12-1951 it was killed and preserved.

Subsequently during the period, April to July 1952, fourteen megalopæ were collected. Though attempts were made to rear them, none moulted and all died within a week.

On 12-2-1953 five megalopæ were collected from burrows of about six inches depth and 3/16 inch diameter, about 25 feet away from the sea in the coastal battery region of Vizagapatam. Later many more were collected in burrows in the same region.