







generally omnivorous, feeding on plant material, live or dead animals such as fish, prawns, molluscs, etc., and sometimes cannibalism is also seen. Over 1300 species are known from the world, of which 96 species are found in India. Some of the commonly found freshwater crabs of India are listed below:

Freshwater Crabs	
Name	Picture
Indian Freshwater Crab <i>Barytelphusa cunicularis</i>	
<i>Maydelliathelphusa lugubris</i>	
<i>Maydelliathelphusa falcidigitis</i>	

b. Brackishwater/Marine Crab:

Marine crabs are one of the valuable seafood items that are in great demand both in the domestic and export markets. There are about 600 species of marine crabs recorded from Indian waters. The crab fishery in India is dominated by a few species such as *Scylla serrata*, *S. tranquebarica*, *Portunus pelagicus*, *P. sanguinolentus*, *Charybdis feriata*, *C. lucifera* and *C. truncata*. Commercial-scale crab culture is undertaken along the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Grow-out culture ('Crab Fattening') is generally pond based wherein crabs juveniles are held in pens or cages. Production of 'Soft-Shelled Crabs' is done using floating boxes held in tidal ponds.

Marine Crabs	
Name	Picture
Mud Crab <i>Scylla serrata</i>	 A photograph of a mud crab, showing its dark green and brown carapace, large claws, and legs.
Three-spot Swimming Crab <i>Portunus sanguinolentus</i>	 A photograph of a three-spot swimming crab, characterized by its light green and brown coloration and three distinct dark spots on its carapace.
Blue Swimming Crab <i>Portunus pelagicus</i>	 A photograph of a blue swimming crab, showing its blue and brown carapace and long, powerful legs.

1.3. Lobsters

Lobsters are one of the most valuable and highly priced crustaceans as well as an important export commodity. The massive head bears five pairs of walking legs; the abdomen is well developed, muscular and bears five pairs of swimmerets. Lobsters are solitary animals that crawl on the sea floor and hide under rocks. Among the 12 species recorded from Indian coastal waters, only four species of Spiny Lobsters (*Panulirus homarus*, *P. ornatus*, *P. polyphagus*, *P. versicolor*) and one species of Slipper Lobster (*Thenus orinetalis*) are commercially important. Growth is slow, most lobsters take more than 3 years to attain maturation and they have a prolonged life-cycle. Grow-out and fattening of lobsters is commonly done in indoor tanks and cages to fetch better price in market.