



Article

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***Britorchestia*, a new talitrid genus from western Europe and the Mediterranean Sea and a revision of *Pseudorchestoidea* and *Sardorchestia* (Crustacea, Amphipoda, Talitridae)**

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Abstract

A new talitrid amphipod genus, *Britorchestia* from western Europe and the Mediterranean Sea is described here and the genera *Pseudorchestoidea* and *Sardorchestia* are redescribed.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Talitridae, *Britorchestia*, *Pseudorchestoidea*, *Sardorchestia*, taxonomy, new genera

Introduction

The first talitrid genus, *Talitrus*, was described by Bosc, 1802. During the next 111 years seven genera were added including *Orchestia* Leach, 1814 and *Talorchestia* Dana, 1852. These two genera captured most of the described species well into the 1980s. J.L. Barnard (1958) listed 71 species in *Orchestia* and 48 species in *Talorchestia* – 78% of all known species at that time. As early as the 1950s taxonomists were having trouble placing species in these genera, especially Hurley (1956, 1975) questioned the taxonomic utility of this situation. Bousfield realised the generic-level diversity of the talitrid group and in five papers (Bousfield 1971, 1982, 1984, 1991; Bousfield & Howarth 1976) he developed a set of generic-level characters and described 21 genera. These papers opened the way for mainly southern hemisphere taxonomists such as Hurley (1975), Friend (1982, 1987), Duncan (1994), Serejo (2004), Serejo & Lowry (2008), Lowry & Coleman (2011), Lowry & Bopiah (this paper), who have added a further 28 genera. There are currently 60 talitrid genera and as post-Gondwanan fragments are more closely examined more genera will be discovered.

As might be expected, detailed examination of existing genera has discovered misplaced species in earlier genera. For example, the initial revision of *Talorchestia* by Morino & Miyamoto (1988) significantly reduced the number of species in that genus from about 50 to five. The remaining species became *incertae sedis*. Subsequent revisions (Serejo 2004, Tafani *et al.*, 2004, Serejo & Lowry 2008, Lowry & Coleman 2011) have reassigned many of the orphaned species but, there are still about 12 species attributed to *Talorchestia* that do not belong in the genus. In this paper we describe one new genus, *Britorchestia*, and assign *Pseudorchestoidea brito* (Stebbing, 1891) and *Talorchestia ugolunii* Bellan-Santini & Ruffo, 1991 to the genus. We redescribe the modified genus *Pseudorchestoidea* Bousfield, 1982 and transfer *Pseudorchestoidea gracilis* (Bousfield & Klawe, 1963) to the currently monotypic Mediterranean genus *Sardorchestia* Ruffo, 2004.

Generic-level characters

The question of supraspecific level characters among talitrid amphipods is not settled nor is their homoplasy understood. We are currently using 26 characters (including eight sexually dimorphic characters) to define talitrid genera: 1. eye size; 2. antenna 1, length in relation to antenna 2 peduncle; 3. antenna 2 male, development of incrassate peduncle; 4. antenna 2 male, development of ventral plate on peduncular article 3 (autapomorphy of