A GENERIC KEY TO THE PROTOZOEAN, MYSIS, AND POSTLARVAL STAGES OF THE LITTORAL PENAEIDAE OF THE NORTHWESTERN GULF OF MEXICO ¹

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ABSTRACT

An illustrated key presenting criteria for differentiating the stages and substages of Gulf of Mexico penaeid larvae (and post larvae) from comparable stages of the more common nonpenaeids is presented. A second key permits generic identification of penaeid protozoean, mysis, and postlarval stages. All genera are illustrated, and a table of important diagnostic characters is included.

Shrimp of the Family Penaeidae which support valuable commercial fisheries in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico are being studied comprehensively by fishery scientists at the Bureau of Commerical Fisheries Biological Laboratory in Galveston, Tex. To properly manage such fisheries, it is necessary to fully understand the dynamics of the shrimp populations upon which they depend. This capability requires, in turn, as complete a knowledge as possible of the life history of the species involved.

Studies of the early (planktonic) life history of the Gulf's commercially important shrimps have been hampered by difficulties encountered in distinguishing larvae of these species from those of lesser importance. Fortunately, there has been considerable research on the description and general systematics of larval and postlarval Penaeidae both in this country and abroad. As a result, all the littoral genera known to occur in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico have had representatives—although not necessarily of indigenous species—at least partially described. The principal problem, therefore, was one of consolidating all the available information and ascertaining what portions of it might help describe the local penaeid larvae. The intent of this paper is to present criteria that will aid in distinguishing larvae and postlarvae of the genus *Penaeus* Fabricius from those of *Parapenaeus* Smith, *Sicyonia* H. Milne Edwards, *Solenocera* Lucas, *Trachypeneus* Alcock, and *Xiphopeneus* Smith, the five other littoral genera found locally.

The material made available for examination during this study was collected systematically between March 1959 and March 1960 and during January to December 1961. From January to September 1961, plankton was sampled with a Gulf-V net to depths of 45 fathoms between Cameron, La., and Freeport, Tex. In September, the sampling program was enlarged to include the area between Morgan City, La., and the mouth of the Colorado River, Tex.

Although various larval stages of several species represented in this area had been recorded, there were no established criteria for differentiating the penaeid larvae. Consequently, as new or theretofore unrecognized penaeid larvae and postlarvae were found in the plankton samples, they were assigned a code number and a reference sketch of them was made. Through the use of descriptions

NOTE.-Approved for publication Sept. 17, 1964.

¹ Contribution No. 189, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries Biological Laboratory, Galveston, Tex.

taken from the literature, and by comparison with larvae reared in the laboratory from eggs of known parentage, planktonic larvae were assigned to genera. Subsequent examination of accumulated material revealed the presence of protozoeal, mysis, and postlarval characters which remained constant within each genus. These characters were, in turn, used as criteria to construct a key to local genera. A key based for the most part on planktonic rather than laboratory-reared material has its limitations, but the scarcity of information concerning penaeid larvae from this area nevertheless justifies its presentation at this time.

Despite the fact that Penaeus aztecus Ives (brown shrimp); P. duorarum Burkenroad (pink shrimp); Sicyonia brevirostris (Stimpson) and S. dorsalis (Kingsley) (rock shrimps); Trachypeneus similis (Smith); and Xiphopeneus krøyeri (Heller) (seabob) have been reared successfully through the nauplial stage under laboratory conditions, the nauplii were found to be so similar as to defy attempts to fit them into a key. Although differences in setation are minor or absent, the lack of a dorsal protuberance (fig. 1f), as well as larger relative size, serves to distinguish nauplii of the genus *Penaeus*. In genera other than *Penaeus*, this protuberance is present on the dorsal surface of the body above the insertion of the second antennae.

