

Macropodia, an underrated spider crab genus in the Belgian part of the North Sea

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Spider crabs of the genus *Macropodia* Leach, 1814 comprise 20 species worldwide (Davie, 2016), of which nine species occur in the northeastern Atlantic and Mediterranean waters: *M. czernjawsii* (Brandt, 1880), *M. deflexa* Forest, 1978, *M. intermedia* Bouvier, 1940, *M. linaresi* Forest & Zariquiey-Álvarez, 1964, *M. longipes* (Milne-Edwards & Bouvier, 1899), *M. longirostris* (Fabricius, 1775), *M. parva* Noort & Adema, 1985, *M. rostrata* (Linnaeus, 1761), and *M. tenuirostris* (Leach, 1814) (Marco-Herrero, Rodríguez, & Cuesta, 2012).

Until recently the genus *Macropodia* has been treated rather poorly in the sampling campaigns of the Belgian part of the North Sea because of difficulty in identification (Van Noort & Adema, 1985) and due to the lack of microscope facilities on board.

Recent identification of *M. parva* in macrobenthos samples hinted at the occurrence of more species than just the common *M. rostrata*. Amongst the 221 specimen that were collected during a routine beam trawl campaign in 2017, the four species mentioned by (Adema, 1991) : *M. linaresi*, *M. parva*, *M. rostrata* and *M. tenuirostris*, were found.

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