



The family Opisidae (Crustacea: Amphipoda: Lysianassoidea) in Australasian waters

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Abstract

The lysianassoid amphipod family Opisidae is reported from Australian waters for the first time. Five new species in three genera are described: *Normanion hipposideros* sp. nov., *N. whoi* sp. nov., *Podoprionella bulla* sp. nov., *Podoprionides akantha* sp. nov., *P. moonamoona* sp. nov.

Key words: Crustacea, Amphipoda, Opisidae, Australia, taxonomy, new species, *Normanion*, *Podoprionella*, *Podoprionides*

Introduction

The Opisidae is a small family of four genera and 17 species known mainly from the North Pacific Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. Only two species, *Podoprionides incerta* Walker, 1906 from the Antarctic and *Podoprionella dagadugaban* Lowry & Stoddart, 1995, from Papua New Guinea, have been reported previously outside these areas. In this paper we report opisids from Australia for the first time. Three of the four known genera are now recorded from the Australian and Papua New Guinean area.

The genus *Normanion* has previously been recorded from the eastern North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. New records from south-eastern Australia and southern Papua New Guinea significantly extend the distribution of the genus and place it in the southern hemisphere for the first time. *Podoprionella* was also known only from the eastern North Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea until it was recorded recently from Papua New Guinea (Lowry & Stoddart 1995). In this paper we record it from Australia for the first time. The third genus, *Podoprionides*, was considered until now as an Antarctic endemic. We also record it from Australia for the first time. The only opisid genus not known from Australian waters is *Opisa*, which is widespread throughout the boreal North Atlantic and North Pacific (Hurley 1963; Lincoln 1979; Bousfield 1987).

It appears that members of the Opisidae are more widespread than previous records would indicate and are probably living throughout the Indo-Pacific area. However, records are relatively rare and the animals may be difficult to collect. During the intensive collecting program on the Great Barrier Reef in 2005 and 2006 (Lowry & Myers 2009) no opisids were collected, yet species are recorded from north and south of the Reef. Neither were any collected in the many baited traps of the SEAS project along the whole east coast of Australia (Lowry & Smith 2003).

Many opisids are regarded as epi-parasites of fish (Vader & Romppainen 1985; Bousfield 1987). The evidence for this is both direct and indirect. *Normanion amblyops* Sars, 1895, *N. quadrimanus* (Bate & Westwood, 1868), *N. sarsi* Diviacco & Vader, 1988, *Opisa eschrichtii* (Krøyer, 1842), *O. odontocheila* Bousfield, 1987 and *O. tridentata* Hurley, 1963, have all been recorded from living and dead fish skins. *Normanion abyssi* Chevreux, 1903 and *Podoprionella dagadugaban* were originally taken in baited traps. In