

***Aega sheni*, a new species of Aegidae (Crustacea: Isopoda: Cymothoidea) from southern China and Australia**

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Abstract

Aega sheni sp. nov. from Chinese and Australian waters, is described and figured. This species is characterized by the plate-like expansion of antennule peduncle articles 1 and 2, very large eyes (nearly making contact), numerous robust setae on the inferior margins of the ischium of pereopods 2 and 3, large distal lobe on the propodus of pereopods 1–3, shape and setation of the uropods, and the rounded pleotelson posterior margin. *Aega sheni* has been recorded at depths of 300–435 metres.

Key words: Isopoda, Aegidae, *Aega*, South China Sea, Coral Sea, China, Australia, Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean

Introduction

The family Aegidae is relatively diverse compared to many other isopod families, containing approximately 138 species at present, and has a world-wide distribution (Kensley *et al.* 2006). While the family is reasonably well known in the Pacific (e.g. Bruce 1983, 1996, 1997, 2004, 2005; Brusca 1983; Brusca & France 1992) there are very few records from the northwestern Pacific other than those of Richardson (1910), reporting primarily on the region around the Philippines, and those from the Japanese literature (summarized by Saito *et al.* 2000).

The marine isopod fauna of Chinese waters is particularly poorly known, with correspondingly few records of Aegidae. Four aegid species have been identified from the collections in the Institute of Oceanology, Chinese Academy of Sciences but these records require verification. The greater region of the northwestern Pacific has numerous species, many of which could also be expected to occur in Chinese waters.