

A new species of *Ptychognathus* Stimpson, 1858 (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura: Varunidae) from the Ryukyu Islands, southwestern Japan

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Abstract

A new varunid crab, *Ptychognathus insolitus*, is described from Izena Island, the Ryukyu Islands, southwestern Japan. This new species is unique among congeners in having a very broad carapace, long and slender ambulatory legs, and stout male first gonopods. Although these characters are diagnostic to *Orcovita* Ng & Tomascik, 1994, the new species belongs to *Ptychognathus* Stimpson, 1858 based on the lack of a distinct frontal median triangle on the carapace and the short dactyli of the fifth pereopods.

Key words: Crustacea, Brachyura, Varunidae, *Ptychognathus*, new species, Ryukyu Islands, Japan

Introduction

The genus *Ptychognathus* Stimpson, 1858 contains about 20 species from the Indo-West Pacific region (Tesch 1918, Sakai 1976, Takeda 1984, Cai & Ng 2001). The crabs are known to usually inhabit under stones or interspaces of pebbles along mouths of rivers or in seashores influenced by flows of fresh water. As pointed out by Komai *et al.* (2004), the taxonomy of *Ptychognathus* is still in need of considerably study. Ten species were recorded from the Ryukyu Islands, southwestern Japan, by Nakasone & Irei (2003): *P. affinis* de Man, 1895, *P. altimanus* (Rathbun, 1914b), *P. barbatus* (A. Milne-Edwards, 1873), *P. capillidigitatus* Takeda, 1984, *P. glaber* Stimpson, 1858, *P. hachijyonensis* Sakai, 1955, *P. ishii* Sakai, 1939, *P. johannae* Rathbun, 1914a, *P. pusillus* Heller, 1865, and *P. takahashii* Sakai, 1939. There are still four undescribed species from Okinawa Island in the Ryukyus (Nakasone & Irei, 2003).