

Book Reviews

In summary, the format and scope of Holthuis' book will prove very useful to all carcinologists and ecologists in general, not just those associated with fisheries. There can be no doubt that this book will be the most important one on lobsters for a long time to come.

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BOOK REVIEW

A GUIDE TO PENAEOID SHRIMPS FOUND IN THAI WATERS. Somnuk Chaitiamvong & Mala Supongpan. 1992. 77 pp. ISBN 0-642-17572-1. Published by the Australian Institute of Marine Science, Townsville, Australia.

Penaeoid prawns are probably the most important of all the crustaceans harvested from the waters of Southeast Asia for food, but the identification of the many species obtained by fishermen has never been an easy task. Hall (1961, 1962) published two very important papers on Malayan penaeid prawns, as did Johnson (1976), and despite the many advances which have occurred since then, no one has prepared a guide to the Southeast Asian penaeoid fauna. Holthuis' (1980) important synopsis of the shrimps and prawns of the world of fishery value, because of its scope, deals only with the more important species only, and does not have illustrations.

It is thus obvious that for animals of such economic importance, an effective means to their identification is needed. While guides to the valuable penaeid fauna of other parts of the world (e.g. Australia) have recently been produced (e.g. Grey *et al.*, 1983), the lack of such guides for Southeast Asia is an unfortunate situation. Certainly, there has never been a good guide to the penaeoid prawns of Thailand. Chaitiamvong & Supongpan's book thus fills a much needed hiatus in Southeast Asian carcinology.

The book deals with three families, Solenoceridae (six genera), Penaeidae (seven genera) and Sicyoniidae (one genus), and a total of 56 species are treated. All are illustrated with line drawings or colour photographs. The 56 colour plates of the species are welcomed, especially since many of them are of fresh animals with their natural colours. It is also very heartening to see that all the specimens illustrated have accompanying data pertaining to their collection site, date of collection etc. The seemingly "unimportant" omission of this information in many guide

books of this type often creates numerous problems for future taxonomists who attempt revisionary work or need to check on earlier identifications. The authors have also adapted and modified existing keys for all the known Thai genera and species, facilitating their identification. Important characters like the form of the petasma and thelycum have also been figured for many species.

A minor nomenclatural point pertains to the authorship for Solenoceridae. The author for this taxon is "Wood-Mason, in Wood-Mason & Alcock, 1891", not "Wood-Mason & Alcock, 1891". The paper validating this taxon was authored by Wood-Mason & Alcock (1891) and was published in five parts in volume 8 (numbers 43, 44, 46, 47, 48). Although they co-authored the introduction, it was obvious that each author was responsible for different sections. In number 43 page 19, it was specifically printed that the text which was to follow was "By A. Alcock". In number 46 page 269, it was printed that the subsequent pages were "By J. Wood-Mason". The family Solenoceridae (published as the "Subfamily Solenocerina") appeared in number 46 on page 275, i.e. under Wood-Mason's authorship.

There can be little doubt that Chaitiamvong & Supongpan's book will catalyse research into these important decapods in future years. Certainly, one would many more species to be found in Thailand once even more extensive surveys are carried out. All in all, the book will also prove useful for penaeoid prawn researchers in neighbouring Malaysia and Singapore. Chaitiamvong & Supongpan must be congratulated for producing a "tight little" book of high quality and utility.

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