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A NEW SPECIES OF *MYRA* LEACH, 1817 (CRUSTACEA: DECAPODA: LEUCOSIIDAE) FROM TIMOR SEA AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

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***ABSTRACT.* –** A new species, *Myra digitata*, is established for two specimens collected over a century ago on Holothuria Bank, Timor Sea, and for material from South China Sea described as *M. biconica* Ihle, 1918, by Chen (1989, 1996) and Chen & Sun (2002). The new species is distinguished from *M. biconica* in having shallower frontal notch, much longer chelipeds, ovate, rather than rounded, carapace, and rounded, less prominent lateral posterior denticles on carapace. The species is described, fully illustrated, and synonymies are discussed.

***KEY WORDS*. –** Sea of Timor, Crustacea, Brachyura, Leucosiidae, *Myra*, new species.

INTRODUCTION

A recent revision of the Indo-Pacific leucosiid genus *Myra* Leach, 1817, listed fourteen species (Galil, 2001). Two more species from South China Sea, *M. hainanica* and *M. longimerus*, were described a few months before the revision appeared in print but were unavailable to the author at the time (Chen & Türkay, 2001). Based on Chen & Türkay's (2001) description and illustrations, *M. hainanica* seems to be a valid species, while the curved apical process of the male first pleopod of *M. longimerus* (see Chen & Türkay, 2001: fig. 7F) clearly identifies the species as *M. fugax* (Fabricius, 1798).

A recent opportune find of two unidentified *Myra* specimens in the collections of the Natural History Musem, London, collected over a century ago on Holothuria Bank, Timor Sea, provided the impetus for the present work.

TAXONOMY

Myra digitata, new species
(Figs. 1, 2A, B)

Myra biconica - Chen, 1989: 219, fig. 17, pl. 3.1; Chen & Sun, 2002: 351, textfig. 155, pl. 6 figs 1, 2.
Myra biconia - Chen, 1996: 285, fig. 13.
(Not *Myra biconica* Ihle, 1918: 258, fig. 138).

***Material examined.* –** Holotype - male (22.2 mm carapace length) (NHM 1892.3.26.173-180), Timor Sea, Holothuria Bank, 13º35'S 126ºE, 70 m depth, coll. P. Bassett Smith, H. M. S. 'Penguin', pres. Lords of the Admiralty.

Paratype - 1 female (23.6 mm carapace length), same data as holotype.

***Diagnosis*. –** Carapace ovate, globose, regions indistinct (Fig. 1). Dorsal surface of carapace finely granulate. Front narrow, produced, upcurved, anterior margin minutely granulate, with shallow v-shaped notch medially. Antennular fossa continuous with orbit, partially sealed by basal plate on antennule; antennules fold obliquely within fossa. Antennae short, inserted between antennular fossa and orbit. Orbits small, outer orbital margin trisutured, tridentate anterior margin of efferent branchial channel forms lower orbital margin. Eyes retractible. External maxillipeds minutely granulate; endopod merus triangulate, shorter than rectangular ischium, vertical row of setae on endopod merus and ischium in female. Hepatic region swollen, bearing minutely granulate line parallel with margin. Faceted subhepatic margin terminates in blunt, triangular denticle, separated from convex lateral margin by shallow notch. Lateral margins of carapace, from outer angle of efferent branchial channel to lateral posterior denticle, lined with closely-spaced granules. Lateral posterior denticles on lower plane than median posterior spine, bluntly triangular, granulate. Median posterior spine proximally granulate, distally acuminate, slightly upcurved.

Chelipeds slender, subequal; longer in adult male than in female specimens: merus in male up to 1.2 as long as carapace, in female slightly less than carapace length. Merus with perliform granules, smaller distally; carpus and propodus

minutely granulate. Dactyl nearly as long as upper margin of palm, inner margins of fingers ctenoid. Pereiopods slender, dactyli styliform, setose, longer than propodi.

Thoracic sternites in male anterolaterally granulate, as well as subdistal margins of abdominal sulcus. Abdominal sulcus deep, elongate, nearly reaching buccal cavity. Male abdomen narrowly triangular; segments 3-6 fused, bearing preapical denticle; lateral margin bearing 3 indistinct ridges fitting into sutures between thoracic sternites; telson lingulate, one quarter as long as fused segment. Female abdomen with segments 4-6 fused, greatly enlarged, shield-like, telson laciniate. First male pleopod elongate, shaft straight, dorso-ventrally flattened, bearing long setae preapically, apical process slender, digitiform, slightly leaning interiorly (Figs. 2A, B). Second male pleopod short, curved, apex scoop-like.

***Etymology*. –** *digitus* L., finger, alluding to the form of the apical process of male 1st pleopod.

***Remarks*. –** Ihle (1918) established *Myra biconica* for a single immature male specimen (carapace length 14.5 mm). Examination of the type ascertained the accuracy of the illustration (Ihle, 1918: fig. 138). Of the specimens identified by Chen (1989) as *M. biconica*, only one was larger than Ihle's type (carapace length 19.0 mm), and was identified by Chen as "full adult male" (Chen, 1989: figs. 17a, c-h). According to Chen's illustrations, her specimen differs from Ihle's type in its more elongate carapace, much longer and boldly granulate cheliped meri, nearly horizontal frontal margin, and prominently triangular lateral posterior denticles on the carapace. Even though species of the genus *Myra* are notorious for "the changes that they undergo in growth" (Alcock, 1896: 201), the suite of characters enumerated above can not stem from the disparity in size between Ihle's type and Chen's specimens, thus the latter belong to a different species.

