

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF GIANT CLAM AROUND LEE-PAE ISLAND, THE ANDAMAN SEA, THAILAND

**By Supot Chantrapornsyi, Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong &
Kanjana Adulyanukosol**

Phuket Jforine Biological Center, P O. Box 60, Phuket 83000, Thailand

ABSTRACT

Three giant clam were found: *Tridacna squamosa*, *T. maxima* and *T. crocea*. Giant clam was most abundant on the southwest side of Lee-Pae Island, which otherwise is dominated by *T. crocea*, the smallest of the giant clams. The shell length of *T. crocea* varied from 2 to 14 cm. *T. maxima* ranged from 2 to 31 cm. Both species were found from the littoral zone to 1.3 m depth, while *T. squamosa* lived in deeper water. The small clams dominated in shallow water, and the big clams in deeper water. *T. squamosa* has been heavily exploited. Thus the clams are endangered species today. An area was identified for the establishment of a clam's sanctuary in the near future. The utilization of giant clam by local fishermen was examined.