



Two new species of *Sphaeromopsis* (Crustacea: Isopoda: Sphaeromatidae) from the Persian Gulf

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Abstract

Two new species of *Sphaeromopsis* (Sphaeromatidae: Isopoda) from Iran are described based on light and electron-microscope study: *Sphaeromopsis sarii* **sp. nov.** from the coasts of Kish and Qeshm Islands, and *S. persikolpos* **sp. nov.** from Kish Island, Qeshm Islands and the southern coasts of Iran. The two species are sympatric in most areas. *Sphaeromopsis sarii* is distinct among other species in the genus for having a pleotelson with a faint dorsomedial furrow and a broadly rounded apex. *Sphaeromopsis persikolpos* **sp. nov.** is unique for the single suture at either side of the posterior margin of the pleon, a narrow pleotelsonic apex, and the uropodal exopod extensions that reach well beyond the pleotelsonic apex.

Key words: Crustacea, Isopoda, Sphaeromatidae, *Sphaeromopsis*, SEM, Persian Gulf, Iran

Introduction

The isopod fauna along the Iranian coasts of the Persian Gulf is very poorly known. Only sporadic studies have been carried out along the south-western coasts of the Persian Gulf, and there are only a few records of Isopoda from this region (Kensley & Reid 1984; Kensley 2001, Schotte & Kensley 2005).

Sphaeromopsis is a small genus of 10 described species, with a wide distribution in warm and tropical waters of the Pacific Ocean (Holdich & Harrison 1981), the Atlantic and Caribbean (Loyola e Silva 1960: Brazil; Kensley & Schotte 1994: Dominica; Kensley & Schotte 1999: Florida; Ortiz et al. 2004: Cuba) and from the Indian Ocean (Holdich & Jones 1973; Javed & Yousuf 1995, 1997). Six species of *Sphaeromopsis* have been described from the Indian Ocean (*S. reticulata* Stebbing, 1910: Red Sea; *S. amathitis* Holdich & Jones, 1973: East Africa; *S. minutus* Javed & Yousuf, 1995: Pakistan; *S. petita* Javed & Yousuf, 1997: Pakistan; *S. sei* Storey, 2002: Thailand; *S. sulcifera* Schotte & Kensley, 2005: Seychelles). *Sphaeromopsis* has not previously been reported from the Persian Gulf. The two new species described below constitute the first record of the genus from the Persian Gulf.

Methods

Appendages were dissected and fixed in stained antibacterial glycerine–gelatine (Merck). Pencil drawings were made using a compound microscope with camera lucida (Olympus BX 51).

Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) objects were cleaned by ultrasonic cleaner. Specimens were dehydrated in an ethanol series and air-dried overnight. The samples were then mounted on stubs using double adhesive carbon spots before being coated with gold in a sputter coater to 40 nanometers thickness. SEM micrographs were taken using a Hitachi S–2460N SEM.