



***Ancylomenes australis* sp. nov. (Crustacea: Decapoda: Pontoniinae) from South Africa**

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Abstract

The holotype specimen of *Ancylomenes australis*, new species, (Crustacea: Decapoda: Pontoniinae) from Sodwana Bay, South Africa, is described and illustrated. It is the only species of the genus reported from south east Africa. It is an associate of cerianthid anemones and has a species specific colour pattern. Closely similar to *A. venustus* (Bruce, 1990) it is readily distinguished from it and all other species of the genus by its characteristic rostrum and blunt inferior orbital angle.

Key words: *Ancylomenes australis*, new species, Crustacea, Decapoda, Pontoniinae, Sodwana Bay, South Africa, cerianthid host, colouration

Introduction

The genus *Ancylomenes* Okuno & Bruce at present includes 22 species of which three are found outside the Indo-West Pacific region (Okuno & Bruce, 2009). The other nineteen species are of widespread distribution, most particularly in the central Indo-West Pacific region. Species from the western Indian Ocean have been sparsely reported and only three species are known from the mainland coast of east Africa. None have been reported from south of Zanzibar at 6° South. A specimen collected from Sodwana Bay by Valda Fraser, initially identified as *A. venustus* on account of its colour pattern, was made available for study and on closer examination proved to be an undescribed species which is now described and illustrated as a new species. In addition to its morphological characters the species may be readily identified, like many species of the genus, by its characteristic colouration. The holotype specimen is deposited in the collection of the Queensland Museum, Brisbane.

Abbreviations used: CL, postorbital carapace length; QM, Queensland Museum, Brisbane. Measurements are in millimetres (mm).

Systematics

Palaemonidae Rafinesque, 1815

Pontoniinae Kingsley, 1879

***Ancylomenes australis* sp. nov.**

(Figs 1–7)

Material examined. 1 ovig. ♀, holotype, Sodwana Bay, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, coll. Valda Fraser, 32.0 m, 26 May 2013, QM W29196.

Diagnosis. Rostral dentition 5/1, slender, carapace with epigastric tooth, inferior orbital angle distally rounded, third abdominal segment strongly produced posterodorsally, rounded, thick, telson with two pairs of very small dorsal spines at 0.6 and 0.8 of length, median process of ophthalmic somite robust, distally swollen and rounded,