



Grapsoid crabs (Decapoda: Brachyura: Thoracotremata) of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman

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Abstract

Grapsoid crabs, together with ocypodoids, are the two most important groups of intertidal brachyurans in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. In total, four families, nine genera and 12 species of grapsoids are known from the region. *Perisesarma guttatum* (A. Milne-Edwards, 1869), and *Plagusia squamosa* (Herbst, 1790), are only recorded from the Gulf of Oman; *Grapsus granulatus* H. Milne-Edwards, 1853, and *Thalassograpsus harpax* (Hilgendorf, 1892), are collected for the first time from the Persian Gulf. *Chiromantes boulengeri* (Calman, 1920), *Nanosesarma sarii* Naderloo & Türkay, 2009, and *Parasesarma persicum* Naderloo & Schubart, 2010, are so far known only from the region.

Key words: Crustacea, Brachyura, Grapsoidea, Grapsidae, Sesarmidae, Varunidae, Plagusidae, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman

Introduction

Several ecological and faunistic studies undertaken along the Arabian coastal region considered grapsoid crabs to be the dominant brachyuran group in the region (e.g., Basson *et al.* 1977; Clayton 1986; Jones 1986a; Al-Khayat & Jones 1996; 1999; Apel 1994a; 1996; Al-Ghais & Cooper 1996; Cooper 1997; Hornby 1997). *Metopograpsus messor* (Forskål, 1775), was first recorded from Bahrain and UAE by Nobili (1906a) and Calman (1920) briefly described a new sesarmid species (*Sesarma boulengeri*) from Basra, Iraq. Stephensen (1945) in his comprehensive work on the brachyuran fauna of the Persian Gulf recorded two more grapsoid species, *M. messor* and *Grapsus maculatus* subsp. *tenuicrustatus* Tesch, 1918, the latter being identified as *Grapsus albolineatus* Latreille in Milbert, 1812, by Apel & Türkay (1999). Apel & Türkay (1999) reviewed the Ocyropodoidea and Grapsoidea of the Per-