

A new genus and species of sepiolid squid from the waters around Tonga in the central South Pacific (Mollusca: Cephalopoda: Sepiolidae)

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Abstract

A new genus and species, *Choneteuthis tongaensis* **gen. et sp. nov.**, is described from the waters around Tonga in the central South Pacific Ocean. The new genus does not clearly fit in any of the currently recognized subfamilies of the family Sepiolidae, justifying a reconsideration of the subfamilial subdivision of the family.

Key words : Cephalopods, Sepiolidae, taxonomy, new genus

Introduction

Members of the family Sepiolidae are small to medium size benthic or pelagic cephalopods common in tropical, subtropical, and temperate waters. Currently, 14 genera are recognized in the following subfamilies: Heteroteuthinae: *Heteroteuthis* Gray, 1849, *Stoloteuthis* Verrill, 1881, *Nectoteuthis* Verrill, 1883, *Iridoteuthis* Naef, 1912, and *Sepiolina* Naef, 1912; Sepiolinae: *Sepiola* Leach, 1817, *Iniotheuthis* Verrill, 1881, *Euprymna* Steenstrup, 1887, *Rondeletiola* Naef, 1921 and *Sepietta* Naef, 1912; and subfamily Rossiinae: *Rossia* Owen, 1834, *Semirossia* Steenstrup, 1881, *Austrorossia* Berry, 1918 and *Neorossia* Boletzky, 1971. The genera are well defined but the taxonomy within each genus is in a poor state as most species are insufficiently known and ontogenetic and sexual changes in morphology are considerable (Nesis 1987).

In this article, we report a new genus and species of the family Sepiolidae from the waters around Tonga in the central South Pacific. The discovery of this new species reveals problems in the subfamilial placement of genera within this family.