VULTOCINUS ANFRACTUS NG & MANUEL-SANTOS, 2007 (DECAPODA, BRACHYURA, VULTOCINIDAE): A NEW RECORD FOR NEW CALEDONIA, WITH NOTES ON FEMALE CHARACTERS

BY

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ABSTRACT

The unusual goneplacoid crab, Vultocinus anfractus Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007, the only member of the family Vultocinidae, is recorded from New Caledonia for the first time. The species, previously known only on the basis of males from the Philippines and Vanuatu, is now also represented by females. The female characters of the species are described and intraspecific variation is discussed.

RÉSUMÉ

Le Goneplacoidea inhabituel, Vultocinus anfractus Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007, seul représentant de la famille des Vultocinidae est découvert pour la première fois en Nouvelle-Calédonie. La connaissance de cette espèce, décrite d’après des specimens males uniquement, des Philippines et de Vanuatu, se complète par la description de specimens femelles. Les caractères femelles sont décrits et les variations intraspécifiques commentées.

INTRODUCTION

The peculiar goneplacoid genus, Vultocinus Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007, was established for a single species, Vultocinus anfractus Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007, on the basis of material from the Philippines and Vanuatu. It had such an unusual suite of characters that a new family, Vultocinidae, was recognized for the genus (Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007). Although five specimens were collected, coincidentally, all were males.

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While working in the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore, the second author examined the type material of *Vultocinus* and remarked that he remembered collecting a species like it from New Caledonia in the 1980s. Although all the New Caledonian material is deposited in the Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle in Paris, the unsorted collections there are so extensive that it was not possible to locate the material without more specific information on the expedition concerned, collecting stations, and date. However, recently, the second author found some old notes and a photograph that not only confirmed that his New Caledonian material was indeed a species of *Vultocinus*, but also provided information on the collecting stations. Using this information, Régis Cleva, the collection manager in Paris conducted a search and eventually located the specimens. Three specimens were found, all incorrectly identified as a “*Planopilumnus* species”.

The present note serves to record this unusual species and family from New Caledonia, to describe the key female characters, as well as to discuss infraspecific variation. The following abbreviations are used: P2-P5 = first to fourth ambulatory legs, respectively; G1 = male first gonopod; G2 = male second gonopod. The suture between the thoracic sternites is denoted by a “/”, e.g., suture 4/5 = suture between sternites 4 and 5. Measurements provided are of the carapace width and length, respectively. Specimens are deposited in the Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle (MNHN), Paris; the Philippine National Museum (NMCR), Manila, Philippines; and the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC), Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore.

**TAXONOMIC ACCOUNT**

**Family VULTOCINIDAE Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007**

**Vultocinus** Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007

Type species. — *Vultocinus anfractus* Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007, by original designation and monotypy.

**Vultocinus anfractus** Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007

(figs. 1, 2)

*Vultocinus anfractus* Ng & Manuel-Santos, 2007: 49, figs. 1-5, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A. 13A; Ng et al., 2008: 85, fig. 76.

Material examined. — Holotype male (20.3 × 19.5 mm) (NMCR 19114), station M27, Santiago, Maribojoc Bay, Panglao, Bohol, 9°0.043′N 123°0.051′E, Philippines, coll. 23 June 2004; paratype male (22.0 × 19.9 mm) (ZRC), station P1, 90-200 m, Maribojoc Bay, Panglao, Bohol, 9°36.1′N 123°45.0′E, Philippines, coll. in tangle nets, 27 June 2004; paratype male (25.3 × 27.3 mm) (ZRC),