A new species of *Palaemonella* Dana, 1852, (Crustacea: Decapoda; Pontoniinae) from the Red Sea

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**Abstract**

A new species of the pontoniine shrimp genus _Palaemonella_ Dana, 1852, from the Red Sea is described and illustrated. Found from 519–544m; this is the greatest depth from which this genus has so far been reported. It is a species of the Indo-West Pacific _P. dolichodactylus_ species complex, to the taxa of which a key is provided.

**Key words**: _Palaemonella meteorae_ sp. nov., Crustacea, Decapoda, Pontoniinae, 500m, Red Sea

**Introduction**

The pontoniine shrimp _Palaemonella rotumana_ (Borradaile, 1898) is one of the commonest and most ubiquitous shallow water Indo-West Pacific pontoniine shrimps, found from the northern Red Sea to the Hawaiian Islands. The genus _Palaemonella_ was established by Dana (1852) for _P. tenuipes_, a much less common species, known from the Red Sea to the Line Islands. The Indo-West Pacific species were reviewed by Bruce (2002). Twelve other species of the genus _Palaemonella_ are also known from the Indo-West Pacific region, mainly from shallow waters. The most recently described species of the genus are _P. maziwi_ Bruce, 2002, from Tanganyika, a shallow water species, and _P. komaii_ Li & Bruce, 2006, from Tonga and the Fijian Islands, from depths of over 300m.

Two small specimens of _Palaemonella_ from the Red Sea, unfortunately both rather incomplete or damaged, were recently provided for study by Dr Michael Türkay. These were initially identified as _P. komaii_ but on more detailed examination, despite their incomplete state, a number of small morphological differences were found indicating that the species were not conspecific. Like _P. komaii_, the Red Sea specimens were also found in deep water and they are now described and illustrated as a new species. Thirteen species of this genus are now known from the Indo-West Pacific region. The only species reported from over 100m depths are _P. rotumana_ at 100m (Bruce, 1981), 107m (Bruce, 1981a) and 128m (Bruce, 1979b), _P. dolichodactylus_ Bruce, 1991 at 250m (Bruce, 1991b), and _P. komaii_ at 350–365m (Li & Bruce, 2006). The present specimens, from over 500m, therefore represent the greatest depth from which the genus _Palaemonella_ has so far been reported.

Of the 13 thirteen named Indo-West Pacific species of _Palaemonella_ only the two shallow water species, _P. rotumana_ and _P. tenuipes_ have been previously recorded from the Red Sea.

Abbreviations used: CL, postorbital carapace length; QM, Queensland Museum, Brisbane; SMF, Forschungsinstitut und Natur-Museum Senckenberg, Frankfurt-am-Main.