

Short communication

Contribution to the knowledge of alien amphipods off the Turkish coast: *Gammaropsis togoensis* (Schellenberg, 1925)

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Abstract

A total of 236 specimens of the *Gammaropsis togoensis* (Schellenberg, 1925) were collected in Iskenderun Bay, SE Turkey during 2005-2006. Already known from the Mediterranean coast of Israel, this is the first record of this alien amphipod from Turkey.

Key words: Levantine Sea, Turkey, lessepsian, alien species, Amphipoda

Alien amphipods that had entered the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal have long been known from the western and southern coast of Turkey: recent publications (Kocataş et al. 2002, Sezgin et al. 2007) reported the occurrence of 3 Lessepsian amphipods: *Maera hamigera* Haswell, 1880; *Stenothoe gallensis* Walker, 1904; *Elasmopus pecteniscrus* (Bate, 1862). We assume they spread with the Asia Minor Current that runs westwards along the Anatolian coastline carrying warm, salty water from the Levantine Sea and passing northward through the eastern Cretan Arc Straits (Yokeş and Galil 2005).

Samples of the marine biota off the southern coast of Turkey were collected by divers in 2005 and 2006. Total of 236 specimens of *Gammaropsis togoensis* (Schellenberg, 1925), were collected in Iskenderun Bay (36°35'13"N, 36°11'48"E), Turkey, on rocky habitats and from the base of a dock in September 2005, at depths of between 0.1-2 m (Figure 1). The water temperature and the time was 28.9°C, and salinity 39.4 PSU. The specimens were identified following Ledoyer (1986) and Myers (1989) and preserved in 5 % formalin. The specimens are



Figure 1. Map of the Levantine coast of Turkey with the location of sampling sites

deposited in the Fisheries Faculty Museum, Ege University, Izmir (ESFM-MAL/05-1). Two of the specimens were photographed and illustrated (Figures 2, 3). Examination of the specimens showed that their morphological features agree with the diagnosis (Myers 1989). However, our specimens are smaller than those collected off the Israeli coast: total length of males is 3.4-3.7 mm, females 2.4-2.7 mm, as compared with length of 4.0-5.5 mm reported from specimens collected off Ashdod.

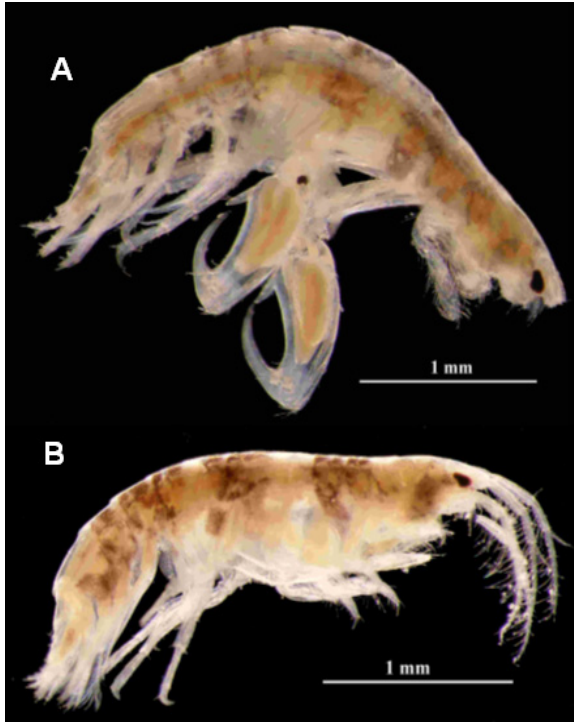


Figure 2. The collected male (A) and female (B) specimens of *Gammaropsis togoensis* (Schellenberg, 1925), general view (ESFM-MAL/05-1) (Photo by Kerem Bakir).

Gammaropsis togoensis is known from the east and west Atlantic Ocean (Florida, Mexico, Belize, Venezuela, Brazil), Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea. In the Mediterranean Sea, this species is only known from coast of Israel, where it is quite common (Krapp-Schickel and Myers 1979, Sorbe et al. 2002). The origin of the Mediterranean alien amphipod populations is unclear: Bellan-Santini and Ruffo (2003:276) wrote: “we have no confirmation on the true origin of these species, nevertheless they are probably lessepsian.” Though the pattern of spread (Israel, southeastern Turkey) fits with the Levantine spread of Erythrean species, its widespread appearance in the western Atlantic could perhaps support a spread by shipping.

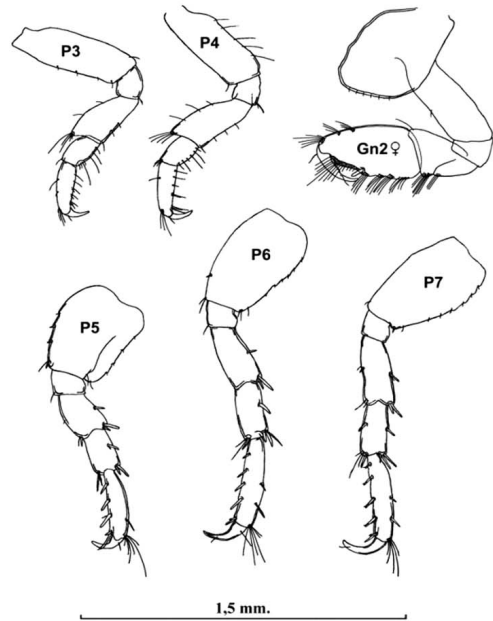
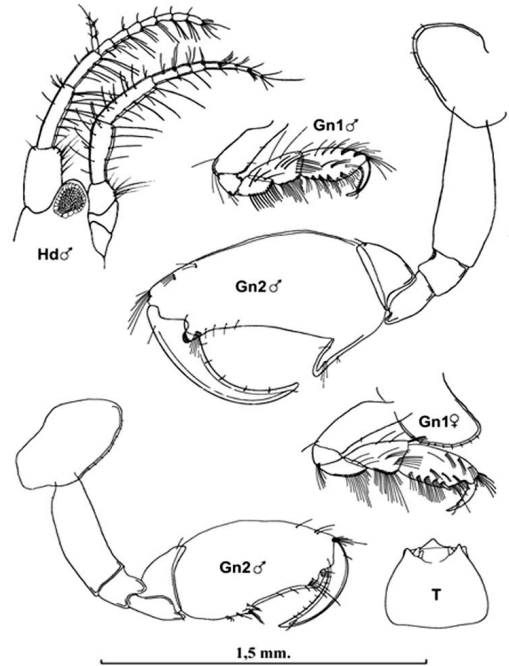


Figure 3. Appendages of male and female *Gammaropsis togoensis* (Schellenberg, 1925) from the present collection. Hd, Head; Gn1, gnathopod I; Gn2, gnathopod II; P3,4,5,6,7, pereopod III, IV, V, VI, VII; T, telson.

Acknowledgements

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