

A New Genus and Two New Species of Unusual Dromiid Crabs (Brachyura: Dromiidae) from Northern Australia

C.L. MCLAY

Zoology Department, Canterbury University, Christchurch, PB 4800, New Zealand
c.mclay@zool.canterbury.ac.nz

ABSTRACT. A new genus, *Desmodromia* n.gen., and two new species of dromiid crabs are described from northern Australia. In *Desmodromia* the rostrum is tridentate, the anterolateral teeth are well developed, the last two pairs of legs have no opposing propodal spines, and the dactyli on these limbs are rotated. The new genus is similar to *Epipedodromia* Andre, 1932 and *Homalodromia* Miers, 1884, but may differ from them in using bivalve shells for camouflage instead of sponges. *Desmodromia* shares some pereopod characters with the shell-carrying genus *Hypoconcha* Guerin-Meneville, 1854, but these characters probably evolved independently.

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McLay (1998) recently described a new genus and species of the Dromiidae from the Timor Sea, northern Australia. *Alainodromia timorensis* McLay, 1998 was described from collections made almost one hundred years ago by the Royal Navy but which laid unrecognised in the collections of the British Museum. Here I describe two new species, belonging to another new genus, collected from the same general area during the 1930's but until now overlooked amongst the extensive collections of the Australian Museum, Sydney. The existence of this new material was alluded to by McLay (1993: 225).

This paper is the first of a series of papers on the dromiid crabs of Australia. The generic revision of the family by McLay (1993) changed many of the names of the Australian

fauna and created several new genera for species already known. Besides *Desmodromia* n.gen., the list of Australian genera includes *Dromidiopsis* Borradaile, 1900, *Lauridromia* McLay, 1993, *Dromia* Weber, 1795, *Haledromia* McLay, 1993, *Fultodromia* McLay, 1993, *Paradromia* Balss, 1921, *Petalomera* Stimpson, 1858, *Stimdromia* McLay, 1993, *Conchoecetes* Stimpson, 1858, *Austrodromidia* McLay, 1993, *Cryptodromiopsis* Borradaile, 1903, *Cryptodromia* Stimpson, 1858, *Epigodromia* McLay, 1993, *Epipedodromia* Andre, 1932 and *Alainodromia* McLay, 1998.

Measurements given are carapace width × carapace length (CW×CL) in millimetres, and indicate the maximum dimensions.