DISCIAS MVITAE SP. NOV., A NEW SPONGE ASSOCIATE FROM KENYA (DECAPODA NATANTIA, DISCIADIDAE)

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The family Disciadidae is one of the smallest caridean families, containing only the single genus Discias, first designated by Rathbun in 1902. Since that time, only four species have been referred to this genus. Two species were reported from the Atlantic Ocean, *D. atlanticus* and *D. serrairostris*, both from Bermuda (Gurney, 1939; Lebour, 1948). The type species of the genus, *D. serrifer*, was first reported from the Galapagos Islands and *D. exul* was discovered in the Andaman Islands by Kemp (1922). Recently, *D. exul* was reported in association with a sponge of the genus *Iaspis* in the Australian Great Barrier Reef (Bruce, 1970) and more recently the presence of *D. atlanticus* in the western Indian Ocean was established (Bruce, 1975).

The discovery of a new species of *Discias* in the western Indian Ocean raises to three the number of species occurring in the Indo-West Pacific region, with two now known to occur in the Atlantic and one only in the Eastern Pacific region. The species so far described all correspond closely to the general pattern of the genus, particularly with reference to the unusual chelae of the first and second pereiopods, and the new species described in this report is also in close conformity. It differs from all the previously described species in the presence of a well developed dorsal spine on the second abdominal segment. In all other species, the abdominal segments are dorsally unarmed.

**Discias mvitae** sp. nov.

**Material examined.** — (1) 1 juvenile female, Leven Reef, Mombasa, 4°04.0'S 39°42.18'E, in lagoon, 1 m, January 1971, coll. A. J. Bruce.

(2) 1 ovigerous female, Fort Jesus, Mombasa, 4°04.0'S 39°01.5'E, 20 m, 24 August 1973, coll. B. O. Benbow.

**Description.** — A small sized shrimp, with a moderately stout subcylindrical body.

The rostrum is short and broad, distally pointed in dorsal view and extending anteriorly to the level of the distal end of the proximal segment of the antennular peduncle. The ventral part of the lamina is lacking and the greatest width is situated on the anterior half. The central part is slightly raised and the lateral borders are also slightly elevated with finely crenulate borders.

The carapace is covered all over with shallow areolations. The orbit is clearly
defined and the inferior orbital angle is obsolescent. Supra-orbital and hepatic spines are absent but a small slender marginal antennal spine is present. The anterior margin of the carapace below the antennal spine is finely denticulate. The antero-lateral angle is bluntly obtuse and the posterior border of the branchiostegite is broadly rounded.

The abdominal tergites and pleura are covered with shallow areolations similarly to the carapace. The second segment is provided with a slender acute spine on the middle of the posterior margin. The dorsal margin of the third segment bears a shallow median groove in the central third to accommodate this spine. The fifth segment is slightly more than twice the length of the sixth segment, which is 1.8 times longer than wide. The posterior lateral angle is broad and acute, the posterior ventral angle is smaller and blunter. The pleura of the first to fifth segments are all broadly rounded.

The telson is about 1.4 times the length of the sixth abdominal segment and 2.6 times longer than broad. The lateral borders are very feebly convex, almost straight, and converge slightly posteriorly to a broad rounded posterior margin. The dorsal surface is finely tuberculate, each minute tubercle bearing a short seta. Three pairs of stout, submarginal dorsal spines are present. The proximal pair is situated at 0.57 of the telson length and is slightly shorter than the intermediate pair, at 0.78 of the length. The disto-lateral telson spines are slightly smaller still, situated at 0.91 of the telson length. The posterior margin bears three pairs of blunt spines. The lateral pair are the longest and the submedian pair the shortest. A few setae are also present.

The antennule is short and robust and exceeds the rostrum by the two distal segments of the peduncle. The proximal segment is twice as broad as the length of the medial border. There is no statocyst but the stylocerite is well developed, acutely pointed distally, and exceeding two thirds of the length of the segment. There is no ventro-medial spine. The distal medial and lateral margins and the lateral aspect of the stylocerite are densely setose. The intermediate segment is short and broad, about 0.35 times the length of the proximal segment. The distal segment is twice the length of the intermediate segment, with a densely setose medial border. The lower antennular flagellum is slender and arises from the extremity of the distal peduncular segment. The upper flagellum arises from the middle of the lateral border. The two rami appear completely fused, forming a thickened proximal portion with indications of six segments, and bearing ten groups of aesthetascs laterally. The distal portion is tapering and slender.

The antenna is normally developed with a stout basicerite bearing a small blunt lateral lobe. The ischiocerite bears a slender acute medial process. The carpocerite reaches to the middle of the scaphocerite. The scaphocerite extends well beyond the end of the antennular peduncle, and is about 2.7 times longer than broad, with the greatest width at about half the length. The lateral border is strongly convex and without a disto-lateral tooth. The medial border is similarly convex and the anterior margin broadly truncate.