

RESEARCHES ON THE COAST OF SOMALIA
PSEUDOCERCEIS SELENEIDES N. SP., A NEW MARINE ISOPOD
(SPHAEROMATIDAE DYNAMENINAE)
FROM THE SOMALIAN COAST

BY

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RÉSUMÉ

Une nouvelle espèce de Sphaeromatide, *Pseudocerceis seleneides* de la côte somalienne est décrite. C'est la première découverte de ce genre dans l'océan Indien. L'espèce est comparée aux espèces australiennes.

INTRODUCTION

Little is known about the marine isopods of the "Horn of Africa". In fact the only publications on this subject are those of Stebbing (1910) on some Tanaidacea and Flabellifera collected in Zanzibar and Wasin Islands, Jones (1971, 1976, 1983), Jones & Icely (1981) and Messana (1985) on cirrolanids, and that of Holdich & Jones (1973) on a new species of sphaeromatid from Kenya.

During the last decade a study of the ecology and ethology of the fauna of the Somalian coast was conducted by the "Centro di Studio per la Faunistica ed Ecologia Tropicali" (Pardi, 1976, 1976a, 1982); during this study some marine isopods were collected.

Among the various specimens of Sphaeromatidae, one was particularly interesting and proved to be a new species of the genus *Pseudocerceis* Harrison & Holdich, 1982.

***Pseudocerceis seleneides* n. sp.**

Material examined. — Holotype, 1 ♂ MF (= Museo zoologico dell'Università di Firenze) 1254, Somalia, Gesira, 1976, M. Vannini leg. (mounted on 8 slides). Paratypes, 3 ♂ MF 1255, Somalia, Gesira, 1979, M. Vannini leg. (1 mounted on 3 slides).

Description. — A milky-white *Pseudocerceis*; body (fig. 1A, B) covered with dispersed, tiny setae, visible only at higher magnification, strongly convex, oval in shape, about 2.4 times longer than wide. Cephalon (fig. 1C) between 2 and 4 times wider than long, anterior margin covering proximal part of

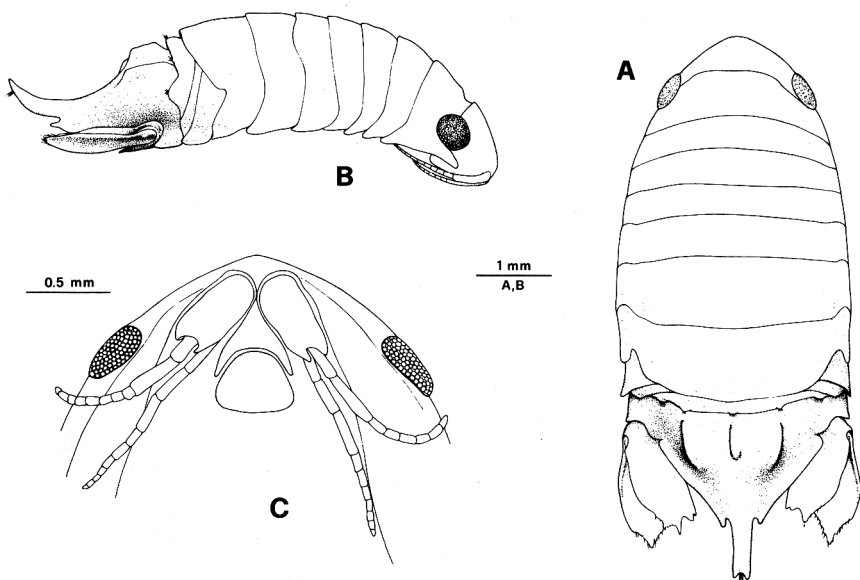


Fig. 1. *Pseudocerceis seleneides* n. sp., male. A, dorsal view; B, lateral view; C, ventral view.

antennae. Sixth and seventh pereopods larger than the others. Pleonites partially covered by seventh pereopod, third pleonal segment with five distal tufts of small setae. Pleotelson triangular, bearing three strong, longitudinal ridges. Pleotelsonic apex with a notch bearing a long, furcate, apically setose, upbent projection. Both rami of uropods flattened and dentate, covered with dispersed, tiny setae, not reaching beyond pleotelsonic projection. Penes short, separate at base.

