

Taxonomy of the monotypic genus *Koehleria* Cherbonnier, 1988 (Echinodermata: Holothuroidea: Cucumariidae)

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Abstract

Voucher material recently collected from the 2-Mile Reef at Sodwana Bay (Republic of South Africa), allows the evaluation of the monotypic genus *Koehleria* Cherbonnier, 1988 and its species *K. unica* Cherbonnier, 1988 collected from Tuléar (Madagascar). Cherbonnier's (1988) conclusion, that *Koehleria* is most related to the also monotypic genus *Pseudocolochirus* Pearson, 1910 is correct, but the differences between *Koehleria* and *Pseudocolochirus* are too small to justify the retention of *Koehleria*. *Koehleria* is relegated herein to the synonymy of *Pseudocolochirus*. Such a step decreases the velocity with which monotypic genera are currently described within the Dendrochirotida.

Key words: Holothuroidea; Cucumariidae; *Koehleria*; *Pseudocolochirus*; *P. unica*. comb. nov.

Introduction

The past quarter century has witnessed a considerable increase in knowledge of the biodiversity of the shallow-water (up to 50 m depth) holothuroids of southern Africa (Thandar 1977, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987a, b, 1989a, b, c, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2001; Thandar & Rowe 1989; Rajpal & Thandar 1998, 1999; Thandar & Rajpal 1999; Samyn 2003; Samyn & Thandar 2003a, b; Samyn & Massin 2003; Thandar & Natasen Moodley 2003; Massin *et al.* 2004; Thandar & Samyn in press). However, relating this local biodiversity with neighbouring regions in the south-western Indian Ocean remains problematic (Thandar &

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