Myra biconica (Ihle, 1918: fig. 138) differs from *M. digitata*, new species, in its much shorter chelipeds, rounded, rather than ovate, carapace, and rounded, less prominent lateral posterior denticles of carapace. Chen's (1989: fig. 17, pl. 3.1; 1996: fig. 13) detailed drawings of the specimens collected in South China Sea, and of the male first pleopod in particular, closely resemble *M. digitata*. The pleopod of the new species is similar to that of *M. grandis* Zarenkov, 1990, but *M. digitata* is easily distinguished from the latter species by its smaller size, and finely granulate, rather than smooth, carapace.

***Distribution*. –** South China Sea, Timor Sea, 50-140 m.

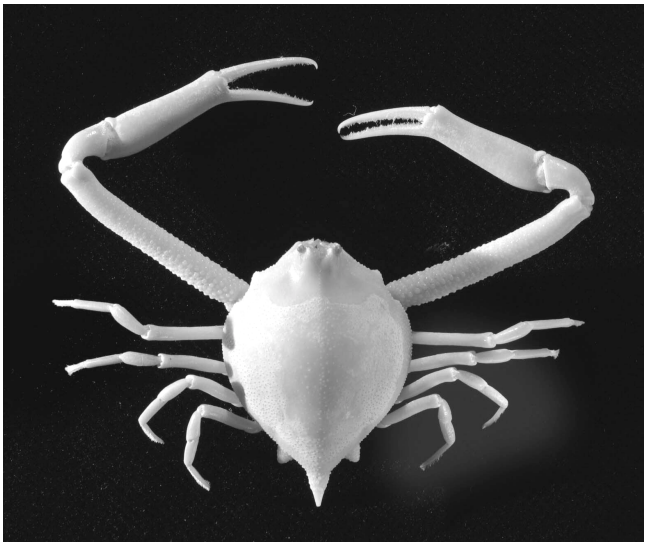

Fig. 1. *Myra digitata*, new species, holotype, 22.2 mm carapace length, NHM 1892.3.26.173-180.

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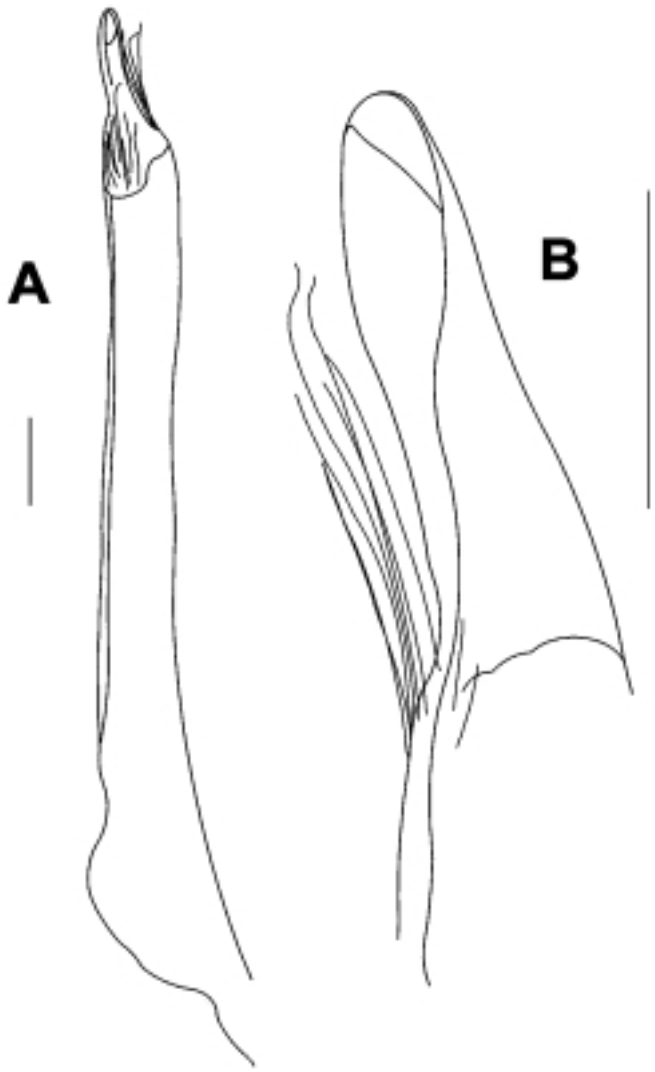

Fig. 2. *Myra digitata*, new species, holotype, 22.2 mm carapace length, NHM 1892.3.26.173-180. A, first male pleopod, dorsal view; B, first male pleopod, tip, ventral view. Scale 1 mm.

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