A note on Conchodytes kempi Bruce 1989 (Crustacea, Palaemonidae, Pontoniinae), with the designation of C. kempoides sp. nov.

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Bruce (1989) reported on a pair of specimens of the pontoniine shrimp Conchodytes kempi from the Philippine Islands. These were subsequently referred to by Fransen (1994) as a junior synonym of C. biunguiculatus (Paulson), but these specimens may well represent a distinct species and deserve further examination. In general, Conchodytes species are of considerable size, with CLs of about 8.7 and 9.2 for males and females, respectively of C. biunguiculatus from the Andaman Islands and are generally found in association with larger bivalve hosts, such as Pinna and Atrina (Bruce 1989). The Philippine specimens are adult, as the female is ovigerous, but of very small size with CLs of only 2.5 and 3.75 mm. They were also found in association with a specimen of Isognomon, a host species not reported as a host for C. biunguiculatus.

Fransen (1994) made a study of specimens of C. biunguiculatus and C. nipponensis (De Haan 1884), using material from a variety of localities, but not including the type material, which is now lost. This study was initiated by confusion with C. kempi Bruce, 1989, from Moalboal Village, Mactan Island, Philippines, in which it was erroneously concluded that C. nipponensis was a synonym of C. biunguiculatus, leaving the specimens from the Andaman Islands referred to C. biunguiculatus by Kemp (1922) without a name. This was then rectified by the designation of C. kempi Bruce. The holotype and allotype of C. kempi were designated on the basis of a pair of specimens from the Andaman Islands identified by Kemp as C. biunguiculatus and placed in the collections of the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

The present distribution of C. biunguiculatus remains rather unclear as a result, as noted by Fransen (1994). Records have been reported from the Red Sea, Egypt, Israel, Madagascar, Seychelle Islands, Vietnam, China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. Most of these records have had the hosts reported and were exclusively from hosts of the family Pinnidae.

The type material of C. kempoides is held in the collections of the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences, Darwin. (NTM).

Abbreviation used: CL, postorbital carapace length.

Systematic account

Family Palaemonidae Rafinesque, 1815

Subfamily Pontoniinae Kingsley, 1879

Genus Conchodytes Peters, 1852

Conchodytes kempoides sp. nov.


Diagnosis. Very small sized species of typical Conchodytes morphology; closely similar to C. biunguiculatus (Paulson); third ambulatory dactyl with unguis more slender, 2.0 times longer than basal width, accessory tooth shorter, more recurved, 2.0 times longer than basal width, with gap between unguis and accessory tooth more open; basal ventral