Troglobitic Millipedes (Diplopoda : Paradoxosomatidae) from Semi-arid Cape Range, Western Australia: Systematics and Biology

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Abstract

Paradoxosomatid millipedes are an important component of the rich troglobitic fauna of the semi-arid tropical Cape Range, Western Australia. They are found in at least 55 of the 282 caves known from Cape Range covering $>500 \text{ km}^2$. The millipedes occur in dense populations only in areas of high relative humidity and organic carbon content. They appear to be opportunistic and are able to grow and breed rapidly on the intermittently available patches of organic matter washed into the caves by unpredictable rainfall. A new genus of paradoxosomatid millipedes (*Stygiochiropus*, gen. nov.), comprising three species (*S. communis*, sp. nov., *S. sympatricus*, sp. nov., and *S. isolatus*, sp. nov.) is described from the caves. A key is provided for males, but females cannot be identified. The only widespread species (*S. communis*) separates into three provinces between which there are many fixed allelic differences, as determined by allozyme electrophoresis. Although these genetic provinces are separated by deep gorges that cut through the cavernous limestone into the underlying non-cavernous strata, the millipede populations cannot be separated using morphological criteria. The affinities of the millipedes are unknown, but they are part of a rich community of troglobites (>26 species) of which many species have affinities with the northern wet tropical forest fauna, rather than with the current semi-arid fauna.

Introduction

Millipedes are an important component of a rich troglobitic fauna (obligate cave-dwelling species) in Cape Range on the North West Cape peninsula ($22^{\circ}S$.) of Western Australia (Vine *et al.* 1988; Humphreys 1989, 1990, 1991*a*, 1991*b*; Humphreys *et al.* 1989; Humphreys and Collis 1990; Humphreys and Adams 1991). Paradoxosomatid millipedes comprise one of the most conspicuous, abundant and genetically diverse components of this fauna. As such they provide a convenient focus for ecological and genetic work aimed at understanding the working of the cave ecosystems, the population processes involved and the nature of the genetic isolation occurring within the karst region. The research is designed to provide the basis for the conservation management of the karst region as a whole.

Here we consider aspects of the biology and genetics of the millipedes and describe a new genus, comprising three new species, of highly cave-adapted paradoxosomatid millipedes.

Materials and Methods

Field

Temperature and relative humidity were spot measured by whirling hygrometer (Brannan, England) and continuously by thermohydrographs (Okawa Seiki Company Ltd, Tokyo). Soil water content was determined gravimetrically and soil organic carbon was determined by the Walkley-Black dichromate oxidation method with glucose as a standard (Allison 1965).

Millipedes were enumerated by mark and recapture methods. Individuals were marked with fluorescent powders (Daylight Pigments: Abel Lemon Company, Adelaide). Previous marks were detected with an ultraviolet lamp (Model MS-47: Ultra-violet Products Inc., San Gabriel, California). Millipedes were coerced into a narrow glass tube to keep them straight and the total length measured with a $\times 10$ Lupe (Peak).

The population size was estimated from the mark-recapture data by means of the sequential Bayes algorithm (Gazey and Staley 1986), as used previously (Humphreys *et al.* 1989), and where the rationale is explained in more detail. The algorithm estimates the minimum population size with 95% confidence and the mean and median population size.

Husbandry

Animals were maintained in the laboratory in either 50-mL vials or small vivaria; in either case, the floor comprised 1 cm or more of soil from the cave of origin. The soil was kept moist with distilled water to maintain near saturated humidity, while preventing the accumulation of solutes. They were maintained in leaf litter from the original cave and then supplemented with litter of non-cave origin, heat sterilised to prevent contamination by other species of invertebrates and micro-organisms.

Electrophoresis

Cellulose acetate gel electrophoresis was conducted according to standard methods (Richardson *et al.* 1986) on samples of frozen millipedes from 36 caves. For systematic purposes, the null hypothesis under test was that all populations were sampled from the gene pool of a single species. A pilot study examined 46 enzymes and non-enzymic proteins, of which 27 were scorable and 18 were polymorphic (Table 1). Only these latter loci were examined in subsequent work.

	Attribute	Millipedes ^A	Attribute	Millipedes ^A
No. of	f caves sampled	10	H-W equilibrium	Yes
No. of	f individuals	40	Panmictic population	No
No. of	f enzymes examined	46	? More than one species ^B	Yes
No. of	f enzymes scored	27	Geographic explanation ^C	Yes
No. of	f loci invariate (%)	9 (33)	Troglobite	Yes
No. of	f polymorphic loci (%)	18 (67)	-	

Table 1. Genetic information on the minipedes obtained from the phot stu	Table 1.	Genetic	information	on	the	millipedes	obtained	from	the	pilot	stuc
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^A There are two major genetic groupings differing at an average of 19% of loci. Group I: C-118, C-203, C-126 and C-127; Group II: C-159, C-107, C-103, C-18, C-106 and C-64. The four populations in Group I are genetically homogeneous. In Group II the population from C-64 is the most divergent. The three groups are divided by major geomorphological features in the form of deep canyons which cut through the limestone strata in which the caves are found.

^B Genetic differences indicate the possibility of sibling species.

^C The genetic differences are in accord with major geomorphological features.

The following loci were polymorphic: aconitate hydratase (ACON, E.C. 4.2.1.3), adenosine deaminase (ADA, E.C. 3.5.4.4), alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH, E.C. 1.1.1.1), diaphorase (DIA, E.C. 1.6.99.?), enolase (ENOL, E.C. 4.2.1.1), fructose-1, 6-diphosphatase (FDP, E.C. 3.1.3.11), fumarate hydratase (FUM, E.C. 4.2.1.2), aspartate aminotransferase (GOT, E.C. 2.6.1.1), glucose-phosphate isomerase (GPI, E.C. 5.3.1.9), hexokinase (HK, E.C. 2.7.1.1), malate dehydrogenase (MDH, E.C. 1.1.1.37), peptidases (PEP, E.C. 3.4.11.? or 3.4.13.?) and triose-phosphate isomerase (TPI, E.C. 5.3.1.1). The following loci were invariate: aldolase (ALD, E.C. 4.1.2.13), alkaline phosphatase (AP, E.C. 3.1.3.1), general protein (GP), glutathione reductase (GSR, E.C. 1.6.4.2), isocitrate dehydrogenase (IDH, E.C. 1.1.1.42), leucine amino peptidase (LAP, E.C. 3.4.11 or 13), lactate dehydrogenase (LDH, E.C. 1.1.1.27), mannose-phosphate isomerase (MPI, E.C. 5.3.1.8), phosphoglycerate mutase (PGAM, E.C. 2.7.5.3) and pyruvate kinase (PK, E.C. 2.7.1.40). The nomenclature and conventions for referring to alleles and loci follow Richardson *et al.* (1986). The fixed-allelic difference matrix was examined by principal coordinate analysis to determine whether distinct genetic provinces occur associated with geomorphological diversity or other criteria.

