



***Cubadeutella cavernicola*, a new genus and species of Caprellidae (Crustacea: Amphipoda) from Cuba**

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Abstract

Cubadeutella cavernicola new genus, new species, is described based on specimens collected from a cave of southern Cuba, Caribbean Sea. *Cubadeutella* new genus is close to *Deutella*, but presents a higher number of plesiomorphic characters: the number of articles in antenna 1 is higher in *Cubadeutella* (20–22) than in *Deutella* (7–14); the flagellum of antenna 2 in *Cubadeutella* is 4 - articulate while it is 2-articulate in *Deutella* and the pereopods 3 and 4 are 4-articulate in *Cubadeutella* and 1 or 2-articulate in *Deutella*. *Cubadeutella*, together with *Triantella* and *Protellina* are the only genera in the Caprellinae with the flagellum of antennae 2 more than 2-articulate, and the presence of 4-articulate pereopod 3 and 4 is unique in the Caprellidae.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Caprellidea, new genus, Cuba

Introduction

There is a lack of studies dealing with the caprellid amphipods of Central and South America. In fact, McCain & Steinberg (1970) pointed out that these coasts are virtually unstudied and that undoubtedly many new records and species would be expected in these areas. Although there are recent attempts to improve the knowledge on caprellids along South America [Chile (Guerra-García & Thiel 2001; Thiel *et al.* 2003), Brazil (Wakabara *et al.* 1991; Wakabara & Serejo 1998; Masunari & Takeuchi 2006), Venezuela (Díaz *et al.* 2005), Colombia (Guerra-García *et al.* 2006)], the coast of central America still remains unknown, apart from the studies conducted in the Gulf of Mexico (Ortiz *et al.* 2002; Escobar-Briones & Winfield, 2003; Winfield *et al.* 2006).

Studies dealing with caprellids from Cuba are very scarce (Ortiz & Lalana 1998). Most of amphipod research has been focused on gammarideans (see i.e Ortiz *et al.* 2007a,b) but little have been investigated about caprellids. Ortiz and Lalana (1998) reported 8 species for the littoral of Cuba: *Caprella andreae* Mayer, 1890; *Deutella mayeri* Stebbing, 1890; *Pseudaeginella biscaynensis* (McCain, 1968); *Hemiaegina minuta* Mayer, 1890; *Deutella incerta* (Mayer, 1903), *Metaprotella hummelicki* McCain, 1968; *Paracaprella pusilla* Mayer, 1890 and *Phtisica marina* Slabber, 1769.

Life of the sea caves (dark caves in particular) has attracted the attention of many marine biologists (Todaro *et al.* 2006). Due to their particular environmental conditions (e.g., light gradient and water confinement), submerged and semi-submerged marine caves host a rich and diversified biota which bear several faunistic peculiarities including batial forms (Harmelin, 1997), 'relict' species (Ohtsuka *et al.* 2002) and genuinely troglobial taxa (Lejeusne & Chevaldonne 2005). However, despite the great scientific interest of marine cave environments, the study of the amphipod communities of these systems is reduced. Recent