



A new species of *Goneplax* Leach, 1814 (Crustacea, Decapoda, Brachyura, Goneplacidae) from the south Atlantic and the western limits of the Indo-West Pacific region, long confused with *G. rhomboides* (Linnaeus, 1758)

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Abstract

A new species of *Goneplax* Leach, 1814, *G. clevai* n. sp., is described from the South Atlantic and the western limits of the Indo-West Pacific region. The new species was for a long time confused with *G. rhomboides* (Linnaeus, 1758), senior synonym of *Cancer angulata* Pennant, 1777, *Ocypoda bispinosa* Lamarck, 1801, *Ocipode* [sic] *longimana* Latreille, 1803, *Goneplax rhomboïdalis* Risso, 1827, and *Gelasimus bellii* Couch, 1838. *Goneplax rhomboides* is found in the northeastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. Museum collections contain mixed material belonging to the two species. *Carcinoplax barnardi* Capart, 1951, which is close to *Goneplax*, is also present in the South Atlantic, its distribution overlapping that of the new species. The sympatry of *G. rhomboides* and *G. clevai* n. sp. is uncertain owing to the absence of information on the southern limit of *G. rhomboides*.

Key words: Crustacea, Decapoda, Brachyura, Goneplacidae, *Carcinoplax*, *Goneplax*, *G. clevai* n. sp., *G. rhomboides*, new species, Africa

Introduction

Goneplax rhomboides (Linnaeus, 1758), a senior synonym of *Cancer angulata* Pennant, 1777, *Ocypoda bispinosa* Lamarck, 1801, *Ocipode* [sic] *longimana* Latreille, 1803, *Goneplax rhomboïdalis* Risso, 1827, and *Gelasimus bellii* Couch, 1838, has been regarded as a single species inhabiting the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean from the North Sea to southern Africa and the Indian Ocean coast of South Africa. It is a common species, found from the intertidal to 700 m, and commonly known as the angular crab.

Confusion has long existed over the status of two species, *Goneplax rhomboides* for the Atlantic populations and *G. angulata* (Pennant, 1777) for individuals with a weak or absent anterolateral tooth and found mostly in the Mediterranean. On account of numerous transitions shown by the anterolateral tooth of the North Atlantic and Mediterranean *Goneplax*, authors such as Bonnier (1887), Paolucci (1909), Pesta (1918), Bouvier (1940), Holthuis & Gottlieb (1958), Forest (1965) and Zariquiey Álvarez (1968), concluded that this character was highly variable, clearly not species-specific, and suggested synonymising the two species.

Nevertheless different authors continued to refer to the species as *G. rhomboides* or *G. angulata* (see synonymy). The described larvae from Plymouth (Lebour 1928: 535, as *G. rhomboides*), Devon Coast (Ingle & Clark 1983: 163–177, as *G. rhomboides*), Marseille (Bourdillon-Casanova 1960: 180, as *G. angulata*) and Moroccan seamounts (Rice & Williamson 1977: 55 as *G. rhomboides*; see also Rice 1980, as *G. rhomboides*) all appear similar, and suggest that there is a single species. However, the larval evidence itself cannot be