Institutions

AMNH: American Museum of Natural History, New York; WAM: Western Australian Museum, Perth; ZMA: Zoölogisch Museum, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands.

The Ecosystem

The regional, climatic and biological setting of the fauna have been described previously (Vine *et al.* 1988; Humphreys 1989, 1990, 1991*a*; Humphreys *et al.* 1989; Humphreys and Collis 1990; Humphreys and Adams 1991), and so only sufficient information is given here to describe broadly the system.

Cape Range lies just within the semi-arid tropics of Western Australia (Fig. 1), and the rainfall is highly unpredictable, both in terms of its seasonality and between-year variation (Humphreys *et al.* 1989). The caves, occurring in the Tulki Limestone of the deeply dissected Cape Range, contain a rich troglobitic fauna. This community is dependent on organic matter and water entering the caves from intermittent flooding (Humphreys 1991b). The frequency of water influx into a given cave depends on the occurrence of significant rainfall and on the nature and size of the catchment area of the cave. The rate of drying of a given cave depends on the relative size of the cave and its opening to the outside. Major water inflow brings with it the energy source (leaves, twigs, etc.) for the cave ecosystem and water to maintain the humidity of the air required by the troglobites (Humphreys 1989; Humphreys *et al.* 1989).

Some caves must be linked at depth by minor cavities (Humphreys *et al.* 1989) and in these depths, relatively devoid of energy, low populations of the cave animals persist (Humphreys 1991b). When caves are wetted and re-energised by the influx of organic matter, these populations move upwards into the newly inhabitable areas and breed there. Until the next influx of water the caves slowly dry, the organic matter is consumed, and the populations retract towards the less dry parts of the cave and then leave entirely those parts of the cave accessible to cavers.

Hence, the evidence suggests that there are inaccessible areas of the cave in which the community is maintained and from which the populations extend upwards at intervals, like



Fig. 1. The location of Cape Range on the North West Cape peninsula and the distribution of caves (\triangle) with millipedes. Cape Range encompasses all the outcropping Tulki Limestone (dashed lines) in which the caves containing troglobites are found; the cave outside this area is also in Tulki Limestone but is covered by other deposits. \Box , the locations of samples used in the allozyme study. The solid lines across the range denote the boundaries between the three major genetic subregions as indicated by the electrophoretic work. The sympatric populations occur in cave C-111 at the extreme NW. of the distribution and *S. isolatus* in C-222 to the extreme NE.

pseudopodia, into the accessible areas of caves. Depending on the characteristics of a cave, its catchment size and the weather, these pulses of the community extend into the accessible areas of the caves with different frequencies and have different rates of decay. The habitable areas are dynamic, continually expanding and contracting, and are fed by unpredictable pulses of organic matter washed into the cave (see Humphreys *et al.* 1989). Hence, the caves in Cape Range contain highly dynamic troglobite communities (Humphreys 1991b) which belie the stability normally associated with such systems (Poulson and White 1969).

A synopsis of the climate of the area is given in Fig. 2.

Results

The Caves

By the end of 1989, millipedes were known from 55 of the 282 caves then known from the North West Cape peninsula; the caves are up to 61 km apart and occur in an area over 500 km² of Cape Range (Fig. 1). *Draculoides vinei* (Harvey) (Chelicerata:Schizomida) also occurs in 31 of the caves. Samples collected for allozyme analysis came from 36 of these caves (Fig. 1). Except where specifically mentioned, the biological data refer to the one widespread species, *Stygiochiropus communis*.

Cave morphology

The population census was conducted in two caves. Cave C-162 (22°09'S.,114°00'E.) (see Humphreys 1990, fig. 1) is broadly open to the outside and thus has variable temperature and humidity. The cave receives inflows of water and its contained organic matter after modest rainfall, and dries rapidly (Humphreys 1989, 1990, 1991b). In contrast, the larger cave C-118 (22°09'S.,113°59'E.) (see Humphreys *et al.* 1989, fig. 1) opens to the surface



Fig. 2. Climatographic synthesis for the North West Cape peninsula. (a) Mean monthly maximum (\bigcirc) and minimum (\bigtriangledown) temperatures and rainfall (\blacksquare); (b) log (mean monthly evapotranspiration/mean rainfall) (\bigcirc) and rainfall (\blacksquare); (c) hythergraph of mean monthly rainfall (mm) and temperature (°C); (d) hythergraph of mean monthly temperature (°C) and relative humidity at 0900 and 1500 hours. The data are composite and were extracted from the available data for Exmouth, Learmouth and Exmouth (Navy) (Microfiche Climatic Averages, Australia and TABS Elements May 1986: Bureau of Meteorology, Canberra).

through a narrow tunnel and in consequence dries very slowly, but receives water on average only once every five years. Both caves contain extensive banks of soil separated by pebble-filled gullies leading to a number of drainage holes (Humphreys 1989, 1990, 1991*a*, 1991*b*).

Cave environment

The typical troglobitic fauna (*D. vinei* and millipedes) is known from *c.* 15% of caves in Cape Range. Compared with caves lacking troglobitic fauna, caves with such fauna have higher relative humidities, greater soil water and soil organic carbon content, but do not differ in temperature (Humphreys 1990). The troglobitic fauna occurs throughout the temperature range (18-29°C) found between the caves of Cape Range, but is restricted to areas of soil water >12% and relative humidity (RH) >80%. Above 80% RH there is a strong positive correlation between RH and the proportion of caves containing troglobitic fauna (r = 0.981, P < 0.05), such that between 95 and 100% RH all caves contain troglobites (Humphreys 1990).