Within a given developmental stage (e.g., Nauplius II, Protozoea I, etc.), the size ranges of penaeid larvae as a whole are extremely variable, although in the northern Gulf, larvae of the genus Penaeus are generally larger than those belonging to comparable stages of other genera. Hudinaga (1942) found that the protozoeal stages of P. japonicus Bate exhibited intermolt growth, the occurrence of which may also be true for other stages as suggested for nauplii of Xiphopeneus krøyeri by Renfro and Cook (1963). The possibility also exists that larvae (and postlarvae) of the same species grow dissimilarly at different times of the year. Since the relative size at each stage overlaps considerably between, as well as within, the various genera, it should be used with discretion for purposes of identification.

While the number of substages in each penaeid larval stage described in the literature has been found to vary, the normal situation in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico—as ascertained from material in plankton collections—seems to be five nauplial, three protozoeal, and three mysis substages. Examples of departure from this sequence are provided by the larvae of *Sicyonia brevirostris* which, when reared in the laboratory, appeared to pass through four mysis substages, and by those of *Parapenaeus* sp. which, as determined from sample material, also have at least four. Such apparent anomalies suggest that descriptions of penaeid larvae obtained either from rearing experiments or plankton samples must be viewed with caution until more is known of the effects of environmental factors on early growth and morphology.

Table 1, in addition to presenting the principal diagnostic characters included in the following key, also furnishes other valuable characters for distinguishing larvae and postlarvae.

All illustrations are intended to clarify generic characteristics and do not represent particular species.

KEY TO STAGES AND SUBSTAGES OF PENAEID LARVAE AND EARLY POST-LARVAE

- 1 Body simple, unsegmented; three pairs of appendages arising from anterior portion of body, first unbranched, second and third branched; paired caudal spines arise from posterior end of body (Nauplius)______ 2 Not as above______ 7
- 2(1)Body pear shaped; pairs of caudal spines of equal length, extending straight posteriorly; lateral setae on appendages arise singly or in pairs; appendages lack spines or processes such as would be utilized for feeding purposes; carapace present only as a close-fitting rudiment in later stages (Penaeid nauplius fig. 1) 3 One or more of the following characters present: body elliptical; pairs of caudal spines of unequal length or extending medianly, crossing one another; lateral setae on appendages arising in clusters; spines or processes such as would be utilized for feeding purposes present; a welldeveloped or prominent carapace present Nonpenaeid nauplius

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FIGURE 1.—Penaeid nauplii: a, Nauplius I; b, Nauplius II; c, Nauplius III; d, Nauplius IV; e, and f, Nauplius V. PENEIDAE OF THE NORTHWESTERN GULF OF MEXICO

More than six setae on exopod of second antenna; usually three or more pairs of caudal spines; surface of body between insertion of caudal spines concave______5

- 6(5) Eight setae on exopod of second antenna; usually five, sometimes six, pairs of caudal spines; slight swelling at base of mandible; endopod of mandible never transparent; rudimentary ventral appendages posterior to third appendages

Nauplius IV (fig. 1d)

Nine setae on exopod of second antenna; usually seven, sometimes six, pairs of caudal spines; large subconical protuberance at base of mandible; endopod of mandible frequently transparent; ventral appendages prominent

Nauplius V (fig. 1e)

- 8(7) Carapace does not completely cover thorax; abdomen bifurcate posteriorly, with each furca bearing at least seven spines; biramous first and

Nonpenaeid protozoea

9(8) Eyes sessile, beneath carapace; pereiopods absent; abdomen unsegmented

Protozoea I (fig. 2a) Eyes stalked; perciopods present at least as small buds; abdomen segmented______ 10

10(9) Uropods not present externally, may be seen beneath cuticle; pereiopods present only as small buds; first five abdominal segments without dorsal spines_____ Protozoea II (fig. 2b) Uropods present externally; pereiopods rudimentary, but biramous and prominent; first five abdominal segments with dorsal spines

Protozoea III (fig. 2c)

11(7) Carapace closely fitting with a rostrum that extends anteriorly between the eyes; five pairs of biramous pereiopods present, with the exopods elongate and bearing numerous setae which make them appear brushlike; six-segmented abdomen followed by telson and biramous uropods; pleopods, if present, rudimentary and nonfunctional (Mysis)______12 Carapace closely fitting with a rostrum extending anteriorly between the eyes; five pairs of pereio-



FIGURE 2.—Penaeid protozoeae: a, Protozoea I; b, Protozoea II; c, Protozoea III; d, Protozoea III, carapace.

