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Amphipoda (Crustacea) from the Chagos Archipelago

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Abstract

Thirteen species of amphipods are recorded from the Chagos archipelago in the Indian Ocean. Of these, six species are new to science. A further four families (and four species) are represented, but were too incomplete to identify.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, taxonomy, new species, Maeridae, Ampithoidae, Photidae, Leucothoidae, Ampeliscaidae, Iphimediidae, Dexaminidae, Eusiridae, Liljeborgiidae, Chagos, Indian Ocean

Introduction

Seventeen species of Amphipoda were collected in the Chagos Archipelago by Catherine Head and Heather Koldewey in 2012. The material was made available to me for study by Dr Sammy DeGrave.

Thirteen species were in sufficiently good state to describe and are reported on here. Of these, six are new to science. Other taxa in the collection that were too incomplete to describe or consisted of females only were in the families Aoridae (*Bemlos*), Photidae (*Gammaropsis*), Hyalidae (*Hyale*) and Pleustidae.

Material and methods

Specimens were dissected in alcohol and mounted on slides in glycerol for study. Drawing was accomplished using a drawing tube attached to a compound microscope. All material is deposited in the Zoological Collection of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH.ZC).

Abbreviations used in figures. Hd = Head; A1, A2 = antenna 1, 2; Lb = labrum; Md = mandible; Mx1 = maxilla 1; Mxp = maxilliped; Lab = labium; G1, G2 = gnathopods 1, 2; P3–P7 = pereopods 3–7; Ep1–3 = epimera 1–3; Us = urosome: U1–U3 = uropods 1–3; T = telson; M = male; F = female.

Systematic section

Family Maeridae Krapp-Schickel, 2008

Elasmopus atollicus sp. nov.

(Figs 1–3)

Type material. Holotype male, 3.5 mm, Diego Garcia atoll, outer reef, dead branching coral heads, 10 m. C. Head and H. Koldewey, 15.02.2012 (OUMNH.ZC.2013.06.001). Paratypes, 1 male 1 female, same data as holotype (OUMNH.ZC.2013.06.002).

Other material. 1 male, Diego Garcia, outer reef, dead branching coral heads, 10 m. C. Head and H. Koldewey, 15.02.2012 (OUMNH.ZC.2013.06.003); 1 male 1 female 1 juvenile, Diego Garcia, outer reef, dead branching coral heads, 10 m. C. Head and H. Koldewey, 16.02.2012 (OUMNH.ZC.2013.06.004); 2 females, Peros

Discussion

The amphipods of the Chagos archipelago show their closest relationships with other Indian Ocean land masses – Madagascar, India and the Mascarenes. India and Madagascar were joined together as a single landmass in the later stages of the Mesozoic.

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