The millipedes may be found in the daylight part of caves (e.g. C-162) and even on the threshold in daylight if the humidity is sufficiently high as a result of water outflow (e.g. C-222) or condensation from exhalent air (e.g. C-15). However, they have never been trapped outside caves as part of the epigean fauna. In the caves they are mostly found wandering on bare mud-banks, stones, piles of organic detritus or, in large numbers, on algae supported by the condensation of water (e.g. C-15).

The Millipedes

Population size

The estimated population densities for millipedes are given in Table 2 and the pertinent posterior distributions and the cumulative posterior distributions (probabilities) against population size are shown in Fig. 3.

There were visually fewer millipedes in C-162 than in C-118 during 1988 and this is reflected in the population estimates. From the view point of conservation, the statistic of most interest is the minimum population size with 95% confidence (Fig. 3).

Table 2. Population size estimates from mark-

recapture 9 mm tota	experiment al length fro du	s on milliped m two caves i ring 1988	les more than n Cape Range
Cave	l Mean	Population es Median	timates Minimum ^A
C-118	1231	990-1011	767
C-162	184	496-506	136

^A Minimum population size estimated with 95% confidence using Bayes algorithm.

Size class structure

As is the case with *D. vinei* (Humphreys 1989, 1990), the millipedes in long-unflooded caves are dominated by the larger size classes and thus have a unimodal population structure (C-118: Fig. 4). In caves recently reactivated by flooding, the millipedes start to breed and cohorts of smaller (assumed to be younger) individuals pass through the population (C-162: Figs 4 and 5).

Growth rate

There is no direct evidence of the growth rate of the millipedes in the field, but several lines of evidence suggest that they grow rapidly in response to favourable conditions. Eggs are laid in a cell in the mud of the caves or cultures where the young millipedes remain

for some time while they grow and from which they subsequently emerge to feed on the mud surface. Of millipedes bred in the laboratory, the smallest individual seen on the surface of the mud was 4 mm long, compared with the smallest seen in a cave of 3.5 mm. Hence, as with the schizomids (Humphreys *et al.* 1989), it would appear that the entire size range of surface-active millipedes was sampled in the caves.

Additional evidence comes from the millipede population structure in cave C-15 which had been activated by 107 mm of rain in May and June 1989 (the heaviest rainfall for 38 months). In mid-July 1989, three cohorts were present in the population. The population was examined again in early September (Fig. 5) when the three cohorts present in the initial sample are tentatively identifiable in the later sample. Joining the cohorts parsimoniously would indicate growth rates of 0.03-0.05 mm day⁻¹. However, data from the laboratory suggest that growth rates may be twice this value (Table 3), in which case the cohorts in Fig. 5 have moved across much further in the time interval between measurements. This faster growth rate is supported by the dominant 8-mm cohort in the September sample, a large cohort that was absent in the July sample and that presumably represents emergence of young from the soil cells at about 3.5 mm length. This interpretation is supported by further growth rate data from cohorts in five laboratory cultures which give rates of 0.14 (s.d., 0.066) mm day⁻¹. The high variance seems typical, with individuals in some cultures growing much faster than others; this is consistent with the suggested opportunism. Hence, the field and the laboratory evidence are consistent with the faster growth and indicate that the cohorts should be connected in the manner shown in Fig. 5.

Genetics

In this paper we present only the results appropriate to the systematics of the millipedes; a detailed analysis of the millipede genetics will be presented elsewhere. It is not appropriate to infer phylogenetic relationships from the measures of genetic distance used (Carpenter 1990).



Fig. 3. Statistical distributions of the millipede populations derived from the mark-recapture data using Bayes algorithm (see Gazey and Staley 1986). (a) and (c) The posterior distribution plotted against population of all millipedes; (b) and (d), the cumulative posterior distribution (probability) against population size, the dotted lines show the minimum population size estimated with 95% confidence. (a) and (b) Cave C-118 (minimum population size of 767 at P=0.95); (c) and (d), cave C-162 (minimum population size of 136 at P=0.95).

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A plot of the principal coordinates based on the fixed allelic differences (see Appendix) shows 36 populations from the 35 caves (Fig. 6). Two sympatric species of *Stygiochiropus* occur in cave C-111 (*S. communis* and *S. sympatricus*), one of them having >39% fixed allelic differences (Richardson *et al.* 1986) from all other populations (Fig. 6, Table 4). Three major genetic provinces of *S. communis* occur in Cape Range: a moderately variable northern group (sympatric with *S. sympatricus* in cave C-111), a homogeneous southern group, and a very heterogenous central group (Fig. 6, Table 4).

As with the amphipods from Cape Range (Humphreys and Adams 1991), there is evidence that sibling species may be involved. Each of the three populations is genetically isolated from the other two. Ignoring allele frequency differences, there are at least 17% fixed genetic differences between the three subregions (Table 4), indicating that there is no gene flow between any of the subregions. The genetic differences observed between subregional populations are at the higher end of the range normally observed for allopatric populations of a single species; rearing experiments are required to determine whether these populations represent sibling species.



Fig. 4. Size-class frequency distribution (total length, mm) of millipedes in mid-1988. (a) Cave C-118 (n=205); (b) cave C-162 (n=134); (c) C-118 at the end of the experiment to re-establish troglobite populations within the cave (n=103; Humphreys 1991b).



Fig. 5. Changes in the size-class frequency distributions of millipedes in C-15 over a period of seven weeks. (a) 16 July, n = 129; (b) 3 September 1989, n = 206. The diagonal lines between the histograms are the forward (solid line) and backward (dashed lines) extrapolations of the maxima by the mean growth rate in the laboratory (Table 3) to show the expected outcome and origin, respectively, of the cohorts.

Table 3. Mean growth rate of millipedes surviving in the laboratory over 67 daysMillipedes were maintained in batches owing to the difficulty of maintaining them in
the laboratory

Initial length (mm)	s.d.	Ν	Final length (mm)	s.d.	N	Growth rate $(mm \ d^{-1})$
3·72	0·55	16	10·67	2·02	3 3	0·10
7·33	0·97	9	13·17	0·29		0·09



Fig. 6. Plot of the principal coordinates based on the matrix of fixed allelic differences (%). The three clusters represent the variation found in *Stygiochiropus communis*, and the lone point represents *S. sympatricus*. The clusters represent the southern (right), central (lower left) and northern (upper left) genetic provinces. The rationale for this approach is given in chapter 12 of Richardson *et al.* (1986).