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FIGURE 3.—Penaeid myses: a, Mysis I; b, Mysis II; c, Mysis III.

mentary chelae; pleura of second abdominal segment overlap first; antennal blades absent; pleopods may not be present on all abdominal segments; telson broad and fan shaped or not notched medianly; uropods with statocyst; spines originate from posterior half of carapace or margins of carapace serrate, with no dorsal organ present______ Nonpenaeid mysis

- 14(13) Pleopods small and unjointed._ Mysis II (fig. 3b) Pleopods long and jointed... Mysis III (fig. 3c)
- 15(11) First three pairs of pereiopods chelate; pleura of first abdominal segment overlapping second; five pairs of functional pleopods present; gills covered by carapace; antennal blades present

Penaeid postlarva (fig. 4)

One or more of the following characters present: first three pairs of pereiopods not chelate; pleura of second abdominal segment overlapping first; less than five pairs of functional pleopods present; gills extending from beneath carapace; antennal blades absent______ Nonpenaeid postlarva



FIGURE 4.—Penaeid postlarva.

KEY TO GENERA OF PENAEID LARVAE AND POSTLARVAE

PROTOZOEAE

(Fig. 5)

² Starting with proximal seta, the number of lateral setae at each point of insertion is recorded.

- 5(4) Four long, terminal setae on endopod of second appendage______ Trachypeneus Four long and one short terminal setae on endopod of second appendage______ Xiphopeneus



FIGURE 5.—Penaeid protozoeae: a, Parapenaeus, Protozoea I; b, Penaeus, Protozoea I; c, Sicyonia, Protozoea I; d, Solenocera, Protozoea I; e, Solenocera, Protozoea II; f, Trachypeneus, Protozoea I; g, Xiphopeneus, Protozoea I.

(Fig. 6)

1

Carapace and abdomen with many spines; dorsal organ present on dorsal surface of carapace

Solenocera Carapace and abdomen without many spines;

dorsal organ absent_____2





FIGURE 6.—Penaeid myses: a, Parapenaeus, Mysis I; b, Penaeus, Mysis I; c, Sicyonia, Mysis I; d, Solenocera, Mysis I; e, Trachypeneus, Mysis I; f, Xiphopeneus, Mysis I.

- 2(1) Dorsomedian spines not present on first five abdominal segments______ Sicyonia Dorsomedian spine present on at least fourth and fifth abdominal segments______ 3
- 4(3) Lateral spine present on fifth abdominal segment; rostrum shorter than eye_____ Trachypeneus Lateral spine not present on fifth abdominal segment; rostrum as long as or shorter than eye Xiphopeneus
- 5(3) Dorsomedian spine on third abdominal segment elongate______ Parapenaeus Dorsomedian spine on third abdominal segment not elongate______ Penaeus

POSTLARVAE

(Fig. 7)

