Dispersal and population maintenance of two hydrothermal vent shrimps, Alvinocaris longirostris and Shinkaicaris leurokolos

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Characterization of spatial distribution in deep-sea chemosynthetic communities is important to elucidate their diversification history. Shrimp, is one of the gregarious animals in several hydrothermal vent fields, in deep-sea chemosynthetic environments is mostly classified into a family Alvinocarididae currently comprising three subfamilies, Alvinocaridinae, Mirocaridinae and Rimicaridinae. In the northwestern Pacific hydrothermal vent fields, two shrimp species, Alvinocaris longirostris (Alvinocaridinae) and Shinkaicaris leurokolos (Rimicaridinae), inhabit a single hydrothermal vent field. Our recent findings showed the diversification of dispersal and population-maintenance strategies of these shrimps based on population genetic analyses and culture experiments. Population genetic structures of these shrimps showed different characteristics; A. longirostris showed a single star-like haplotype network with low genetic diversity even in populations inhabiting both vent and seep in East China Sea and Pacific Ocean, whereas S. leurokolos showed a more complicated haplotype network than A. longirostris with high genetic diversity in populations in vent in East China Sea. The culture experiments showed the different thermal preferences for the reproduction of these two shrimps; eggs of A. longirostris hatched in low temperature and those of S. leurokolos hatched in high temperature. These facts indicate that chemosynthetic animals have different environmental preference with different dispersal and population-maintenance strategies, and this ecological diversification leads habitat isolation in a single hydrothermal field by a single animal family. The information on ecological diversification will contribute to establish conservation strategies in deep-sea mining.