Table 4.	The fixed differences and genetic distances between the	e
three	major genetic provinces of millipedes in Cape Range	

Groups compared	Fixed differences (%)	Nei's distance
South v. Central	29	0.42
South v. North	29	0.42
Central v. North	17	0.32
All v. C-111b	39	0.60

C-111b is the distance between S. communis and S. sympatricus

Systematics

Family **PARADOXOSOMATIDAE** Daday Subfamily **AUSTRALIOSOMATINAE** Brölemann Tribe **ANTICHIROPODINI** Brölemann

Stygiochiropus, gen. nov.

Type species: Stygiochiropus communis, sp. nov.

Diagnosis

Distinct from all other members of the Tribe Antichiropodini (see Jeekel 1968) in being strongly modified for cave life, with greatly enlongated legs and antennae (Fig. 57), total lack of pigment, brittle cuticle, and narrow, elongated segments with short, angular, spine-like paranota (Fig. 58). The male gonopods are distinctive in the comparatively short, broadly expanded, laminate solenomerite with three processes at its base, the proximal (a) short and sometimes bifid or toothed, and the distal (b) unbranched, evenly curved, and equal to or exceeding the solenomerite (Figs 59–61).

Description

Twenty segments. Pore formula normal. Segments more than twice as long as broad, moderately constricted between prozonite and metazonite, unsculptured, bearing 2 transverse rows of setae, the posterior row of 8–10 setae at the posterior margin of the metazonite (Fig. 58). Pleural keels absent.

Paranota present from segment 2 onward as short, subtriangular extensions as posteriolateral corners of metazonites, larger on poriferous segments (Figs 57, 58). Sternites sparsely setose; anterior sternites of males not modified.

Legs and antennae strongly attenuate (Fig. 57). First legs of males with strong ventral femoral tubercle; other anterior legs of males unmodified.

Gonopod coxae robust, prefemora short, densely setose, articulation with acropodite indistinct. Acropodite long, curved strongly laterally and slightly ventrally (Fig. 59). Femoral process absent (*S. communis* and *S. sympatricus*) or present only as ledge-like corner at distal end of femur (*S. isolatus*); articulation at end of femur completely suppressed. Solenomerite (Figs 9, 10) with three accompanying processes; the most proximal (a) usually simple and acuminate, or significantly thickened and with knob-like teeth, or distally bifid; the most distal (b) laminate, broadly curved, equally or exceeding solenomerite; medial process (c) highly variable but usually with thickened base and by far the smaller of the three processes. Solenomerite with thickened base, distally flaring and laminate, with many fine marginal teeth.

Distribution

Known only from caves in the Cape Range, Western Australia.

Included Species

Stygiochiropus communis, sp. nov., S. sympatricus, sp. nov., and S. isolatus, sp. nov.

Remarks

The paradoxosomatid millipede fauna of Western Australia is poorly known. Only two antichiropodine genera, *Antichiropus* Attems (seven species) and *Helicopodosoma* Verhoeff (two species), have been previously recorded, together with the australiosomatine *Akamptogonus novarae* (Humbert and de Saussure), a synanthropic species that has also reached New Zealand (Johns 1967; Jeekel 1968) and has recently been collected in the San Francisco Bay region of the United States (Hoffman 1980) and in Hawaii (Jeekel 1981). Its original home is probably somewhere in south-eastern Australia.

Stygiochiropus has very clear affinities with Antichiropus, including the evident suppression of the femoral process of the gonopod, and at least a basal fusion of the tibiotarsus and solenomerite. However, the gonopods of members of both genera are so highly modified in comparison with australosomatine gonopods that the various processes are very difficult to homologise. Hence we have followed Jeekel (1965) in labelling the gonopod processes with the same letters used by Attems (1911) in describing Antichiropus, but we have not tried to distinguish tibiotarsal and parasolenomerite branches. The major difference between the two genera, aside from the troglobitic modifications of Stygiochiropus, is in the form of the solenomerite, which is very long and curved in a circle or helix in Antichiropus, but is short, broad, and lamellate in Stygiochiropus. Also, in the latter genus, there are three terminal processes around the base of the solenomerite, while in all Antichiropus species (except A. fossulifrons Attems, and a new species to be described later), there are only two.

On one side, relatives of these two genera would appear to be the two species of *Pogonosternum* Jeekel, from Victoria. A femoral process persists in this genus, in addition to three processes near the base of the solenomerite (Jeekel 1965). Following a trend to greater simplification of the gonopods, *Notodesmus scotius* (Chamberlin), from Tasmania, has two remaining processes, both much shortened (Jeekel 1979), and species of *Helicopodosoma* have lost all processes and the gonopod ends only in a coiled solenomerite (Attems 1937).

Obviously, it is premature to do anything more than suggest these relationships. The Australian paradoxosomatid fauna contains numerous undiagnosed genera and species; descriptions of these and discussions of synapomorphies are required in order to treat the phylogeny of the group as a whole. However, the Australian fauna would be a good place to start as it is relatively coherent and of manageable size (Jeekel 1968).

An absence of detailed distributional information prevents any meaningful discussion of the biogeography at the generic level (some taxa were described only as from 'Australia'), but it may be meaningful to note that a new species of *Antichiropus* has been described from Cape Range (Shear 1992). Another useful fact is that *Helicopodosoma* (if it includes *Brochopeltis* Verhoeff) has three species in Queensland in addition to the two in Western Australia; this may fit in with the suggested rainforest affinities of some elements of the Cape Range cave fauna, but Jeekel (1981) has stated that paradoxosomatids occur much more abundantly in open eucalypt forests than in rainforests. Further, it is not clear if the Western Australian species are congeneric with either *Helicopodosoma* or *Brochopeltis*.

