



Maxillipiidae*

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Abstract

Maxillipius rectitelson Ledoyer, 1973 is redescribed. It was found for the first time in Australia close to Lizard Island. It differs from *Maxillipius commensalis* Lowry, 1984 by the unproduced anterior margin of coxa 1 and the bulky carpus and propodus of gnathopod 1.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Maxillipiidae, Great Barrier Reef, Australia, taxonomy, *Maxillipius rectitelson*

Introduction

The Maxillipiidae are an interesting amphipod family consisting of only 2 genera, *Maxillipius* Ledoyer, 1973 and *Maxillipides* Ledoyer, 1984, with in total 3 species (*Maxillipides laticarpus* Ledoyer, 1984, *Maxillipius commensalis* Lowry, 1984 and *Maxillipius rectitelson* Ledoyer, 1973). They are confined to tropical oceans and at least one species, *Maxillipius commensalis*, is associated with gorgonians (Lowry 1984; Thomas 1996). This species lives in dense assemblages on the host gorgonian and they use their enormously elongated pereopods 6 to keep contact with each other. They are sensitive to movements in the environment and the entire aggregation of amphipods might move to the other side of the gorgonian when approached. Lowry (1984) described specimens from Bootless Bay, in southern Papua New Guinea, with a camouflage red body colour making it difficult to see the animals on the gorgonian surface. The specimens observed by Thomas (1996) in Madang Lagoon on the north coast, however, were creamy white and well visible against the gorgonian host. Details on the biology of *Maxillipius rectitelson* Ledoyer, 1973, redescribed herein for the first time from Lizard Island, are not known.

Materials and methods

The description was generated from a DELTA database (Dallwitz 2005). Material was hand-collected on scuba and is lodged in the Australian Museum, Sydney (AM). A set of colour plates, a list of standard abbreviations and detailed station data is available in Lowry & Myers (2009). Illustrations were made using the methods described in Coleman (2003, 2006). A CD (*Benthic Amphipoda (Crustacea: Peracarida) of the Great Barrier Reef: Interactive Keys*) is available with the book or the keys can be accessed at the crustacea.net website.