

# MONOCULUS POLYPHEMUS.



## CHARACTER GENERICUS.

*Pedes* natatorii.

*Corpus* crusta tectum.

*Oculi* (plerisque) approximati, testæ innati.

## CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

MONOCULUS testâ antica convexa lunata, cauda triquetra-fubulata.

MONOCULUS testâ convexa futura lunata: postica dentata, cauda fubulata longissima.

*Lin. Syst. Nat.* p. 1057.

*Clus. exot.* l. 6. c. 14. p. 128.

*Bont. jav.* l. 5. c. 31.

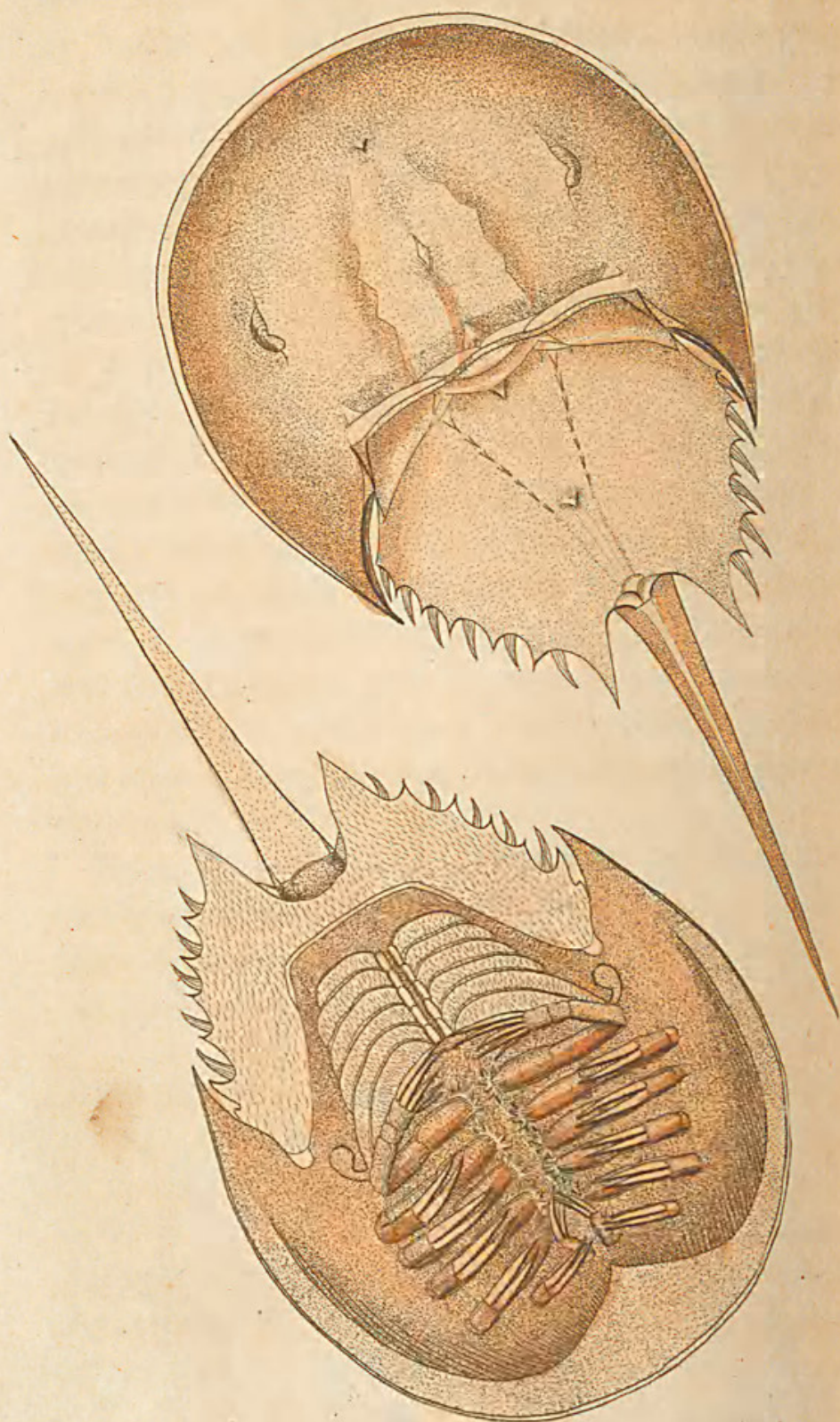
---

Monoculum dicitur hoc genus, quod oculi, ut plurimum, sibi invicem adeo appropinquant, ut primo intuitu unicus esse oculus videantur. Aliquarum tamen specierum oculi, et præsertim ejus de qua jam agitur, sunt alter ab altero valde remoti. Animal quod repræsentat tabula, omnium proculdubio est maximum, quotquot inter insecta numerare hodiernis visum est physicis: est enim illi corpus, extra caudam, interdum bipedale in longitudinem. Linnæus dicit “insectorum omnium facile