More can be said regarding the three species of *Stygiochiropus*. Of the 282 caves so far explored on the North West Cape, 55 host *Stygiochiropus*. We cannot say with complete assurance that no more than the three species described here will be found, because sexually mature males from some caves have not been collected. In cases where mature males were not available but juvenile or female specimens were used for electrophoretic studies, all clustered with *Stygiochiropus communis*. However, there remain some caves for which neither electrophoretic data nor mature males are available, and it is possible that some represent additional species. *Stygiochiropus communis* is clearly the most widespread and abundant species, as the other two occur only in single caves (*Stygiochiropus sympatricus* is so far known only from cave C-111, where it is found together with *S. communis*, and *S. isolatus* has been collected only from cave C-222).

It was possible to assess gonopod variation both within and between cave populations by making careful camera lucida drawings of gonopods and examining them side-by-side. Obviously, this work was done with *Stygiochiropus communis*, and the results will be discussed under that species, but we can say here that it is not possible to differentiate any

populations of this species on the basis of gonopod anatomy. With only single males of the two other species available, no study of variation was possible, but the gonopods and body size of both these species indicate distinctness from *S. communis*. In addition, the electrophoretic analysis showed that *S. sympatricus* has greater than 39% fixed differences from any other populations studied, including the *S. communis* population that occurs with it in the same cave. Unfortunately, *S. isolatus* was not included in the analysis.

Etymology

From stygio-, the infernal regions, and -chiropus ('hand-foot'), as a combining stem indicating a relationship to the genus *Antichiropus* Attems.

Key to Males of Stygiochiropus

1 <i>a</i> .	End of gonopod femorite with a distinct angular shelf (Figs 17, 18); length of mature males
	7-8 mm, width 0.6 mm S. isolatus
1 <i>b</i> .	End of gonopod femorite without a distinct angular shelf (Figs 14-16); length of mature males
	14–15 mm, width 1.0 mm
2a.	Process a of gonopod deeply bifid (Figs 14-16) S. sympatricus
3a.	Process a of gonopod simple (Figs 7-10) S. communis

Stygiochiropus communis, sp. nov.

(Figs 7-13)

Material Examined

Holotype. \circ , cave C-18 (22°05'S.,113°59'E.), Cape Range, Western Australia, 13.viii.1988, W. F. Humphreys et al. (WAM 88/2452).

Paratypes. 1σ , 2ϕ , same data as holotype (WAM 91/1402-1404); 7σ , 6ϕ , cave C-126 ($22^{\circ}09'$ S., 114°00'E.), Cape Range, W.A. 18.viii.1988, W. F. Humphreys *et al.* (WAM 88/2483-95); 2σ , 2ϕ , same data as last, deposited in AMNH and ZMA.

Diagnosis

Distinct from S. sympatricus in the simple process \mathbf{a} (bifid in S. sympatricus) and the less robust base of the solenomerite; from S. *isolatus* in the larger gonopod lacking a projecting angle at the distal end of the femorite.

Description

Male

Length, 14-15 mm; width at seventh metazonite, $1\cdot 0$ mm; third antennal article $0\cdot 6$ mm long. Segments in dorsal view as in Fig. 58. Postgonopodal legs (Fig. 12) long and slender, first legs (Fig. 11) typical of tribe, with strong distal femoral tubercle.

Gonopods moderately robust for size of animal, *in situ* with coxae and prefemora in contact, acropodite curving laterally, then mesally so tips of gonopods touch or cross (Figs 7, 59). Coxa about twice as long as broad. Prefemur short, about $\frac{1}{3}$ length of coxa, heavily setose, sharply curved. Prefemur/acropodite articulation obscure, acropodite at obtuse angle to prefemur. Femorite basally narrow, expanding to maximum width in distal $\frac{2}{3}$, evenly curved basally but widened part is nearly straight; transition to apical division smooth, marked by narrow neck; femoral process absent. Process **a** (probably tibiotarsus) a little shorter than solenomerite, cylindrical-acuminate. Process **b** (probably parasolenomerite) exceeding solenomerite, sickle-like. Process **c** shortest of three processes, base somewhat bulbous, distally bifid. Solenomerite laminate, broadly expanded distally, longitudinally striate, with many marginal teeth or fimbriae.

Cuticle extremely brittle, colourless; gut clearly visible dorsally.

Female

Length, 15-17 mm; width at seventh metazonite, $1 \cdot 15$ mm; nonsexual structures otherwise as in male.

Distribution

Mature males of this species have been taken from the following Cape Range caves: C-15, 18, 47, 56, 64, 68, 79, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 111, 118, 119, 126, 152, 154, 156, 159, 161, 162, 163, 167, 171, 201, 203, 207, 254, 256, 260, 277, 291, 300 and 312. Of these, the following were not included in the genetic analysis: C-102, 104, 152, 201, 203, 250, 277, 291 and 300. Included in the genetic analysis, but lacking mature males, are the following: C-65, 119, 215, 227, 261, 263, 278 and 281; the analysis showed all of these specimens to belong to *S. communis. Stygiochiropus* females and/or juveniles, not genetically analysed, have been taken in the following: C-21, 45, 63, 169, 250, 252 and 262; we cannot be sure that all these represent *S. communis.* The relative locations of the caves in which any *Stygiochiropus* specimens have been collected are shown in Fig. 1.



Figs 7-13. Stygiochiropus communis: 7-10, gonopods, mesal view; 8, 9, holotype; 7, 11, paratype; 11, leg 1, holotype; 12, legs from segment 12, holotype; 13, antenna, holotype. Processes a, b and c are labelled (see text) together with the solenomerite (s) and the femorite (f). Scale bars in μ m.

Remarks

The genetic analysis already described shows that the populations assigned here to *S. communis* readily divide into three clusters which, by ordinary criteria, are genetically isolated. The southern cluster appears to be the most divergent, with the central and northern clusters more similar to one another. The genetic analysis and traditional systematics based on morphology were carried out independently, and the populations used for the two methods do not entirely overlap, as indicated in the section above.

