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TITLE: The supergiant amphipod *Alicella gigantea* (Crustacea: Alicellidae) from hadal depths in the Kermadec Trench, SW Pacific Ocean

AUTHOR: ['Alan J. Jamieson', 'Nichola C. Lacey', 'Anne?Nina Lörz', 'Ashley A. Rowden', 'Stuart B. Piertney']

ABSTRACT:

Here we provide the first record of the 'supergiant' amphipod *Alicella gigantea* Chevreux, 1899 (Alicellidae) from the Southern Hemisphere, and extend the known bathymetric range by over 1000 m to 7000 m. An estimated nine individuals were observed across 1500 photographs taken in situ by baited camera at 6979 m in the Kermadec Trench, SW Pacific Ocean. Nine specimens, ranging in length from 102 to 290 mm were recovered by baited trap at depths of 6265 m and 7000 m. Mitochondrial and nuclear DNA sequences obtained indicate a cosmopolitan distribution for the species. Data and observations from the study are used to discuss the reason for gigantism in this species, and its apparently disjunct geographical distribution.

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