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Magelonidae (Polychaeta) from the Arabian Peninsula: a review of known species, with notes on *Magelona tinae* from Thailand

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Abstract

Five species of *Magelona* have been previously reported from the seas surrounding the Arabian Peninsula: *Magelona cornuta* Wesenberg-Lund, *M. obockensis* Gravier, *M. heteropoda* Mohammed, *M. pulchella* Mohammed and *M. papillicornis* F. Müller. The type material of *M. heteropoda, M. pulchella* and *M. obockensis* are examined and redescriptions presented. Several features not recorded in the original descriptions and several corrections are made; as a result *M. heteropoda* is synonymised with *M. obockensis. Magelona tinae* is deemed to be morphologically similar to *M. obockensis.* Variations seen between the specimens may be caused by a disparity in their size. Further examination of specimens of a similar size are required. Specimens recorded as *M. cornuta* and *M. papillicornis* from the Red Sea (Amoureux 1983) are examined. Material originally identified as *M. papillicornis* is found to be *M. obockensis* and that identified as *M. obockensis* is believed to be an undescribed species. The current terminology for magelonid pouches is discussed. A key is provided for the 12 species currently known from the western Indian Ocean region.

Key words: Arabian Sea, *Magelona obockensis*, *Magelona heteropoda*, *Magelona pulchella*, pouches

Introduction

The Magelonidae is a relatively small family comprising of approximately 70 species worldwide. They are characterized by the presence of shovel–shaped prostomia and paired papillated palps. Their bodies are divided into two regions; a thorax of either eight or nine chaetigers; and an abdomen of many. Almost all species are included in the genus *Magelona* Müller, 1858, however Aguirrezabalaga, Ceberio & Fiege (2001) erected *Octomagelona* for species possessing eight thoracic chaetigers. *Octomagelona* is currently monotypic, however a further two species are believed to exist in Mexican and Australian waters (Brasil and Glasby, pers. com. respectively). A third genus *Meridithia* Hernández-Alcántara & Solís-Weiss, 2000, containing two species was recently questioned by Mortimer & Mackie (2003). A detailed cladistic analysis of relationships within the Magelonidae is needed, which may provide evidence for recognizing genera within the family.

Important literature on the Magelonidae comprises of a series of papers by Jones (1963, 1968, 1971, 1977, 1978). Regional studies of the magelonid include: Uebelacker & Jones (1984), Gulf of Mexico; Bolívar & Lana (1986), Brazil; Nateewathana & Hylleberg (1991), Thailand; Blake (1996), California; Hernández-Alcántara & Solís-Weiss (2000), Mexico; Fiege *et al.* 2000, Europe; Mortimer & Mackie (2003, 2006) Seychelles. Despite several species being described from the seas surrounding the Arabian Peninsula, a comprehensive review of *Magelona* species within the region has never been carried out.

Wehe & Fiege (2002) produced an annotated checklist of the polychaete species of the seas surrounding the Arabian Peninsula. They listed records of five magelonid species in this region: *Magelona cornuta* Wesenberg-Lund, 1949 from the Gulf of Oman (type locality), Red Sea (Amoureux 1983) and Gulf of Aden (Hartman 1974); *Magelona heteropoda* Mohammed, 1973 and *Magelona pulchella* Mohammed, 1970 from Kuwait (type localities); *Magelona obockensis* Gravier, 1905 from the Gulf of Aden (type locality) and Red Sea (Amoureux 1983); and *Magelona papillicornis* F. Müller, 1858 from Red Sea (Amoureux 1983).

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