Gonopod variation in this species was assessed by making careful camera lucida drawings of the gonopods and comparing them side-by-side. Usually only one or a few males were available from a single cave, but in several instances more than three were examined. As a preliminary conclusion, we found that variation between all caves, regardless of grouping in the electrophoretic experiments, was not significant and that variation within single cave populations was comparable to between-cave variation. Variation in the form of the several gonopod processes showed no coherent pattern within this species; in other words, a particular form of process a did not correlate with a particular form of process b or c. The three geographically coherent population clusters revealed in the genetic analysis, despite levels of fixed differences indicative of complete isolation, are not recognisable on the basis of gonopod anatomy. Because of the complex nature of the gonopods, this represents a subjective judgement. The range of variation is illustrated in Figs 21-56 and briefly discussed below.

As all figures are drawn to the same scale, it can be seen that there is no meaningful variation in size, but that the width of the femorite does show some differences. It is not possible to say whether this is real or that it results from the angle of view (the gonopods were temporarily mounted in glycerine on microscope slides for illustration).

The form of the solenomerite was essentially invariable.

Process a showed almost no variation, though in a few cases a small subterminal swelling or knob may suggest that the ancestral form was bifid, as in *S. sympatricus*. A male from C-260 had this process unusually strengthened (Fig. 36), and a possibly abnormal male from C-300 had process a of a form approaching that in *S. isolatus* (Figs 22, 23).

Process **b** varied mostly in its curvature. A simple 'C' curve was found in males from C-18 (Fig. 32), 107 (Fig. 30), 18 (Figs 9, 10), 126 (Fig. 27), 154 (Fig. 26), 159 (Fig. 29), 201 (Fig. 24) and 203 (Fig. 21). A sigmoid, or 'S' curve of varying degree occurred in males from C-64 (Fig. 38), 106 (Fig. 34), 162 (Fig. 25) and 260 (Fig. 36); an extreme version of the sigmoid curve occurred in one male from C-260 (Fig. 35). In males from C-68 (Fig. 31) and 103 (Fig. 28), both 'C' and 'S' curves were found.

Process c showed the greatest degree of variation. A simple form appeared in a male from C-106 (Fig. 34). A bifid form occurred in males from C-103 (Fig. 28), 106 (Fig. 33), 107 (Fig. 30), 159 (Fig. 29), 201 (Fig. 24) and 203 (Fig. 21); in males from C-103, the two prongs diverged widely (Fig. 28), and the base was noticeably thickened in examples from C-159 (Fig. 29) and 106 (Fig. 34). A thicker shape with several to many small acute projections occurred in males from C-64 (Fig. 38), 111, 126 (Fig. 27), 154 (Fig. 26), 162 (Fig. 25) and 260 (Fig. 36). This process was evidently absent entirely in males from C-68 (Fig. 31) and in one male from C-260 (Fig. 36). Finally, males from C-18 showed either simple, bifid, or many-toothed processes (Figs 9, 10).

Thus, while the electrophoretic work revealed three clusters of populations that meet the criterion for genetic isolation, it would not be possible for a systematist working with museum specimens to place males in one cluster or another, or to guess from which cave a male was taken if such data were not available. This poses a practical problem: should the three population clusters, regardless of one's inability to separate them morphologically, each be named to indicate their possible status as sibling species? To do so would be to adopt that hypothesis. We have decided not to name these forms separately but to simply draw attention by this discussion to their relationships. It may be entirely possible that while genetic exchange does not in fact take place between these populations because of geographical isolation, such exchange would be possible if the populations came into contact again (because surely they represent the descendents of a once panmictic ancestor). If in fact gonopod morphology is an isolating factor in millipede speciation [see Eberhard (1985, 1990) for an exhaustive discussion of this subject in animals in general], then all known populations of *S. communis* showing no gonopod variation taken by analogy to be indicative of speciation may be potentially interfertile. By including all these populations under one species name, that is the hypothesis we wish to put forward.

In cave C-111, S. communis is sympatric with S. sympatricus, and with a predominantly surface-dwelling paradoxosomatid, *Boreohesperus capensis* Shear, 1992. The latter species is also found with S. communis in caves C-18, 68, 106, 107, 162 and 203.

Stygiochiropus sympatricus, sp. nov. (Figs 14-16)

Material Examined

Holotype. σ , cave C-111, Cape Range, Western Australia, 5.vii.1989, E. R. Wood (WAM 91/1405).

Diagnosis

Distinct from S. isolatus in the larger size of the gonopod, and from S. communis in the bifid nature of gonopod process a.

Description

Length, about 14 mm; width at seventh metazonite, 1.0 mm; third antennal article 0.65 mm long. Structure closely similar to above description of S. communis.

Gonopod (Figs 14-16) similar to that of *S. communis*, with the following differences. Width of femorite more even throughout length, maximum width of femorite somewhat less, constriction between femorite and apical division less pronounced. Process **a** more robust, deeply bifid, ectal branch with a small subapical tooth. Process **b** relatively shorter, thicker, more cylindrical, especially at base, hardly curved except near apex, not exceeding solenomerite. Process **c** with distinct bulbous base, shorter, complex, fundamentally bifid but with 3-5 teeth on each branch. Solenomerite with much heavier, bulbous base, thickened portion extending from base nearly to apex, lamina somewhat less expanded.

Remarks

This species is known only from the holotype, though others were sacrificed for the electrophoretic work. The holotype was a deviating male in a collection from cave C-111, so presumably represents the genetically divergent population, but this could only be confirmed by first examining the gonopods of males that would then be used for electrophoresis. However, W.A.S. was immediately able to pick out this male as different from *S. communis* at low magnification under a dissecting microscope. The only available collection contained one male of *S. communis*, one male of *S. sympatricus*, a single female, and six immature individuals. It is not possible to determine which species the female represents. Obviously, additional material of both species from cave C-111 is needed to clarify the status of the two sympatric species.

Cave C-111, the only cave known with sympatric *Stygiochiropus* species populations, is at the extreme north-west of Cape Range and separated from other caves containing *Stygiochiropus* populations by c. 8 km both to the east (C-222) and to the south (C-215; Fig. 1). Another species of paradoxosomatid, *Boreohesperus capensis*, is also found in this cave, but is an obvious accidental or at most a troglophile (Shear 1992). The cave (Breakdown Maze) is a large breakdown structure, mostly dry. The millipedes were collected from a single, small patch of damp mud in the twilight zone. The cave was completely dry in July 1991, and no millipedes were found.

