



Bathynomus raksasa: Isopod Species

Why in News

Recently, scientists have reported the **discovery of the first super giant isopod species in the eastern Indian Ocean** named '**Bathynomus raksasa**'.

- It has been described as the '**cockroach of the sea**'.
- A team of researchers from Singapore discovered it while exploring waters of the Indian Ocean in **Bantan**, off the southern coast of West Java in **Indonesia** in **2018**.



Key Points

- **Super Giant Isopod:** The *Bathynomus raksasa* is a super giant isopod in the genus *Bathynomus*.
 - Isopods are **marine invertebrates** (animals without backbones) that belong to the greater crustacean group of animals, which also includes crabs and shrimp.
 - They live in many different types of habitat, from mountains and deserts to the deep sea.
 - **Isopods that reach 50 cm are referred to as supergiants.** The largest isopod species are from the genus *Bathynomus*.
- **Features:**
 - It has **14 legs** but uses these only to crawl along the bed of oceans in search of food.
 - It measures around **50 cm in length**, which is big for isopods, which normally do not grow beyond 33 cm.
 - The **only** member of the isopod species that **exceeds the raksasa in size** is the ***Bathynomus giganteus***, which is commonly found in the deep waters of the western Atlantic Ocean.
 - As a **scavenger**, it eats the remains of dead marine animals, such as whales and fish, but can also go for long periods without food, a trait that it shares with the cockroach.
- **Significance:**
 - It is the first recorded species of the genus *Bathynomus* from Indonesia.
 - It is the **sixth 'supergiant' species** from the Indo-West Pacific, and is one of the largest known members of the genus *Bathynomus*.
 - It's discovery will contribute towards increasing knowledge about the deep sea.

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The Vision

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