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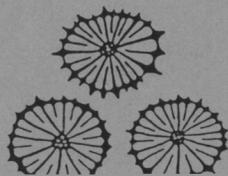
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PALINURELLUS WIENECKII, A RARE SPECIES OF SPINY LOBSTER
FOUND IN OKINAWA-JIMA OF THE RYUKYUS (CRUSTACEA: DECAPODA:
PALINURIDAE)¹

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Abstract: A rare species of the spiny lobster, *Palinurellus wieneckii*, is recorded for the first time from Okinawa. Its biological interest is briefly noted.

In 1977, Mr. Tomoharu Gima of the Itanma Prawn Culture Center, Chinen, obtained from a fisherman a spiny lobster of small size (50.0 mm in carapace length) which was collected by a gill net at a depth of 10 m in Nakagusuku Bay off the southeast coast of Okinawa-jima of the Ryukyus. After a week of rearing he forwarded it to one of us (S.S.) for identification. This specimen is now identified with *Palinurellus wieneckii* (de Man, 1881). Originally it was described as *Araeosternus wieneckii* gen. sp. nov. from Pulu Tikus (Rat Island) near Bengkulu, southwestern Sumatra (de Man, 1881), but next year it was transferred to *Palinurellus* von Martens, 1878 (de Man, 1882).

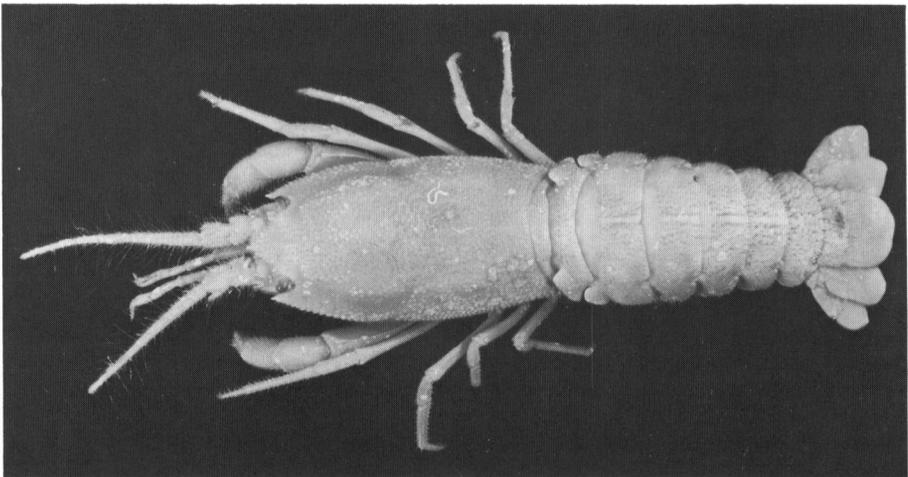


Fig. 1. *Palinurellus wieneckii*, male from Nakagusuku Bay, Okinawa, c.l., 50.0 mm.

The genus *Palinurellus* now contains only two species; the other species, *P. gundlachi* von Martens, 1878, is known from the western Atlantic in Bermuda, southwest Florida, Yucatan, West Indies and the northeast coast of Brazil (Holthuis, 1966; Fausto-Filho & de Costa, 1969).

Palinurellus wieneckii is very rarely known in the Indo-West Pacific. According to Holthuis (1946, 1966) it has been recorded from Mauritius, off southwest Sumatra, northeast Borneo and Ifaluk Atoll of the Caroline Islands, and recently the sixth specimen was taken from Yoron Island of the Ryukyus (Sakai, 1971).

The present specimen therefore constitutes the second record in the Ryukyu Islands. This species is characterized by the carapace evenly tuberculate without spines, and the eyestalk not overlapped by an anteriorly directed process or a strong spine of the carapace.

The color photographs taken when alive by Mr. T. Gima show that the body and legs are totally bright red, but the tail fan somewhat orange. This is nearly the same as described by Holthuis (1966) from a dead animal.

This specimen is a male; the pleopods are completely absent from the first abdominal segment; those on the second through fifth segments are biramous as mentioned by Holthuis (1966). Holthuis strongly suggests that the presence or absence of pleopods on the first abdominal segment represents a sex character in this genus. However, due to the presence of lash-like pleopods in a female specimen from Mauritius, in which Holthuis presumed some abnormality, the problem still remains unresolved.

We thank Mr. T. Gima for making this interesting specimen available for study. This study was partially supported in preparation for the manuscript by a Grant-in-Aid for Special Project Research on Biological Aspects of Optimal Strategy and Social Structure from Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan.

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