1	Total length 6.0 mm. or less ³ 3
2 (1)	Total length greater than 6.0 mm
2(1)	Total length 12.0 mm. to 25.0 mm 10
3(1)	No terminal spines on telson Sicyonia
•	Terminal spines present on telson4
4(3)	Medioterminal spines of telson longer than those
	adjacent to it Trachypeneus
	Medioterminal spine of telson equal in length
	to those adjacent to it Penaeus
5(2)	First abdominal segment with dorsal antero-
	median spine Sicyonia
	First abdominal segment without dorsal antero-
	median spine6
6(5)	Pterygostomian spine present; pleopods of fifth
	abdominal segment with exopods and endopods
	of equal length7
	Pterygostomian spine absent; pleopods of fifth
	abdominal segment with endopods inferior to
= (0)	exopods8
7(6)	Antennules round; no cervical sulcus on carapace; rostrum curved Parapenaeus
	Antennules flattened; well-defined cervical sulcus
	present on carapace; rostrum straight_ Solenocera
8(5)	Antennal spine absent or minute; if present,
0(0)	subrostral teeth also present Penaeus
	Antennal spine very prominent; no subrostral
	teeth9
9(8)	Rostrum shorter than eye Trachypeneus
0(0)	Rostrum longer than eye
10(2)	Rostrum usually with ventral teeth and shallowly
\ - <i>\</i>	compressed Penaeus
	Rostrum without ventral teeth and broadly
	compressed 11
11(10)	Pterygostomian spine present 12
	Pterygostomian spine absent 13

³ Early Niphopeneus postlarvae probably fall in the <6.0-mm. category, but none in this size range was noted during the study.

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Rostrum shorter than eye_____ 14

14(13) First abdominal segment with anteromedian spine on dorsal surface; sixth abdominal segment short______ Sicyonia First abdominal segment without anteromedian spine on dorsal surface; sixth abdominal segment elongate_____ Trachypeneus



FIGURE 7.—Penaeid postlarvae: a, Parapenaeus postlarva, 8.0 mm.; b, Penaeus postlarva, 6.0 mm.; c, Penaeus postlarva, 15.0 mm.; d, Sicyonia postlarva, 5.0 mm.; e, Sicyonia postlarva, 14.0 mm.; f, Solenocera postlarva, 7.0 mm.; g, Trachypeneus postlarva, 6.0 mm.; h, Trachypeneus postlarva, 10.0 mm.; i, Trachypeneus postlarva, 25.0 mm.; j, Xiphopeneus postlarva, 6.0 mm.; k, Xiphopeneus postlarva, 7.5 mm.; m, Xiphopeneus postlarva, 12.0 mm.; l, Tip of telson.

Stage and structure	Parapenaeus	Penaeus	Sicyonia	Solenocera	Trachypeneus	Xiphopeneus			
PROTOZOEAE-GENERAL									
Relative lengths of 1st and 2d appendages.	Approximately equal.	Approximately equal.	First about twice as long as	Approximately equal.	First about 1½ as long as second.	First about 1½ as long as second.			
Spine on labrum Telson	Small Narrow and deeply notched.	Small Medium width and notch.	second. Absent Medium width and notch	Very long Wide and shal- lowly notched.	Small Medium width and notch.	Small. Medium width and notch.			
Dorsal surface of carapace	Smooth	Smooth	Small hump	Spines and dorsal	Small hump	Small hump.			
Setation of endopod of second appendage.	Variable	1+1+2 lateral	1+2+3 lateral	organ. $2+2+3$ lateral	2+2 lateral, 4 terminal.	2+2 lateral, 5 terminal.			
PROTOZOEAE I									
Projection on front of	Pointed	Round	Round	Pointed	Round	Round.			
carapace. Third maxilliped	Small, biramous, no setae.	Absent or present as small uni-	Small, biramous, no setae.	Small, biramous, with setae.	Small, biramous, with setae.	Small, biramous, with setae.			
Spines on carapace	None	ramous bud. None	None	Four pairs	None	None.			
PROTOZOEAE II									
Rostrum Supraorbital spines	Long Two pairs	Long One pair	Short Absent	Long One pair with many branches.	Long Absent	Long. Absent.			
PROTOZOEAE III									
Rostrum Supraorbital spines Dorsomedian spines of abdomen. Posterolateral spines of abdomen. Ventrolateral spine on sixth	Long One pair Present on six segments. Present on fourth, fifth, and sixth segments. One pair	Long One pair Present on first five segments. Present on fifth and sixth segments. One pair	Short Absent Present on first five segments. Present on fifth segment. One pair	Long One pair Present on first five segments. Present on sixth segment One pair	Long Absent Present on first five segments. Present on fifth and sixth segments. Two pairs	Long. Absent. Present on first five segments. Present on fifth and sixth segments. Two pairs.			
segment.									
Mysis									
Rostrum	Elongate, toothed, broadened at base.	Elongate, smooth, not broadened at base.	Short, toothed, not broadened at base.	Elongate, toothed, not broadened at base.	Elongate, toothed, not broadened at base.	Elongate, toothed not broadened at base.			
Superaorbital spine Hepatic spine	Present Present	Present	Present Absent	Present Present	Present Absent	Present. Absent.			
Ventromedian spines of abdomen.	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent.			
abdomen. Posterolateral spines of abdomen.	Present on fifth and sixth seg- ments.	Present on fifth and sixth seg- ments.	Absent	Present on first five segments.	Present on fifth segment.	Absent.			

