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Biology of Mediterranean and Caribbean Thalassinidea

Among burrowing organisms, the most complex and extensive burrow systems are found within the Thalassinidea. This group of decapods comprises some 520+ species in currently 11 families and 80+ genera. They live predominantly in very shallow waters, where they often occur in high densities and influence the whole sedimentology and geochemistry of the seabed.

In this contribution I present results of studies on the biology of several Mediterranean (*Upogebia pusilla*, *U. tipica*, *Callianassa tyrrhena*, *C. candida*, *Jaxea nocturna*) and Caribbean (*Axiopsis serratifrons*, *Neocallichirus grandimana*, *Glypturus acanthochirus*, *Corallianassa longiventris*) species.

Of special interest is the occurrence of debris-filled chambers in the burrows of two callianassid species, *Callianassa tyrrhena* and *Corallianassa longiventris*. The possible role of this introduced plant material for the nutrition of the shrimps is discussed.