



Maeridae, the *Ceradocus* group*

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* In: Lowry, J.K. & Myers, A.A. (Eds) (2009) Amphipoda (Crustacea: Peracarida) of the Great Barrier Reef, Australia. *Zootaxa*, 2260, 1–930.

Abstract

Eight genera, of which one is new to science and 18 species, of which one is new to science, are reported, primarily living in the crevices of the reef or among algae, but one genus is probably interstitial.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Maeridae, Great Barrier Reef, Australia, taxonomy, new genus, new species, *Austromaera brevicaudata*, *Ceradocus crenatipalma*, *Ceradocus hawaiiensis*, *Ceradocus oxyodus*, *Ceradocus* cf. *rubromaculatus*, *Ceradocus woorree*, *Ceradocus yandala*, *Glossomaera octodens*, *Jerbarnia stocki*, *Linguimaera pirloti*, *Maeropsis cobia*, *Maeropsis griffini*, *Quadrимаera pacifica*, *Quadrимаera quadrimana*, *Quadrимаera* cf. *reishi*, *Quadrимаera serrata*, *Saurodocus hobbit*, *Saurodocus minimarenius*

Introduction

Within the large family Maeridae the *Ceradocus*-*Maera*-*Elasmopus* group is defined by rami of third uropods subequal in length and conspicuously long, in contrast to melitids (*sensu stricto*) with rami clearly unequal in length. While the latter have developed a quite typical shape of the first gnathopod, this is much less the case in this group.

Ceradocus is exclusively marine and widely distributed from the tropics to the Mediterranean. Both pairs of maxillae have the inner plates medially fully setose, the inner plate of maxilla 2 is widened and often of triangular shape; the third article of the mandible palp shows different steps of reduction, the first article is usually distally lengthened and pointed, creating a "knee" on this articulation.

The genus *Maera* (*sensu lato*) was for a long time mainly negatively defined: it lacks the medial setation on both maxillae, typical for *Ceradocus*, it lacks the falcate third article on the mandible palp, typical for *Elasmopus*. Recently *Maera* (*sensu stricto*) was redefined (Krapp-Schickel, 2000), which excluded a number of species. *Maera* (*sensu stricto*) is similar to *Ceradocus* in the shape of the mandible palp, but has lost the medial setation on the maxillae; and it shows a series of special synapomorphies (eyes reniform, dactylus of gnathopod 2 on outer margin with many dense setae, basis of pereopod 7 with posterodistal corner, uropod 3 rami truncate etc.). Other genera had to be created or re-established for grouping the remaining species of *Maera* (*sensu lato*).

Elasmopus, *Mallacoota* and *Parelmopus* also belong to this group, but are treated in a separate paper.

Materials and methods

Material was hand collected on SCUBA. The descriptions were generated from a DELTA database (Dallwitz