facile maximum." Oceanum Indicum incolit, et, (ut fertur) bina plerumque simul conspiciuntur, scilicet mas et fœmina prope natantes. Pleræque hujus generis species parvula sunt insecta in aquis dulcibus viventia, quorum multa adeo sunt minuta, ut inter animalcula microscopica numerentur. Qui intimas et minus cognitæ Naturæ partes scrutari solent, et innumera animalculorum agmina quibus aquæ scatent, attentius examinare, ii sane summa cum voluptate conspiciant necesse est varias hujus generis species, quæ sine ope microscopii vix videndæ, characteribus tamen genericis plane demonstrant certissimum esse illis cum ingenti et gigantea specie de qua jam loquimur, cognationis vinculum. Hæc animalcula mensibus æstivis in omnibus fere aquis stagnantibus facillime reperiuntur; eorum etiam nonnulla a scriptoribus microscopis, Bakero præcipue, non fane eleganter, satis tamen accurate delineantur, et exempla sunt miræ quoad magnitudinem differentiæ quam in ejusdem generis animalibus non possumus non observare.

Huic descriptioni Monoculi Polyphemi non abs re fit addere, quod tunica oculi externa, quæ in aliis insectis e convexitatibus innumeris basi hexagona inclusis constat, in hoc, attestante Domino André (Phil. Trans. t. 72.) e corpusculis plurimis conicis fit conflata. Possit etiam observari quod oculi multarum parvularum Monoculi specierum, ab oculis aliorum insectorum structura et aspectu differunt, et velut e pluribus ocellis seu globulis tunica communi contentis, componi videntur. Notandum præterea est genus Monoculi generi Cancræ (quod astacos omnes et cancros includit) valde esse affine.





THE  
INDIAN MONOCULUS.



*GENERIC CHARACTER.*

*Feet* formed for swimming.

*Body* covered by a crustaceous shell.

*Eyes* (in most species) approximated, fixed in the shell.

*SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.*

MONOCULUS with the anterior part of the shell lunated, and long, triangular, sharp-pointed tail.

The INDIAN MONOCULUS, MOLUCCA CRAB, or KING-CRAB.

---

The name Monoculus was bestowed on this genus of insects from the circumstance of the eyes being generally seated so near each other, as, upon a cursory view, to appear as if single. In some species however, (as in the present,) it happens that they are really very remote from each other. Of all the animals which modern naturalists have agreed to distinguish by the appellation of Insects, the creature figured on this plate is by far the largest yet known; specimens being sometimes seen of two feet in length, exclusive of the tail. Linnaeus  
calls

calls it "insectorum omnium facile maximum." It is a native of the Indian ocean, and is said to be generally found in pairs, or male and female swimming together. Most of the species of *Monoculus* are small fresh-water insects, and some of them even belong to the tribe of microscopic animalcules. To those who are accustomed to penetrate into the less conspicuous provinces of Nature, and to investigate the legions of animated beings with which the waters in particular are peopled, it must afford a pleasing entertainment to view several species of this genus, which though scarce perceptible without the assistance of the microscope, yet with respect to their generic characters, bear the most striking resemblance to the gigantic species just described. These minute *Monoculi* are very common animalcules, and may be found in the summer months in almost all stagnant waters. Some of them are figured, (though not very elegantly, yet with sufficient exactness,) in Baker's works on the microscope, and may serve as curious examples of the wonderful disparity of size which sometimes takes place in animals of the same genus.

To what has been said of the *Monoculus Polyphemus*, I should not omit to add, that the eyes in this animal, according to the observations of Mr. André, (*Phil. Trans.* vol. 72.) consist of a great number of very small cones, in which respect they differ from those of most other insects, in which the outward coat of the eye is composed of innumerable slight convexities, each bounded by an hexagonal outline. It may be proper to add, that the eyes of most of the smaller species of  
*Monoculi*

Monoculi differ in their structure and appearance from those of the generality of insects, and seem composed of a number of smaller eyes or globular parts united by the same external tunic. It may also be observed that the genus Monoculus is very nearly allied to that of Cancer, which contains the Crab and Lobster tribe.



Shaw, George. 1792. "The Indian Monoculus, *Monoculus polyphemus* [Pl. 91]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 3(XXX), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.304511>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/279090>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.304511>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/304511>

**Holding Institution**

Museums Victoria

**Sponsored by**

Atlas of Living Australia

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.