

**GEORGEPLAX, NEW GENUS FOR  
LITOCHEIRA GLABRA BAKER, 1906  
(CRUSTACEA: DECAPODA: BRACHYURA)**

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SUMMARY

*Georgeoplax* new genus is proposed for *Litoecheira glabra* Baker, 1906, as the shape of the male first pleopod is different from that of *Litoecheira bispinosa* Kinahan, 1856. Both genera share the primitively catometopan configuration of the male reproductive system with coxal genital openings and the penis situated in a groove between the seventh and eighth sternites, as well as the general torsion of the basal part of the first male pleopod as shown by the direction of the sperm channel. For these reasons both genera are monotypic.

INTRODUCTION

*Litoecheira glabra* was first described by W.H. Baker (1906) in his "Notes on South Australian Crustacea" from a female specimen dredged in St Vincent's Gulf (South Australia). Baker placed his species in the genus *Litoecheira*, as he found close resemblance to its type-species *L. bispinosa*. He pointed out the two main differences in gross morphology between *L. bispinosa* and *L. glabra*: the former has a well-developed spine on the antero-lateral borders of the carapace behind the exorbital corner and has a double-edged front, while the latter has an indentate antero-lateral border of the carapace and a simple front.

Baker's specimen remained the only one known for a very long time. Hale (1927: 170, 171) mentioned the species in both his key and the current text, but had only the type before him. He suggested that *glabra* might be merely a variety of *L. bispinosa*. Griffin & Yaldwyn (1971: 57) repeated the differences between *L. bispinosa* and *L. glabra*, but had no material of the latter. Türkay (1975) revised the genus *Litoecheira*, which was very heterogenous, and excluded all species but *L. bispinosa* and *L. glabra*. The latter was provisionally left in the same genus, because there was no material of it available, and a superficial similarity could be concluded from Baker's original description and figure. As the holotype was a female no better judgement would have resulted from its examination.

Recently a good series of *L. glabra* including male specimens was dredged between Rottnest Island and Fremantle (Western Australia) and made available for study by R.W. George of the Western Australian Museum. The present study is based on this material and the holotype, which was borrowed from the South Australian Museum (SAM). The recently collected specimens are deposited in the Western Australian Museum (WAM) and a pair has been deposited in the Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt (SMF).

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

**Georgeoplax n. gen.**

**Type species:** *Litoecheira glabra* Baker, 1906 (by monotypy).

**Diagnosis.** Carapace glabrous, front simple-edged, antero-lateral borders indentate. Male genital opening coxal, penis situated in a groove. First male pleopod twisted with sperm channel beginning dorsally and ending in the ventrally situated distal opening; distal end of the pleopod flattened and provided with broad, scale-like structures. Second male pleopod distinctly shorter than first.