



Halacarid mites (Acari: Halacaridae) from Esperance (Western Australia), description of two new *Copidognathus* species

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Abstract

Two new species, *Copidognathus angusticeps* **spec. nov.** and *C. parvulus* **spec. nov.**, are described. The two species are from the southern coast of Western Australia, from Esperance. *Copidognathus angusticeps* has a long, slender gnathosoma, the rostrum is about as long as the gnathosomal base, major parts of the dorsal and ventral plates are punctate, the hardly delimited porose areolae have a similar ornamentation, the epimeral pores are enlarged. In *C. parvulus* the slender rostrum is almost twice as long as the gnathosomal base, the dorsal and ventral plates are almost smooth except for the sharply delimited areolae with rosette pores. *Copidognathus amaurus* Bartsch, 1999 and *C. australensis* (Lohmann, 1909), which are new records in the Esperance fauna, are also characterized by an elongate gnathosoma, but are not closely related with any of the two new species.

Key words: Australia, south-western coast, Halacaroidea, *Copidognathus*, new records, new species

Introduction

A recent study of the halacarid fauna near Esperance (Western Australia) revealed more than 40 halacarid species in 15 genera (Bartsch 2007). The genera, and in parentheses the number of species, are: *Actacarus* (1), *Agauae* (4), *Agauopsis* (3), *Arhodeoporus* (2), *Atelopsalis* (1), *Bradyagaue* (1), *Copidognathus* (ca 13), *Halacarellus* (2), *Halacaropsis* (1), *Halacarus* (4), *Lohmannella* (2), *Rhombognathus* (5), *Scaptognathus* (1), *Simognathus* (3) and *Werthella* (1). A single genus, *Copidognathus* Trouessart, holds more than one third of the halacarid species. During the sorting process at 12–25x magnification, several individuals could be distinguished from others because of their long and slender gnathosoma. These specimens belonged to *C. amaurus* Bartsch, 1999 and *C. australensis* (Lohmann, 1909), new records in this part of Australia, and *C. angusticeps* **spec. nov.** and *C. parvulus* **spec. nov.**, new to science; they are described. Other *Copidognathus* species collected around Esperance are representatives of the *Copidognathus gibbus*, *oculatus* and *magnipalpus* groups, they will be treated separately.

Material and methods

The samples are from the southern coast of Western Australia, from the Duke of Orleans Bay, 33°55'S, 122°35'E, just east of Esperance. One of the species described below is from seagrass (*Amphibolis* spec.) in a shallow sandy area, the other from a demosponge in a rocky, sheltered part of the bay. The material was collected by the author. The mites were cleared in lactic acid and mounted in glycerine jelly. The two holotypes