

**A New Species of *Sphenocarcinus* A. Milne
Edwards, 1875 from Tasmantid Guyots, *S. lowryi* n.sp.
(Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura) with Notes on
the Taxonomic Status of the Genus**

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ABSTRACT. A new species of *Sphenocarcinus* with a bifid rostrum, *S. lowryi*, is described from the Tasman Sea. This brings to 17 the number of species of the genus *Sphenocarcinus*.

RÉSUMÉ. Une nouvelle espèce de *Sphenocarcinus* à rostre bifide, *S. lowryi*, est décrite de la mer de Tasman. Cela porte à 17 le nombre des espèces du genre *Sphenocarcinus*.

RICHER de FORGES, B., 1992. A new species of *Sphenocarcinus* A. Milne Edwards, 1875 from tasmantid guyots, *S. lowryi*, n.sp. (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura) with notes on the taxonomic status of the genus. Records of the Australian Museum 44(1): 1-5.

In May 1989, an expedition organised by the Australian Museum, Sydney on board the RV *Franklin* explored the Tasman Sea (Lowry, 1989). One aim of this expedition was the sampling of the benthic fauna living on the summit of the guyots. In the Tasman Sea, these guyots form several alignments parallel from north to south between 21° and 38°S (Kroenke *et al.*, 1983). These reliefs are the signs of a volcanic activity linked to a "Hot-spot" and to the movement south-north of the Indian-Australian plate (Slater & Goodwin, 1973; Rigolot, 1988).

The summits of these structures are relatively flat and can be worked by dredges and trawls; they reach heights between 90 and 900 m in depth, forming small islands

of bathyal fauna, isolated from each other by abyssal depths (Fig.1).

Despite the difficulties encountered in working these hard bottoms with gears which were too fragile, 21 species of crabs belonging to 11 families were collected. From this collection, a series of specimens of the genus *Sphenocarcinus* A. Milne Edwards, 1875 are described as a new species.

This genus currently contains 16 species: four have a single rostrum composed of two spines of varying lengths and shapes. It has been recently enriched by three new species, originating in New Caledonia (*S. orbiculatus*, *S. stuckiae*) and in the Philippines (*S. bipartitus*), described by Guinot & Richer de Forges