



A new species of Chaetiliidae (Crustacea: Isopoda: Valvifera) from the Río de la Plata estuary, Argentina-Uruguay, and reconsideration of *Macrochiridothea* and *Chiriscus*

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Abstract

A new species, *Macrochiridothea estuariae*, is described from the estuary of the Río de la Plata. It differs from other species of the genus in having weakly defined incisions on the side of the head. The genus *Chiriscus* Richardson, 1911, previously synonymised with *Macrochiridothea* Ohlin, 1901 is revived on the basis of a lobed article 4 on antenna 2 and a longer pereonite 7 to include the type species, *Chiriscus australis* Richardson, 1911, and *C. giambiagiae* (Torti & Bastida, 1972) transferred from *Macrochiridothea*. Nine other species of *Macrochiridothea* from southern South America and another from New Zealand are briefly diagnosed. A key is provided.

Key words: Chaetiliidae, *Chaetilia*, *Macrochiridothea*, new species, Argentina, Uruguay

Introduction

Macrochiridothea Ohlin, 1901, and its current synonym *Chiriscus* Richardson, 1911, genera of the isopod family Chaetiliidae Dana, 1849 (Poore, 2001) are represented in South America by ten described species (Carvacho, 1997; Moreira, 1973). These species are distributed south of 23°S on the Atlantic coast of southern Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina and the Pacific coast of Chile. A subspecies of one has been recorded from the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands (Nordenstam 1933). Another species inhabits New Zealand (Hurley & Murray, 1968). A key to separate eight species was provided by Moreira (1973, in English) and another to all 11 species by Carvacho (1997, in Spanish).

A new species of *Macrochiridothea* was discovered from northern Argentinean coastal waters where other species apparently belonging to this genus are already known leading to a reappraisal of its composition. Since the revision of *Chiriscus* Richardson, 1911 by the first author (Poore, 1984), all publications have referred *Chiriscus australis* Richardson, 1911 to *Macrochiridothea*. In this contribution, *Chiriscus* is revived out of synonymy with *Macrochiridothea* and new generic diagnoses written to distinguish them from other members of Chaetiliidae, in particular *Chiridotea* Harger, 1878 (see King & Cawood, 2007) and *Chaetilia* Dana, 1853 (see Poore, 1985), two genera without mandibular molar processes and with lateral incisions on the head.

In addition, we describe the new species and review all published species descriptions and illustrations. To confirm enigmatic published observations, we examined the holotypes and paratypes of *Macrochiridothea robusta* Bastida & Torti, 1969 and *M. giambiagiae* Torti & Bastida, 1972 (MACN, MNHN). We also examined the holotype of *M. setifer* Menzies, 1962 (SMNH) and other specimens from central Chile. A paratype of *M. uncinata* Hurley & Murray, 1968 (NIWA) was reexamined for us (see below). In spite of the existence already of two keys, we present another that reflects the new classification, includes the new species, and uses more reliable characters.