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Taxonomy and ecology of the Cape Town Spider Crab, *Macropodia falcifera* (Stimpson, 1858) (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura: Inachidae)

PETER K. L. NG^{1,4}, BERTRAND RICHER DE FORGES² & GEORGINA JONES³

¹Tropical Marine Science Institute and Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore, Kent Ridge, Singapore 119260, Republic of Singapore. E-mail: dbsngkl@nus.edu.sg

²5, rue Félix Franchette, 98800 Nouméa, New Caledonia. E-mail: b.richerdeforges@gmail.com

³Southern Underwater Research Group, South Africa. E-mail: georgina@surg.co.za

⁴Corresponding author

Abstract

The nomenclature and taxonomy of the Cape Town Spider Crab, *Macropodia falcifera* Stimpson, 1858, is treated. The species is rediagnosed and figured, and its ecology discussed. A key is also provided of the Indo-West Pacific species of *Macropodia*.

Key words: Crustacea, Brachyura, Inachidae, *Macropodia falcifera*, taxonomy, ecology, South Africa

Introduction

The inachid spider crab genus *Macropodia* Leach, 1814, is primarily an eastern Atlantic taxon, with 19 described species (amended from Ng *et al.* 2008). Only four species have been reported from outside the Atlantic: *M. falcifera* (Stimpson, 1858) (not listed in Ng *et al.* 2008), *M. formosa* Rathbun, 1911, and *M. intermedia* Bouvier, 1940, from the Indian Ocean; and *M. trigonus* Richer de Forges, 1993, from seamounts along the east coast of Australia.

We recently examined two specimens collected by diving in South Africa, and we here append a few notes on this species. Specimens examined are deposited in the Zoological Reference Collection of the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore (ZRC). Measurements, in millimeters, provided are of the prerostral carapace length and maximum carapace width, respectively.

Taxonomy

Family INACHIDAE MacLeay, 1838

Macropodia falcifera Stimpson, 1858

(Figs. 1–3)

Stenorhynchus falcifer Stimpson, 1858: 219.—Miers 1886: 6, pl. 1 fig. 1.—Doflein 1904: 70, fig. 6.—Stimpson 1907: 22, pl. 3 fig. 8.—Lenz & Strunck 1914: 273.

Macropodia falcifera—Stebbing 1910: 284. —Balss 1913: 109.—Odhner 1923: 26. —Barnard 1950: 14, fig. 2b–f.—Kensley & Buxton 1984: 191.—Griffin & Tranter 1986: 33 (key).

Material examined. South Africa, False Bay, 24 m, living on a *Leptogorgia palma* (Pallas, 1766) (Anthozoa: Gorgonacea: Gorgonidae), coll. G. Jones, 14 August 2010: 1 male (18.65 × 11.10 mm) (carapace bearing bryozoa and serpulids), 1 ovigerous female (17.33 × 9.87 mm) (ZRC).

Diagnosis. Relatively large size (ca. 16 mm carapace length). Carapace pyriform with long rostrum (Figs. 2,