



Stephonyx arabiensis* (Crustacea: Amphipoda: Lysianassoidea: Uristidae), a new deep-water scavenger species from the Indian Ocean, with a key to the genus *Stephonyx

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Abstract

The amphipod genus *Stephonyx* Lowry & Stoddart, 1989, consists of nine species. This paper adds a new species from the deep Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean, based on material collected by baited trap at 1864m off the coast of Pakistan. The species can be distinguished from the most closely allied species *Stephonyx laqueus* (Barnard, 1967) by the weakly excavate palm of gnathopod 2, the pointed lateral cephalic lobe, and the shape of coxa 4. A key to the ten species in the genus is provided.

Key words Crustacea, Amphipoda, Lysianassoidea, Uristidae, *Stephonyx*, new species, Indian Ocean, deep-sea

Introduction

During a recent cruise to the Pakistan margin (northern Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean), baited traps were set to collect and study the scavenging amphipod community at various depths. A trap set at 1864m contained a new species of *Stephonyx*, as well as new species of *Paracallisoma*, *Cyclocaris* and *Hirondellea* (which will be described elsewhere). The trap also contained 2 known species of amphipod *Eurythenes gryllus* (Lichtenstein in Mandt, 1822) and *Abyssorchomene abyssorum* Stebbing, 1888. The amphipod scavenging fauna from the deep Arabian Sea currently comprises several species; including *Podoprion addyi* Horton, 2005, *Eurythenes gryllus*, *Hirondellea* sp. nov., and *Abyssorchomene abyssorum* (see Horton, 2005). Witte (1999) and Janssen *et al.* (2000) also recorded *Eurythenes gryllus*, *Paralicella* sp., *Abyssorchomene abyssorum* and *Paracallisoma* sp.

The genus *Stephonyx* belongs to the family Uristidae. Hurley (1963) established the Uristinae for lysianassid amphipods in which “gnathopod 1 is subchelate or imperfectly subchelate”. He included a number of Californian genera in the subfamily, but never indicated the full extent of the group. Lowry & Stoddart (1992) raised the subfamily to family status and further refined the family by discussing an anonychine group which included genera with a 7/4 crown setal-tooth arrangement on maxilla 1 and a tongue-like, non-triturating mandibular molar. Lowry & Stoddart (1997) established the subfamily Tryphosinae within the Lysianassidae, further restricting the uristid concept. The restricted Uristidae is composed of mainly demersal scavenging genera and some highly derived genera often associated with other invertebrates (Vader, 1978). There are 21 genera currently considered in the Uristidae. Until the polyphyly of the Lysianassidae is resolved it is not possible to give a clear diagnosis of the family Uristidae.