

Actinarctus odissi

May 24, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

Actinarctus odissi



Actinarctus odissi Latest News

Scientists recently discovered a new species of tardigrade, fondly known as the marine water bear, named *Actinarctus odissi*, off the northeast coast of India.

About *Actinarctus odissi*

- It is a new species of **tardigrade**.
- The **microscopic** creature was discovered in the **shallow marine waters** of the **Bay of Bengal**, near the coastal region of Markandi in **Odisha**.
- The name "**odissi**" was chosen to honour the famous **traditional classical dance** form **originating from Odisha**.
- This marks the first time in 43 years that a new member of its elusive genus has been found.
- **Features:**
 - It boasts a **dome-shaped body surrounded by transparent, wing-like flaps called alae**, which are supported by translucent pillars.

- While other species in this genus feature long wings and elaborate internal supports, this new water bear has **noticeably shorter lateral wings**.
- Its **back legs** possess **simple, un-split sensory organs** that are much shorter than those of its cousins.
- It also features blunt-tipped sensory appendages, rather than sharp ones, and its back is uniquely heavily sculptured with tiny, trombone-shaped pillars.

What are Tardigrades?

- Tardigrades, also called “**water bears**” or “**moss-piglets**”, are **tiny microscopic animals**.
- Scientists have identified about 1,300 tardigrade species.
- Tardigrades can be found in almost **every habitat** on Earth.
- **Most species** live in **freshwater or semiaquatic terrestrial environments**.
- **Marine tardigrades** account for **17%** of all known tardigrade species.
- They are **short** (0.05 mm – 1.2 mm in body length), **plump, bilaterally symmetrical, segmented organisms**.
- They have **four pairs of legs**, each of which **ends in four to eight claws**.
- They feed on the fluids of plant cells, animal cells, and bacteria.
- They are famous for their extraordinary ability to **survive extreme environmental conditions**.
- They can survive punishing heat, freezing cold, ultraviolet radiation, and **even outer space**.
- **Under unfavourable conditions**, they go into a **state of suspended animation** called the “**tun**” state—in which the **body dries out** and **appears as a lifeless ball** (or tun).
 - In this state their **metabolism may decline** to as little as 0.01 percent of its normal rate.
 - Tardigrades can **survive as tuns for years, or even decades**, to wait out dry conditions.

Source: **RM**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/actinartus-odissi/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.