Stygiochiropus isolatus, sp. nov.

(Figs 17-20)

Material Examined

Holotype. σ , cave C-222, Cape Range, Western Australia, A. J. Humphreys, 30.vi.1989 (WAM 91/1406).

Paratype. Q, same data (WAM 91/1407).

Diagnosis

Much smaller (7-8 mm long, 0.6 mm wide) than the other species; gonopods (Figs 17-20) with a unique acute shelf-like projection (arrow in Fig. 19) at the end of the femorite, which is absent in the others.

Description

Male

Length, 7–8 mm; width at seventh metazonite, 0.6 mm; third antennal article 0.25 mm long. Structure typical of genus but differing in the much longer segmental setae, producing distinctive setose appearance.



Figs 14-16. Stygiochiropus sympatricus gonopods. 14, lateral view left gonopod; 15, mesal view right gonopod; 16, lateral view of left gonopod. Figs 17-20. Stygiochiropus isolatus left gonopod. 17, 19, mesal views; 18, 20, lateral views. Processes a, b, c and arrow (see text) and the solenomerite (s) are labelled. Scale bars in μ m.

Gonopod (Figs 17-20) differs from the other species in the following. Femorite narrowed basally, abruptly widened at about $\frac{1}{3}$ its length, curve less pronounced; femorite ending in pronounced shelf-like or subtriangular projection perhaps representing femoral process, neck separating apical division from femorite less pronounced, but in lateral view entire apical division with distinct bulbous base. Process **a** very heavy, seen in posteroventral view nearly half as wide as long, blunt, ending in 5-7 rounded teeth. Process **b** evenly and shallowly curved, proportionally less robust, about equal to solenomerite. Process **c** relatively gracile, base not pronouncedly bulbous, bifid, ectal branch with 2 apical teeth. Solenomerite with moderately expanded base, otherwise similar to *S. communis*.

Female

Length, 9–10 mm; width at seventh metazonite, 0.7 mm; third antennal segment 0.25 mm long. Nonsexual characters as in male.



Figs 21-38. Stygiochiropus communis, variation in gonopods. The figures are arranged so they represent a schematic latitudinal gradient from south to north across the rows from upper left to bottom right. All represent the mesal view of the right gonopod unless stated otherwise. Cave numbers are denoted with a C- prefix. 21, C-203; 22, C-300; 23, C-300 detail; 24, C-201 posterio-mesal view; 25, C-162; 26, C-154; 27, C-126; 28, C-103; 29, C-159; 30, C-107; 31, C-68; 32, C-18; 33, C-106; 34, C-106; 35, C-260; 36, C-260; 37, C-277; 38, C-64. Scale bars in μ m.

Remarks

Clearly distinct from the other two species, *S. isolatus* is known only from two specimens, but the differences are so strong that its status cannot be in doubt. The overall impression from this species is that of less extreme troglobitic adaptation. The body seems more compact, the antennae and legs less attenuate.

Cave C-222 is at the extreme north-east of Cape Range and separated from other known *Stygiochiropus* populations by c. 8 km to the west (C-111) and to the south (C-263; Fig. 1). The cave is a small horizontal tunnel in the side of a gorge. *Stygiochiropus isolatus* was found on a small, isolated, wet patch on a mud-bank just inside the entrance, and in the



Figs 39-56. Stygiochiropus communis, variation in gonopods. The figures are arranged so they represent a schematic latitudinal gradient from south to north across the rows from upper left to bottom right. All represent the mesal view of the right gonopod unless stated otherwise. Cave numbers are denoted with a C- prefix. 39, C-203; 40, C-300; 41, C-162; 42, C-154; 43, C-126; 44, C-126; 45, C-103; 46, C-103; 47, C-159; 48, C-107; 49, C-68; 50, C-18; 51, C-106; 52, C-106; 53, C-260; 54, C-260; 55, C-277; 56, C-64. Scale bars in μ m.

drip zone at the entrance, both in daylight. *Boreohesperus capensis*, a predominantly surface-dweller, has also been taken in this cave (Shear 1992). The cave was completely dry in July 1991, and no millipedes were found.

Discussion

It has been demonstrated experimentally that water and surface organic matter are the prime factors in the re-establishment of millipede populations in caves depleted of



Figs 57-62. Scanning electron micrographs of *Stygiochiropus communis* from cave C-118, a cave in the southern genetic province (Humphreys 1991b). 57, lateral view of male, pores open at the tip of the paranota, scale bar 1000 μ m; 58, dorsal view of two tergites showing the paranota and setae at the posterior margin of the metazonite, scale bar 500 μ m; 59, mesal view of the right gonopod, scale bar 200 μ m; 60, mesal view of the right gonopod, scale bar 100 μ m; 62, anterior view of the head, scale bar 500 μ m.

water and energy (Humphreys 1991b). While there is no direct evidence of growth rates of S. communis in the caves, both field and laboratory evidence are consistent with high growth rates. Hence, it would appear that the millipedes may be opportunistic ('r-strategists'), holding on in deeper refugia until conditions become more suitable for them, and then undergoing rapid growth and breeding in the newly but temporarily favourable sites.

We suspect that *Stygiochiropus* millipedes are relictual forest forms that were isolated in caves in the North West Cape when the region became too dry to support forests some time after the Miocene. While some elements of the Cape Range cave fauna have clear rainforest affinities, Jeekel (1980, 1981, 1984, 1985), in the only systematic effort ever mounted to collect millipedes in Australia, found paradoxosomatids more common in open eucalypt forests. However, Jeekel's work was done during an abnormally hot and dry year. It is possible that eucalypt forests, with a richer paradoxosomatid fauna, succeeded rainforest in the North West Cape region as it dried out.

The allozyme analysis is robust in that the samples meet the criteria for adequate genetic work at the within-species level (Richardson *et al.* 1986) in that there were at least six polymorphic loci; the samples could be drawn from the smallest and homogeneous population units (caves) and they were sampled over some geographical distance, including the extremities and intermediate locations. The only widespread species (*S. communis*) separates into three genetic provinces between which there are substantial fixed allelic differences. These provinces are bounded by clear geomorphological divides, but the millipede populations cannot be separated using morphological criteria.

