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## ***Elasmopus alkhiranensis* sp. nov., a new species of amphipod (Senticaudata, Maeridae) from the Persian Gulf**

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### **Abstract**

A new species, *Elasmopus alkhiranensis* allied to *E. pecteniscrus* is described from the Persian Gulf. Recent collections identify this species as having a morphological variation previously unreported in *Elasmopus*.

**Key words:** Amphipoda, taxonomy, *Elasmopus*, new species, Persian Gulf

### **Introduction**

*Elasmopus pecteniscrus* was described (as *Moera pecteniscrus*) by Bate (1862) from New Guinea. The type locality is vague and the type material is lost. Lowry & Hughes (2009) redescribed material of *E. pecteniscrus* from The Torres Strait that they thought most closely approximated the rather poor description of Bate (1862) but they stopped short of erecting a neotype. Lowry & Hughes, 2009, further compared their material with the descriptions in the literature of *E. pecteniscrus* from worldwide localities and concluded that *E. pecteniscrus* may represent a group of sibling species.

We have examined material in the *E. pecteniscrus* complex from five localities in the Persian Gulf, one in the northern Gulf (Sea city, Kuwait), one in the Central Gulf (Chapahn Village near Bushehr) and three in the south (Qeshm, Chiruyeh village and Abu Musa) (Fig. 1). We find variability, within populations, in a number of the character states listed by Lowry & Hughes (2009). We compare our material with *E. pecteniscrus* from Torres Strait and from other world localities described in the literature. We cannot find any consistent character states that distinguish world materials (where sufficiently described) from one another or from material from the Persian Gulf, with the exception of material from Torres Strait (Lowry & Hughes, 2009), which we accept as *E. pecteniscrus* sensu stricto. We here allocate all sufficiently described world material except Torres Strait material to a new species, *E. alkhiranensis* sp. nov.

### **Material and methods**

Specimens were dissected and parts were mounted on microscope slides in glycerol. They were then examined and drawn under a compound microscope fitted with a drawing tube.

Material is deposited in the Natural History Museum, London (NHM) and the Iranian National Institute for Oceanography Collection (INIOC).

Abbreviations used in figures: Cx = coxa; Ep = epimera; F = female; G1–2 = gnathopods 1–2; Hd = head; Lab = Labium; M = male; Md = mandible; Mx1 = maxilla 1; P5–7 = pereopods 5–7; U1–3 = uropods 1–3; T = telson.