

MYSIDA TAXONOMY – MORE THAN DESCRIBING NEW SPECIES

Deprez Tim

Section Marine Biology, Department of Biology, University of Ghent
Krijgslaan 281 S8, B-9000 Ghent, Belgium
E-mail: tim.deprez@Ugent.be

The order Mysida is a group of about 1000 species belonging to the Peracarid Crustaceans. The taxonomy of this taxon is relatively well-studied although a structured global overview is lacking. Combining literature information and collection data through a webbased database system (NeMys) offers possibilities to comprehend biogeographical and morphological patterns within the order.

All possible literature from different points of view (taxonomical, biogeographical, ecological, ...) is analysed and data on morphology, ecology and geography is entered in the database. Collection data from collections all over the world are also added to the dataset. By creating summarising outputs from these huge databases it is possible to extract phylogenetic morphological patterns which may help to understand relations within the whole order. Bringing all the biogeographical records together on maps shows clearly distribution patterns of species and possible links with physical or biological environmental variables.

This study shows that making use of recent technologies enlarges the group of end-users of the taxonomical work. Not only taxonomists but also people working in many other domains involved with the Mysida can benefit from the work done. Taxonomy can only survive when taking the digital highway!