It is not possible to say whether the three species now known represent separate colonisations or are descended from a single colonising ancestor. The major populations of the millipedes probably exist in a vast maze of underground spaces inaccessible to man, and which may indeed connect with one another over very wide areas. Thus, prior to the erosional barriers that now exist separating the three clusters, *Stygiochiropus communis* could have spread underground from an originally limited area.

This leads to the following historical scenario.

1. Invasion of caves by one or more species of *Stygiochiropus* or its ancestors as the region became more arid after the Miocene.

2. Subsequent extinction of many cave populations, perhaps during dry intervals in the Pleistocene. At this time the three extant species (and perhaps others) were isolated geographically (probably by distance) and in all likelihood 'bottlenecked', leading to strong genetic differences.



Figs 63, 64. Scanning electron micrographs of *Stygiochiropus communis* from cave C-118. 63, two distal segments of the right antenna, note the conical sensilla on the terminal segment and the sensory organ on the penultimate segment (cf. Fig. 13), scale bar 100 μ m; 64, pore opening at the tip of the paranota of segment V; note the hexagonal cuticular pattern, scale bar 20 μ m.

3. One of the surviving species (*Stygiochiropus communis*) developed the ability to disperse rather rapidly through the deeper underground connections between caves and, as conditions improved (more moisture), spread out from one or more restricted foci.

4. Subsequently, contact between the three population clusters was cut off by erosion and they began to differentiate, but not enough to produce differences in the gonopods. Part of the population reached cave C-111, already occupied by *Stygiochiropus sympatricus*, which probably evolved there in isolation; the two have coexisted since. *Stygiochiropus communis* probably did not reach cave C-222.

Acknowledgments

This work has been supported by numerous people and organisations in many capacities. We thank Mark Adams (Evolutionary Biology Unit, South Australian Museum; allozyme work), Darren Brooks, Malcolm East, Drs M. Gray and M. S. Harvey, Angus Humphreys, Peter Fallan, Caroline Lawrence, Brian Vine, Julianne Waldock, Ray Wood and Rae Young. Drs W. J. Gazey and V. Palermo (British Columbia) kindly provided their programs to calculate the sequential Bayes algorithm. Pigments were provided by Abel, Lemon and Co., Adelaide. Organic carbon determinations were done with the permission of the Director of the Chemistry Centre, W.A., and Dr F. Hingston (Division of Forest Research, CSIRO). Electron optic facilities were provided by the School of Veterinary Science, Murdoch University. Work in the area was permitted by the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the lessees of Exmouth Gulf Station. The work was funded by numerous volunteers, the Western Australian Museum, the National Estate Program and the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

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Appendix. Genetic distance matrix

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	1116	563	602	702	511	557	501	711	510	503	554	526	603	611	591	697	593	571	578	577	478	621	614	860	577	557	842	602	540	603	543	580	725	602	557	6 44	536	1
	281	304	311	375	293	310	302	311	302	299	305	258	313	313	230	344	268	364	382	301	185	358	24	180	20	46	131	53	100	28	4	47	116	64	19	45	l	39
	261	329	362	381	321	346	344	362	314	326	332	363	362	270	235	223	164	279	313	196	202	250	55	251	24	63	192	80	23	45	58	31	44	190	78	1	0	42
	260	322	339	397	307	329	330	339	313	312	331	288	341	293	222	346	273	347	365	298	198	345	47	151	47	61	170	69	127	69	68	72	130	54	I	0	0	39
	215	395	405	476	375	398	394	405	381	379	398	342	407	394	288	476	363	425	453	375	248	413	82	194	110	130	229	129	189	114	131	138	215	i	0	17	0	4
	159	384	389	425	383	333	383	389	376	381	380	372	388	314	322	262	197	326	351	262	230	277	92	263	92	141	183	142	51	6 L	108	42	I	19	0	0	9	50
	156	413	437	484	411	415	386	437	416	414	429	364	437	314	192	325	246	337	346	242	174	312	34	210	19	25	102	39	27	28	21	1	0	12	0	0	0	41
	107	422	436	483	410	426	390	436	418	415	426	365	438	263	124	267	198	286	294	222	114	266	23	188	15	13	74	25	96	18	I	0	0	12	0	0	0	35
(pən	106	346	347	401	337	338	339	347	344	341	336	281	348	359	279	332	291	414	435	345	210	402	S	175	17	29	59	31.	95	1	0	0	9	11	0	0	0	39
(contin	103	450	483	575	458	457	463	483	458	459	478	409	481	335	337	340	302	388	413	329	290	391	105	282	77	96	208	111	ł	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	33
pendix	679	400	414	494	388	408	402	414	396	389	398	357	416	344	271	365	315	408	422	352	229	407	25	126	31	S	86	I	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	0	0	39
Υ	068	504	498	555	494	492	466	498	506	496	484	431	500	497	346	482	381	521	533	415	278	473	63	203	102	88	1	0	9	0	0	0	13	18	9	×	9	47
	065 -	397	418	497	386	411	399	418	394	390	405	353	419	319	240	351	303	383	395	332	216	391	28	152	19	I	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	11	0	0	0	39
	056	371	386	418	361	378	343	386	369	368	378	317	388	300	157	307	233	322	331	240	141	303	52	186	I	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	9	12	0	0	0	41
	047	440	449	542	418	443	475	449	426	418	435	474	4.J	410	409	443	373	464	491	414	325	451	116	I	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	13	9	0	0	0	39
	018	320	322	373	308	314	319	322	315	311	311	284	324	329	275	313	271	382	406	319	198	369	I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	39
	312	536	561	551	530	532	492	561	524	536	558	583	562	22	140	44	26	2	33	102	121	ı	17	17	18	22	24	17	17	22	12	18	13	22	22	8	22	39
	278	428	443	436	421	438	380	443	431	429	438	454	445	157	8	187	118	119	115	92	ı	9	11	11	9	11	12	11	11	11	0	9	13	22	Π	8	11	33
	Cave	015	062	118	126	151	154	161	162	163	167	171	207	064	111	119	227	254	256	263	278	312	018	047	056	065	068	620	103	106	107	156	159	215	260	261	281	111b

Manuscript received 23 December 1991; accepted 4 September 1992

Troglobitic Millipedes from Cape Range

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