TABLE 1.—Characters of diagnostic importance in distinguishing genera during the early life history stages of the littoral Penaeidae occurring along the northern Gulf coast—Continued

Stage and structure	Parapenaeus	Penaeus	Sicyonia	Solenocera	Trachypeneus	Xiphopeneus
PROTOZOEAE—Continued						
Mysis-Continued					,	
Dorsomedian spines of abdomen.	Present on third, fourth, fifth, and sixth seg- ments. Spine of third seg- ment elongate.	Present on third, fourth, fifth, and sixth seg- ments.	Present on sixth segment only.	Present on six segments.	Present on fourth, fifth, and sixth segments.	Present on fourth, fifth, and sixth segments.
POSTLARVAE						
First to 6.0-MM. POSTLARVAE: Rostrum	[First postlarva begins at about 8.0 mm.]	Straight	Curved	[First postlarva begins at about 7.0 mm.]	Curved	None examined.
Anteromedian spine on		Absent	Present		Present	
first abdominal segment. Sixth abdominal segment		Elongate	Short		Elongate	
6.0- то 12.0-мм. Post-						
LARVAE: Anteromedian spine of	Absent	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent.
first abdominal segment. Length of pleopods	All equal	All equal	Fifth pleopod shorter than first.	Fifth pleopod shorter than first.	All equal	All equal.
Relative lengths of endopod and exopod of fifth pelopod.	Approximately equal.	Endopod absent or inferior.	Endopod absent	Approximately equal.	Endopod inferior	Endopod inferior, exopod elongate
Ptervgostomian spine	Present	Absent Absent	Absent Present	Present Present	Absent	Absent. Present.
Antennal spine	Round	Round	Round	Flattened	Present Round	Round.
Sulcae of carapace	Absent	Absent	Absent	Cervical sulcus	Absent	Branchio-cardiac sulcus.
Rostrum Sixth abdominal segment	Curved, elongate Elongate, straight_	Straight, elongate Elongate, straight_	Straight, short Short, straight	Straight, short Medium, curved ventrally.	Curved, short Medium, straight	Curved, elongate. Medium, straight.
12.0- то 25.0-мм. Розт- Larvae:			i			
Rostrum	Curved, elongate, subrostral teeth absent.	Curved, elongate, subrostral teeth present.	Straight, short, subrostral teeth absent.	Straight, medium, subrostral teeth absent.	Curved, medium, subrostral teeth absent.	Curved, elongate, subrostral teeth absent.
Pterygostomian spine	Present	Absent	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent.
Antennules Sulcae of carapace	RoundAbsent	RoundAbsent	Round Absent	Flattened Cervical sulcus	Round Absent	Round. Branchio-cardiac
Sixth abdominal segment	Elongate, straight_	Elongate, straight_	Short, straight	Medium, curved	Medium, straight	sulcus. Medium, straight.
Anteromedian spine on first abdominal segment.	Absent	Absent	Present	ventrally. Absent	Absent	Absent.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Ray S. Wheeler and Robert F. Temple offered many helpful suggestions during the course of this study, and Daniel Patlan assisted with the drawings.

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