

THE TERMINAL REGION OF THE MALE GENITAL TRACT IN CEPHALOPOD SYSTEMATICS: A REVISED TERMINOLOGY, AND AN ILLUSTRATION OF INTRAGENERIC VARIATION WITHIN ONE GENUS OF OCTOPUS

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Characterizing cephalopod genera has long proved a difficult task: the genus *Octopus* Cuvier, for example, currently includes 112 species (e.g. SWEENEY & ROPER, 1998) but included among these are members of probably at least five other genera, which can be distinguished (in part at least) by the morphology of the male genital tract. However, although it is widely accepted that the morphology of the terminal region of the male genital tract is a species-specific characteristic, this region has rarely been described in sufficient detail to clarify the distinctions, and in systematic descriptions is typically included as a small part of a standard diagram illustrating the entire dissected male reproductive system.

Current work on redescrptions of octopus species in the Indo-Pacific has included a morphological study of the terminal region of the male reproductive tract in several different genera of the recent Octopodidae. A revised terminology for the terminal structures of the male reproductive tract is proposed, including several previously undescribed anatomical features. Work on 8 species within one particular genus (containing a total of 15 species) is the main focus of this presentation, with examples drawn from other, poorly known genera and one new genus.

Reference

SWEENEY, M.J., and ROPER, C.F.E., 1998: Classification, type localities, and type repositories of recent Cephalopoda. – *Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology*, 586 (II), 561-599.