First antenna (fig. 2A), short, reaching half of first pereopod, first article of peduncle as long as the second and third together, and with two lateral projections, the outer smooth and the inner acute. Third to last articles of flagellum bearing one distal aesthetasc; the number of flagellar articles ranged between 8 and 10.

Second antenna (fig. 2B) slender, not much longer than first antenna, reaching posterior margin of first pereopod, articles of flagellum 9-10.

Left mandible (fig. 2C) with incisor process stout and tridentate, lacinia mobilis tridentate, spine row with eight spines, some of which are spinate; pars molaris oval and apparently articulate, bearing two smooth and one spinate setae.

Right mandible (fig. 2E) with incisor process bidentate, spine row with seven spines, pars molaris roundish and dentate, bearing four dentate spines along its proximal margin.

Mandibular palp (fig. 2D) with outer margin of first article covered with thin setae, second article with a proximal notch in its inner margin and seven

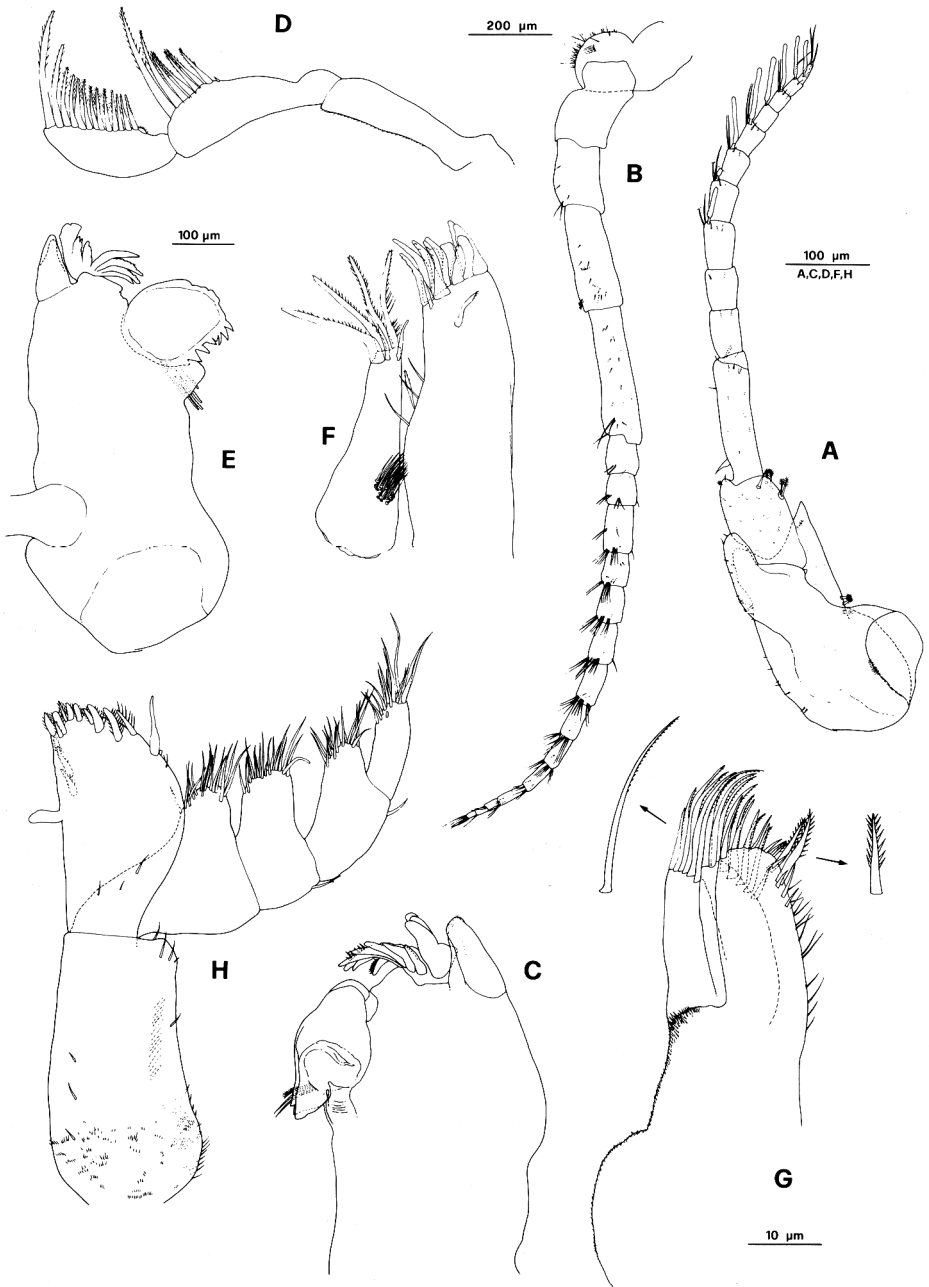


Fig. 2. *Pseudocerceis seleneides* n. sp., male. A, first antenna; B, second antenna; C, left mandible; D, palp of left mandible; E, right mandible; F, first maxilla; G, second maxilla; H, maxilliped.

strong, distally pennate spines, third article with one proximal scale spine followed by thirteen pennate spines.

First maxilla (fig. 2F) with endite bearing proximal tuft of setae, two smooth terminal outer setae and four pennate inner spines; exite with marginal setae, one subterminal, plumose seta on its inner surface and eleven strong terminal spines.

Second maxilla (fig. 2G) with outer and medial endites each bearing a row of eight falcate, toothed spines, inner endite with ten spinate spines and three to four smooth spines.

Maxilliped (fig. 2H) with one smooth coupling hook, and the first three articles of the palp lobate.

