

## Abstract:

The present study from January, 2013 to July, 2017 shows the short coastal line (158.2 km) of West Bengal offers a wide variety of biotic components which are used by the local people for their sustenance. Shell fish collection is an old occupation from the past to till date in this region. At present, the total population of India is about 127 crores. A huge number of our children among this high population have been suffering from mal-nutritional diseases. They need highly protein enriched food and molluscs meat is a very good source of protein. In dry condition *Loligo duvauceli* contains 12.17% protein, *Octopus macropus* - 12.71%, *Sepia aculeata* - 11.48% and *Sepiella inermis* - 14.53% protein. India harvested 0.04 lakh tones of bivalves, 0.02 lakh tones of gastropods and 1.73 lakh tones of cephalopods from Indian marine resources in the year 2013-2014. Molluscs species are available at Digha coast more or less throughout the year. During post monsoon period from the month of September to February, the marine molluscs population density is highest. Availability goes down lowest in monsoon period from the month of June to August and density is optimum in pre-monsoon season, ranges from the month of March to May. At Digha, the beach is about 10 km long from Paschim Gadadharpur to Digha Mohana and from the study it is collected 54 varieties of bivalve species, 35 varieties of gastropod species and 4 varieties of cephalopod species. Out of them 12 bivalves, 2 gastropods and 4 cephalopods are edible species as per local survey in 5 coastal villages located around Digha coast such as Padima, Mirjapur, Dattapur, Mandala and Raghusardarbard but local people consume molluscs meat very little because they are getting different varieties of marine fishes at low price. Few tribal people consume molluscs meat adequately at Digha during winter season. In Southern part of India especially Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu etc, the poor people including fisher folk population considered the marine edible molluscs meat as their food. But at Digha in future, it is expected the edible marine molluscs meat may be eaten by local poor people adequately due to containing high protein in comparison with marine fishes and scarcity of marine fishes due to depletion of marine fishery resources.

This study is conducted to make awareness among the people at Digha especially poor coastal villagers and fisher folk communities about nutritive values of edible marine molluscs meat and its beneficial effect on human body.