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Observations on the Morphology and Systematics of *Thalassogenus* Andrássy, 1973 (Nematoda: Thalassogeneridae n.fam.)

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ABSTRACT. *Thalassogenus archaeops* n.sp., the second species belonging to the extraordinary enoplid genus of predatory terrestrial nematodes first described by Andrássy (1973), is described from Western Samoa. The importance of the arrangement of the stoma, structure of the cardia and its accompanying glands, and the presence of an eye-spot and six caudal glands is discussed and a new family Thalassogeneridae is proposed for the genus.

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In recent years a number of unusual nematodes have been discovered in Australia, New Zealand and the islands of the Central and South Pacific, resulting in the erection of several genera that have not always fitted easily into existing classifications. During preliminary examination of material from a survey of Pacific Island groups collected by one of us (KJOW) in 1976-1977, an interesting nematode, apparently a mononch, was noted in a single sample. On closer investigation it proved to belong to the monotypic enoplid genus *Thalassogenus* Andrássy, 1973, which was described from Papua New Guinea. Our species, from Western Samoa, though closely related to the generitype, *T. paradoxus* Andrássy, 1973, represents a new species. The observations on its morphology given in the description below throw more light on this remarkable genus and its affinities.

Materials and Methods

Specimens were heat-fixed in F.A. 4:10, cleared in warm lactophenol and processed to a glycerine mountant containing traces of picric acid by a modified Baker method. One female and the single juvenile were processed to the same mountant by a glycerine-alcohol slow evaporation technique.

Thalassogenus archaeops n.sp.

Figs 1-18

Dimensions. *Females (4)*: L = 1.66–1.90 mm (mean 1.81); a = 29–34 (31); b = 4.3–4.7 (4.4); c = 34–47 (38); V = 59–62 (61).

Holotype female: L = 1.9 mm; a = 30; b = 4.7; c = 36; V = 62.

Description. *Females.* Body stout, an open spiral on heat death with a slight taper anteriorly and posteriorly. Cuticle smooth, about 3.5 μm at base of lip region, 3.5–4.5 μm at midbody, increasing to 5 or 6 μm on tail. Hyaline portion of terminus 6–8 μm thick.

Lip region continuous, 36–41 μm wide at level of amphid apertures, flattened anteriorly to produce a truncate outline. Lips six, four submedian and two lateral, rounded, each bearing two projecting labial papillae, one on the inner and one on the outer side. Papillae consisting of small convex base thinning abruptly to short setose apex and arranged in two circles; the inner circle with narrower bases inclined towards the mouth, the outer circle with wider bases inclined outwards. Four additional submedian cephalic papillae present at level of amphids. Amphid aperture a small slit about 3.5 μm wide, located at 32–34 μm from the base of stoma, leading into a large sensillar pouch about 8 μm wide which extends posteriorly to a maximum of 15 μm from amphid aperture.

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