

# *Ampithoe valida*

Mottled amphipod of the Atlantic

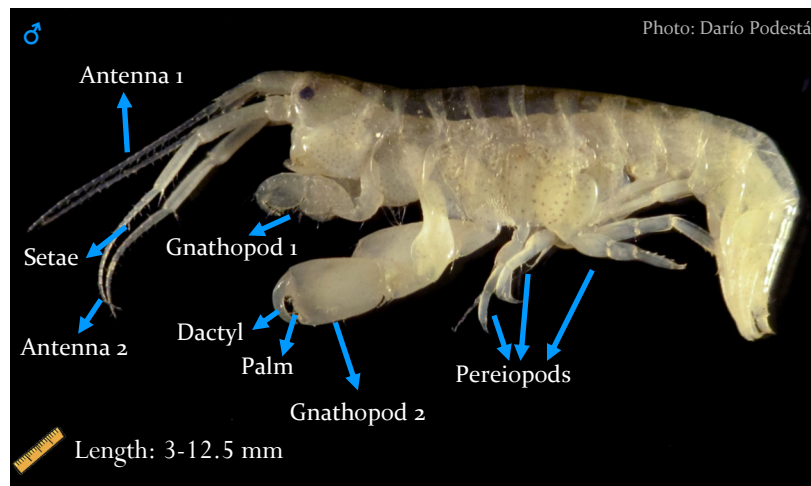


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## MARINE-COASTAL EXOTIC SPECIES GUIDE FOR ARGENTINA

### DESCRIPTION

- Antero-posterior elongated body, two pairs of antennae and gnathopods, and 5 pairs of pereopods.
- Antenna 1 and 2 similar in size, with few setae.
- Adult males with gnathopod 2 robust, with transverse palm and curved dactyl. Female gnathopod 1 and 2 similar, with oblique palm.
- Urosomites and telson short.
- Body green to brown, covered by numerous black chromatophores (little spots, see photo below).



### HABITAT

Intertidal and subtidal species, commonly found in tropical, subtropical and temperate regions. It builds tubes as shelters adhering small particles with mucous threads on algae, sea worms, mussels and coastal plants. Also, it can be found as part of the biofouling community, inhabiting fixed (docks and breakwaters) and floating artificial structures (buoys).

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### SIMILAR SPECIES

- *Melita palmata*: Exotic. Antenna 1 and 2 with more setae than *A. valida*. Males with dactyl overlapped to the external part of the gnathopod 2, not resting against the palm like in *A. valida*.

### INVASIVE STATUS

*Ampithoe valida* is native to the Northwestern Atlantic. In Argentina, it is found abundantly from Santa Clara del Mar (37°S) in Buenos Aires province, to Playa Cangrejales (43°S), in Chubut. It is transported in ballast water and as ship fouling around the world.



Figure: *Melita palmata* (♀)  
Diagram: Gnathopod 2 (♂)<sup>(1)</sup>.

### IMPACT ON NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Its impact on native communities is unknown, but in several environments of Argentina *A. valida* is one of the most abundant organisms.

### CONTACT US

This guide has been developed by the Grupo de Ecología en Ambientes Costeros (GEAC), from CENPAT (CONICET). If you find this species outside the reported areas, please contact us and let us know the date, locality, approximate number of individuals and, if possible, send us a picture:

 [especiesexoticasarg@gmail.com](mailto:especiesexoticasarg@gmail.com)



Grupo de Ecología en Ambientes Costeros (GEAC)

1. Alonso GM. 2004. Publicaciones Especiales INIDEP, Mar del Plata, p 169–178.