A New Species of the Ghost Shrimp Family Ctenochelidae (Crustacea: Decapoda: Axiidea) from Japan

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A new species of the ghost shrimp genus Ctenocheloides (Decapoda: Axiidea: Ctenochelidae), C. nomurai, is described on the basis of two male specimens from the shallow subtidal bottom of Arita Bay, Kushimoto, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. The new species differs from its sole known congener, C. attenboroughi Anker, 2010, in the structure of the carapace, the well developed crista dentata of the third maxilliped, the strongly asymmetrical chelipeds, and the chelate fifth pereopod. The two type specimens were found under a rock on soft bottom, suggesting that the new species is a burrower like other callianassoid species.

Key Words: Crustacea, Decapoda, Axiidea, Ctenochelidae, Ctenocheloides, new species, Japan.

Introduction

Within the superfamily Callianassoidea (Decapoda: Axiidea), only two genera are characterized by a comb-like row of teeth on the cutting edge of the elongate finger of at least one cheliped, viz., Ctenocheles Kishinouye, 1926 and Ctenocheloides Anker, 2010. Both genera are currently assigned to the family Ctenochelidae, although the classification of its family and its related taxa is still in a state of flux (cf. Tudge et al. 2000; Lin et al. 2007; Anker 2010; Sakai 2011).

In 1997, Mr Keiichi Nomura of the Kushimoto Marine Park Center, Japan, collected two specimens of a very unusual ghost shrimp from a subtidal soft bottom in Arita Bay, Kushimoto, Wakayama Prefecture, during routine investigations of the fauna in local waters. These specimens have a comb-like row of teeth on each finger of the right cheliped and exhibit substantial similarities to Ctenocheloides attenboroughi Anker, 2010. The latter is the type species of its monotypic genus, and is represented only by the holotype from Madagascar. This paper serves to describe the second species of the genus, C. nomurai sp. nov., with discussion of the differentiating characters between the two species. The generic diagnosis of Ctenocheloides is emended to accommodate the present new species.

The type specimens are deposited in the Natural History Museum and Institute, Chiba (CBM) in Chiba, Japan. The carapace length (cl: distance from the frontal margin to the posterodorsal margin of the carapace, in mm) is used as a standard measurement. Higher classification follows that of Anker (2010).