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***Caprella suprapiscis* sp. nov. (Crustacea: Amphipoda: Caprellidae) from the Pacific coast of Mexico**

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Abstract

A new species of caprellid, *Caprella suprapiscis* sp. nov., is described based on several specimens collected from Bahía Chamela, Jalisco, Mexico. All specimens were found in association with the scorpionfish *Scorpaena mystes*. Caprellids are set on the dorsal surface of fishes. The species is distinguished by head with a short dorsal projection, eyes distinctive, body slender and smooth, peduncular articles of antenna 1 not setose, antenna 2 with swimming setae, gnathopod 2 with three ventral projections in males. The species is close to *C. californica*, *C. mercedesae*, and *C. scaura* for a sharp spine on the forehead but can be distinguished by gnathopod 2 finely setose, and basis of gnathopod 2 shorter.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Caprellidae, new species, eastern Pacific

Introduction

Caprellidae is a well-studied family of caprellids with approximately 401 species recorded worldwide (Ahyong *et al.* 2011). Recent contributions indicates that 58 species of Caprellidae have been recorded for the eastern Pacific (Martin & Pettit 1998; Hendrickx & Ayón-Parente 2014; Sánchez-Moyano *et al.* 2014). However, there is a significant lack of information on caprellids from tropical and subtropical waters in this region. For example, in the Mexican Pacific only 12 species have been recorded, half of which have been described in 2014: *Aciconula acanthosoma* Chess, 1989, *Caprella calderoni* Hendrickx & Ayón-Parente, 2014, *C. californica* Stimpson, 1856, *C. equilibra* Say, 1818, *C. mendax* Mayer, 1903, *C. mercedesae* Hendrickx & Ayón-Parente, 2014, *C. penantis* Leach, 1814, *C. pitu* Sánchez-Moyano, García-Ascencio & Guerra-García, 2014, *C. scaura* Templeton, 1836, *Liropus isabelensis* Sánchez-Moyano, García-Ascencio & Guerra-García, 2014, *Paracaprella carballoi* Sánchez-Moyano, García-Ascencio & Guerra-García, 2014, and *P. isabelae* Sánchez-Moyano, García-Ascencio & Guerra-García, 2014 (Brusca & Hendrickx 2005; García-Madriral 2007; Alarcón-Ortega *et al.* 2012; Hendrickx & Ayón-Parente 2014; Sánchez-Moyano *et al.* 2014). In most cases, these species have been recorded from very few localities and very little is known about their biology and ecology (Hendrickx & Ayón-Parente 2014).

Caprellids are found in specific habitats and many have a wide distribution (Guerra-García & Lowry 2009). These amphipods are often found abundantly in shallow habitats associated with red algae (Norderhaug 2004). Some species occur in deeper waters associated to hydrozoans (Caine 1980, Guerra-García 2001, Ros & Guerra-García 2012) and some feed directly from the substrates where they cling on, mainly on cnidarians and other substrates that also provide protection from their predators (Guerra-García 2006). Previous studies suggest that caprellids can be used as an alternative bioindicator of environmental stress and marine pollution (Guerra-García & García-Gómez 2001). Density of caprellids has also been proposed as a new monitoring tool for the detection of nutrient enrichment on coral reefs (Guerra-García & Koonjul 2005). They have also been considered as potential food resource for marine fish aquaculture (Woods 2009).

Most caprellids reported from the Mexican Pacific have been collected among algae, hydroids, and gorgonians also used as food by some species (Alarcón-Ortega *et al.* 2012). A non-feeding association between fish and