

CLADISTICS OF *OSTRINCOLA* (COPEPODA), A GENUS OF PESTS IN
CLAM CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Ostrincola is a genus of mycolid copepods known to live exclusively in the mantle cavities of marine bivalves. Up to the present, nine species of *Ostrincola* are known from 27 species of bivalves. A cladistic analysis of *Ostrincola* was conducted by using the computer program HENNIG86. Six shortest (most parsimonious) trees were obtained with a consistency index of 0.75 and a retention index of 0.76. The results of this analysis show that *Ostrincola portonouiensis* Reddiah, 1962 is the sister taxon of *Ostrincola koe* Tanaka, 1961. Inasmuch as *O. koe* is known to cause mass mortalities of hard clams cultured in the Far East, *O. portonouiensis*, being the closest ally of the most virulent species, is deemed to be a potential pest to clam farming in India and Southeast Asia.