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Review of amphipods of the *Melita* group (Amphipoda: Melitidae) from the coastal waters of Sakhalin Island (Far East of Russia). I. Genera *Megamoera* Bate, 1862 and *Armatomelita* gen. nov.

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Abstract

A review of *Melita* group (fam. Melitidae) from the shelf of Sakhalin Island based on literature and own data is provided. Based on new material, four new species of the genus *Megamoera* are described: *M. similidentata* sp. nov. and *M. striata* sp. nov. from north-east shelf of Sakhalin Island; *M. falsomikulitschae* sp. nov. and *M. aequidentatum* sp. nov. from Aniva Bay (southern Sakhalin). The new genus *Armatomelita* gen. nov. and new species *A. tshayensis* sp. nov. are described from Aniva Bay (southern Sakhalin). A key to the world species of the genus *Megamoera* is provided. Cladistic analysis of morphological relationships within the genus *Megamoera* is implemented.

Key words: new genus, new species, taxonomy, cladistic analysis, North Pacific

Introduction

The amphipod family Maeridae have been recently phylogenetically separated from the Melitidae (Krapp-Schickel 2008, Lowry & Hughes 2009), and within the Melitidae s. str., several informal groups have been recognized based on morphology. Among them, the *Melita* group contained 23 genera. Lowry & Springthorpe (2009) still included 22 genera in the *Melita* group. More recently, Tandberg et al. (2011) described a new genus *Exitomelita* Tandberg, Rapp, Schander, Vader, Sweetman & Berge, 2011 from the Arctic Loki Castle vent field, to include in the *Melita* group. Genera of *Melita* group are different from other Melitidae by: a laterally compressed body; pereopods 1 and 2 (gnathopods 1 and 2) unequal in size (strongly so in male), usually sexually dimorphic; pereopod 2 (male) regularly subchelate, ischioum not elongate; pereopods 5–7, dactyls short, rarely elongate; small, dorsal robust setae on urosomite 2; a basofacial seta on the peduncle of uropod 1; uropod 3 inaequiramous: a scale-like inner ramus and elongate outer ramus which is 1- or 2-articulate, with article 2, when present, short or long, never greatly elongate (Barnard & Barnard 1983, Jarret & Bousfield 1996).

In the North Asian Pacific coastal marine region, from the Bering Sea to the Sea of Japan (Russian Far East), species of the *Melita* group had previously been assigned to the genera *Melita* Leach, 1814 (revised by Karaman 1981), *Abludomelita* Karaman, 1981, *Megamoera* Bate, 1862 (revised by Jarret & Bousfield 1996), *Melitoides* Gurjanova, 1934, and *Quasimelita* Jarret & Bousfield, 1996. Studies on the *Melita* group in this region were initiated by Gurjanova (1934, 1938). Publications on the far eastern fauna of the USSR (Russia) continued with Gurjanova's major compendium (1951) and shorter papers (1953, 1965), with Bulycheva (1952, 1955), Labay (2003), and other regional faunistic studies (Kudrjaschov 1972; Budnikova 1991, 2001; Budnikova & Bezrukov 2003, 2008; Budnikova & Savko 2002).

The list of the *Melita* group in the Russian Far East coastal waters included eight species: *Megamoera dentata* (Krøyer, 1842) (as *Melita dentata*: Gurjanova 1951; Kudrjaschov 1972; Budnikova & Bezrukov 2003), *M. mikulitschae* (Gurjanova, 1985) (as *Melita mikulitschae*: Tzvetkova & Kudrjaschov 1985), *Melitoides makarovi* Gurjanova, 1934, *Quasimelita quadrispinosa* (Vosseler, 1889) (as *Melita quadrispinosa*: Gurjanova 1951; Kudrjaschov 1972), *Q. formosa* (Murdoch, 1885) (as *Melita formosa*: Gurjanova 1951; Kudrjaschov 1972),