

RANINIDEA.

Raniniens, Milne-Edwards, Hist. Nat. des Crust, t. ii. p. 190, 1837.

Raninoidea, De Haan, Crust. Japon., p. 136, 1850.

Raninidea, Dana, U.S. Explor. Exped., vol. xiii., Crust., part i. p. 400, 1852.

Carapace ovato-oblong, smooth, the regions not defined; frontal margin of variable width. Ambulatory limbs with broad flattened dactyli; the last pair of small size and subdorsal in position. Abdomen short, semi-extended, not folded under the thorax, with four pairs of appendages in the female. Sterna of the thoracic legs fused to form a ventral shield which is wide anteriorly. External maxillipedes moderately elongate. Eyes placed in well-marked orbits; antennules not furnished with special fossæ, and placed to a certain extent behind the antennæ. Vasa deferentia protruded in the males.

There can be no doubt that the Raninidea have many characters in common with the Brachyura, indeed Dr. Boas places them without any hesitation in the latter section. According to this observer, the position of the female genital openings is entirely due to the extreme narrowing of the thoracic sterna which has taken place. In many of their external features they show a decided resemblance to the Oxystomatous Brachyura.

The members of this small and distinct group form a single family. Little appears to be known as to their habits, but according to Adams and White they are swimming Crustacea inhabiting deep pools of coral ledges, and moving by rapid jerks like the *Galatheæ*. It seems probable, however, that some of them at least burrow in sand or mud like the Hippidea, to which they bear some resemblance in the structure of the legs. They are almost entirely confined to the tropics, only a few occurring in the warmer temperate seas, where they live in shallow and moderately deep water, apparently not venturing beyond a depth of 300 fathoms.

The genera may be grouped as follows:—

I. External maxillipedes with the ischium longer than the merus—

Ranina, Lamarck.

Raninoides, M.-Edw.

Notopus, De Haan.

Notopoides, n. gen.

Zanclifer, n. gen.

Cosmonotus, Adams and White (?).

Raninops, A. M.-Edw. (?).

II. External maxillipedes with the ischium shorter than the merus.

Ranilia, M.-Edw.

Lyreidus, De Haan.