Peraeopods subequal, slightly increasing in length posteriorly. Dactylar organ of each peraeopod consisting of a double seta.

Inner margin of propus and carpus of first peraeopod (fig. 3F) with strong, spinate setae: merus and distal part of ischium with a "brush" of short setae.

Second peraeopod with slender basis having subparallel margins; "brush" on carpus, merus, proximal part of propus and on distal part of ischium.

Peraeopods three to five with "brush" on propus, carpus, merus and distal half of ischium.

Sixth peraeopod bearing the "brush" on merus, distal corner of ischium and proximal corner of carpus.

Seventh peraeopod with a small "brush" on the distal corner of ischium and merus; carpus and propus with strong spines.

Symphodite of first pleopod (fig. 3A) with three setose coupling hooks; endopodite triangular, outer margin with long, plumose setae; exopodite truncate with four external teeth, internal and external margins covered with long plumose setae.

Symphodite of second pleopod (fig. 3B) biarticulate, with three setose coupling hooks; endopodite subtriangular, appendix masculina longer than endopod, distally covered by thin setae; exopod truncate with twelve external teeth and many long, plumose setae on both distal and external margins, and a tuft of short setae on the proximal margin.

Third pleopod (fig. 3C) with two small, smooth coupling hooks on symphodite; endopod triangular, exopod oval and biarticulate.

Fourth pleopod (fig. 3D) with a single plumose coupling hook on symphodite; exopod with small lateral incisions and a submedial, toothed boss at the outer margin.

Exopod of fifth pleopod (fig. 3E) with a subterminal articulation, two terminal, toothed papillae and one internal, subterminal papilla.

Uropodal rami (fig. 3I) subequal and covered with very thin, dispersed setae, strongly dentate, with tufts of short setae between each tooth; exopod with six external scale-shaped spines.

