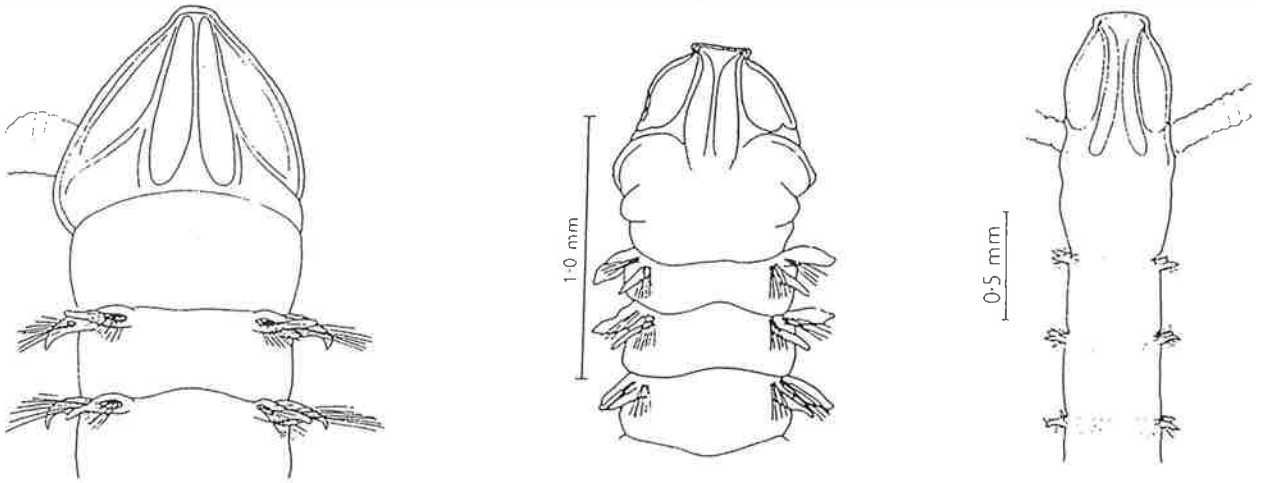
MAGELONIDAE

The Magelonidae are a small group of spioniform polychaetes. Note that the tentacular 'palps' arise ventrally rather than dorsally as in spionids. They further differ in being densely papillate The prostomium in magelonids is very distinctive taking the form of a flattened spade-like plate with two curved longitudinal ridges.

IMPORTANT TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS

Prostomium — The shape of the prostomium is a useful feature. The relative proportions width to length, and presence, absence or development of 'frontal horns' should all be considered.



Parapodia - The shape and sizes of the thoracic parapodial lamellae are often characteristic. Those of setiger 9 should be examined relative to the others as they can differ markedly. Similarly the abdominal lamellae can be important. In this latter case, the presence of folded lateral pouches on certain setigers may be also species specific.

Setae - In the thorax the setae are generally sheathed capillaries, however, some species possess modified setae on setiger 9 (e.g. the spatulate setae in *M. mirabilis*). Care should be taken here since juveniles have very few of these, if at all.

The abdominal setae in all the European species are all bidentate (*M. minuta*) or tridentate (remaining species) hooks.

Colour - Many magelonids have glandular (fluorescent?) areas that stain bright red using Rose Bengal. Of more significance in current keys is the presence or absence of darker pigmentation over several posterior thoracic setigers. In my experience this character should be used with caution as there seems to be considerable intraspecific variation.

There are 7 species in European waters. The key presented below is based primarily on that of Glémarec (1966), but takes into account the two species confused under the name "*Magelona mirabilis* (JOHNSTON, 1865)" [=European "*Magelona papillicornis* "]. *Magelona papillicornis* is a South American species and was re-described by Jones (1977). It is not currently possible to say which of the two species in European waters is the 'real' *M. mirabilis* .

1.Setiger 9 with spatulate setae.....*"M. mirabilis"*.....2
-- Setae of setiger 9 not modified, similar to those of setigers 1-8.....3
2. Thoracic notopodial lamellae often with serrated upper edge; superior notopodial cirrus present on posterior thoracic setigers. Lateral pouches present between setigers 10 and 11.....FORM A
--.Thoracic notopodial lamellae not serrated; superior notopodial cirrus absent on all thoracic setigers. No lateral pouches between setigers 10 and 11.....FORM B
3. Abdominal hooks bidentate (single conspicuous tooth above main fang).....*M. minuta* ELIASON, 1962
-- Abdominal hooks tridentate (two teeth side by side above main fang).....4
4. Abdominal notopodial lamellae foliaceous, much larger than neuropodial lamellae.....*M. alleni* WILSON, 1958
-- Abdominal notopodial and neuropodial lamellae of equal size.....5
5. Anterior body with distinct pigmented band.....*M. equilamellae* HARMELIN,1964
-- Body of uniform colour.....6
6. Prostomium longer than wide, with weakly developed frontal horns. Thoracic notopodial lamellae digitiform.....*M. filiformis* WILSON, 1959
-- Prostomium wider than long, with strongly developed frontal horns. Thoracic notopodial lamellae foliaceous.....*M. wilsoni* GLÉMAREC, 1966

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