

COMPILATION OF MOLECULAR DATA FOR THE PHYLOGENY OF THE GENUS AUSTROPOTAMOBIUS: ONE SPECIES OR SEVERAL?



The phylogenetic relationships of the genus *Austropotamobius* were reviewed by the compilation of two recent genetic studies based on the partial nucleotide sequence of the mitochondrial RNA 16S gene. The results showed a well-resolved phylogeny revealing four distinct clades: A1, A2, A3 and B, supported by high bootstrap values. The clades A (including A1, A2, A3) and B are separated by a high genetic divergence (5%). In accordance with morphological and nuclear data, two species could be defined: *A. italicus* and *A. pallipes*, respectively. The average of genetic divergence within the major group A and B was $2.1\% \pm 1.2$ and $0.9\% \pm 0.6$ respectively. Three clades A1, A2 and A3 correspond mainly to crayfish sampled from Austria-Switzerland, South of Balkans and Italy-Spain respectively. On the basis of morphological, genetic and distribution data, a new systematic - based on two species *A. pallipes* and *A. italicus* with 3 subspecies *A. i. carinthiacus*, *A. i. carsicus* and *A. i. italicus* - could be proposed for the white-clawed crayfish species complex. We rejected the specific status of *A. berndhauseri* and *A. i. lusitanicus* given to the Swiss and Spanish

crayfish respectively.

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Obtenir le document : EDP Sciences

Mots clés : *Austropotamobius*, species complex, phylogeny, 16S RNA, *Austropotamobius*, complexe d'espèces, phylogénie, ARN 16S

Thème (issu du Text Mining) : SCIENCES EXACTES SCIENCES HUMAINES

Date : 2008-05-01

Format : text/xml

Source : <https://doi.org/10.1051/kmae:2002058>

Langue : Anglais

Télécharger les documents : <https://www.kmae-journal.org/10.1051/kmae:2002058/pdf>

Permalien : <https://www.documentation.eauetbiodiversite.fr/notice/compilation-of-molecular-data-for-the-phylogeny-of-the-genus-austropotamobius-one-species-or-several0>

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