Etymology. — The specific name (*σεληνοειδής* greek for moon like; half

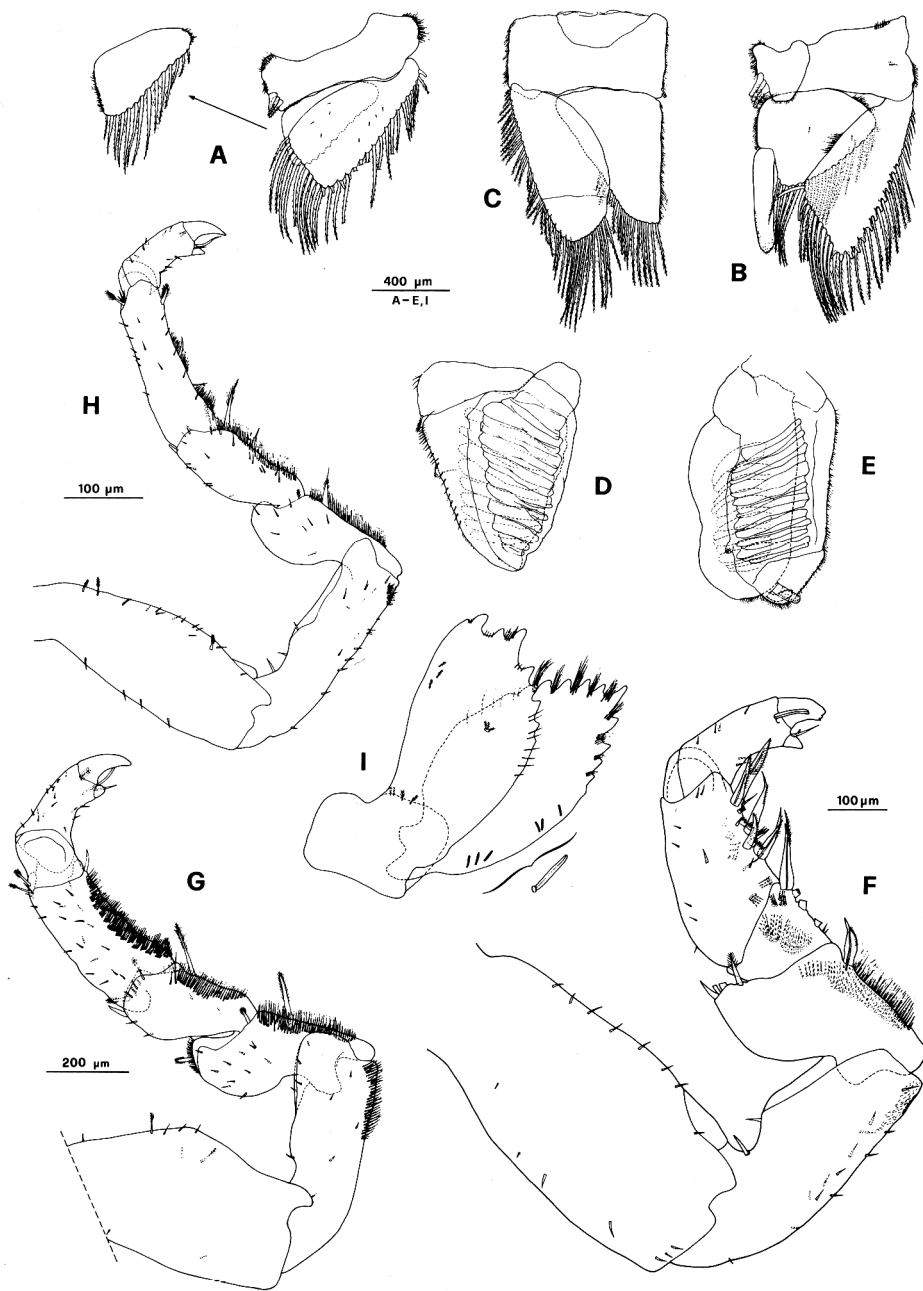


Fig. 3. *Pseudocerceis seleneides* n. sp., male. A-E, pleopods I-V; F-H, peracopods I-III; I, left uropod.

moon in some authors) refers to the moon-white colour of the body and to the falciform aspect of pleotelson in lateral view.

Ecology. — All the specimens have been found in tidal pools and among Scleractinia (Vannini, personal communication).

Remarks. — *Pseudocerceis seleneides* is the first species of the genus found in the Indian Ocean. It differs from the other species, *P. furculata* Harrison & Holdich, 1982, and *Pseudocerceis* sp. Harrison & Holdich, 1982, and *P. trilobata* (Baker, 1908), all from Australian waters, in several features: the base of the antennae is not dorsally visible; the sixth and seventh peraeonite are much wider than in the Australian species, in which the seventh peraeonite does not cover the pleonites; the articulation of sympodite of the first pleopod, and of the exopodite of the third pleopod is lacking in the Australian species; the shape and dentation of the uropodal rami are also different. Also the smoothness of the pleotelson and the aspect of the three ridges on its surface, constitute differences between *P. seleneides*, *P. furculata* and *Pseudocerceis* sp.; though it resembles *P. trilobata*. Length and shape of the pleotelsonic process are the most evident features of the new species, in length the process is similar to that of *Pseudocerceis* sp., constituting a good "first glance" character. As no female has been found nothing can be said about the sexual dimorphism of the Somalian species.

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