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Four new species and two new genera of Metapseudidae (Crustacea: Tanaidacea: Apseudomorpha) from Australian coral reefs

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Abstract

This paper presents the descriptions of two new genera and four new metapseudid species collected from the coral reefs of Ningaloo and Heron Island in north-western and eastern Australia, respectively. Two of the species, *Curtipleon chadi* n. sp., and *Creefs heronum* n. gen. n. sp. are members of the subfamily Synapseudinae, one, *Msangia mussida* n. sp. is a member of the subfamily Msangiinae and one *Bamberus jinigudirus* n. gen. n. sp. is a member of the subfamily Chondropodinae. With the exception of *M. mussida* that was found on live coral, all of the species were associated with dead corals.

Key words: Tanaidacea, Metapseudidae, *Curtipleon*, *Msangia*, *Creefs*, *Bamberus*, Heron Island, Ningaloo, Great Barrier Reef, CReefs Program

Introduction

Research on Australian Tanaidacea, small marine, benthic peracarids, has been concentrated mainly in southern and southern-eastern Australia, from Esperance Bay through to the Bass Strait and Tasmania, and up to Moreton Bay (Hasswell 1882; Larsen 2001; Bamber 2005; 2008; Guțu 2006; Edgar 2008; 2011; Błażewicz-Paszkowycz and Bamber 2007a; 2007b; 2012; *inter alia*). The Tanaidacea from the northern coasts of Australia have been almost totally unstudied, with the exception of a few taxonomical papers by Băcescu (1981), Edgar (1997; 2008), Guțu (2006), Guțu & Heard (2002), Larsen & Heard (2001) and Larsen & Hansknecht (2004). This also means that the present knowledge of Australian tanaidacean species does not adequately cover the most diverse and most complex marine habitat—coral reef (Gray *et al.* 1998). Up to now, in Australian waters 14 species of tanaidaceans have been found from coral reefs. Thus the known Australian tanaidaceans contribute only 18% of the world total of tanaidaceans from this type of habitat.

The Census of Coral Reef Ecosystem program (CReefs) working under the umbrella of the international program Census of Marine Life (CoML) and has concentrated on the problem of severe underestimation of the biodiversity of coral reefs. One of three nodes comprising this scientific activity focused on Australian reefs. During nine scientific expeditions organized by the Australian Institute of Marine Research to Lizard Island, Heron Island (both GBR) and Ningaloo (Western Australia) a large collection of tanaidaceans has been obtained. In the present paper we present the descriptions of four new species and two new genera of the family Metapseudidae that have been identified in the samples taken on coral rubble and living coral of the family Mussidae at Heron Island and Ningaloo Reef.

Material and methods

Pieces of coral rubble were collected by hand during SCUBA-diving, and were placed into buckets (20 l) in a mixture of fresh and sea-water or in sea water with a few drops of formaldehyde for a few hours, to encourage