

**Two New Species of *Exampithoe* Barnard, 1925,  
Subgenus *Melanesius* Ledoyer, 1984,  
from Southern Australia  
(Crustacea: Amphipoda: Ampithoidae)**

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**ABSTRACT.** *Exampithoe (Melanesius) compressa* n.sp. and *E. (M.) halei* n.sp. are described from shallow water in southern Australia. The distinctive compressed body shape sets the former species apart from other *Exampithoe*. *Exampithoe (M.) halei* is of similar body shape as the two previously known species in *Melanesius*, viz. *E. (M.) cooki* and *E. (M.) kutti*, but can be immediately distinguished from them by the angular cutting edge of its gnathopods 1 and 2, and by its vestigial mandibular molar.

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Until recently Australian marine ampithoid amphipods had received little attention, although members of the family constitute a diverse and commonly occurring element of the fauna in algal communities and sea-grass beds of subtropical and temperate parts of Australia.

Poore & Lowry (1997) reviewed the status and validity of species reported from Australia, presented diagnoses of all known genera in the Ampithoidae, and described five new ampithoid species, including *Exampithoe kutti* Poore & Lowry, 1997, first Australian record of the genus.

Prior to Poore & Lowry (1997), three species of *Exampithoe* had been described: *E. natalensis* Barnard, 1925 (type-species) from South Africa, *E. gracilipes*

Ledoyer, 1984 and *E. cooki* Ledoyer, 1984 both from New Caledonia. Ledoyer (1984) placed *E. cooki* in a new subgenus *Melanesius* based on its lacking a mandibular palp. Poore & Lowry (1997) referred their new species, *E. kutti*, to *Melanesius*.

In the present study two new species of *Exampithoe (Melanesius)* from the south coast of Australia are described. *Exampithoe (Melanesius) halei* n.sp. is similar to *E. (M.) kutti*, while *E. (M.) compressa* n.sp. exhibits an unusual body form.

Unless otherwise stated, left side appendages are illustrated. The length of animals was measured from the mid-dorsal front margin of the cephalon along the dorsal curvature to the apex of the telson.