

## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Orchestia gammarellus*

English name: –	Scientific name: <i>Orchestia gammarellus</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Malacostraca Order: Amphipoda Family: Talitridae	Species authority: Pallas, 1766	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: <i>Orchestia gammarella</i> Pallas, 1766	Generation length: 1–2 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes):	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes):	
IUCN Criteria: –	<b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b>	<b>DD Data Deficient</b>
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: Tourism (cleaning of beaches; G05.05), Construction (J02.12.01)	Habitats Directive: –	
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/V (Near threatened, incl. North Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/–		

**Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region**

*Orchestia gammarellus* is a rare amphipod which lives in a potentially deteriorated habitat in the southern and western Baltic Sea. The only recent finding is from Germany. The Swedish data are entirely from the 1920s and 1930s but on the other hand the species has not necessarily been looked for more recently.

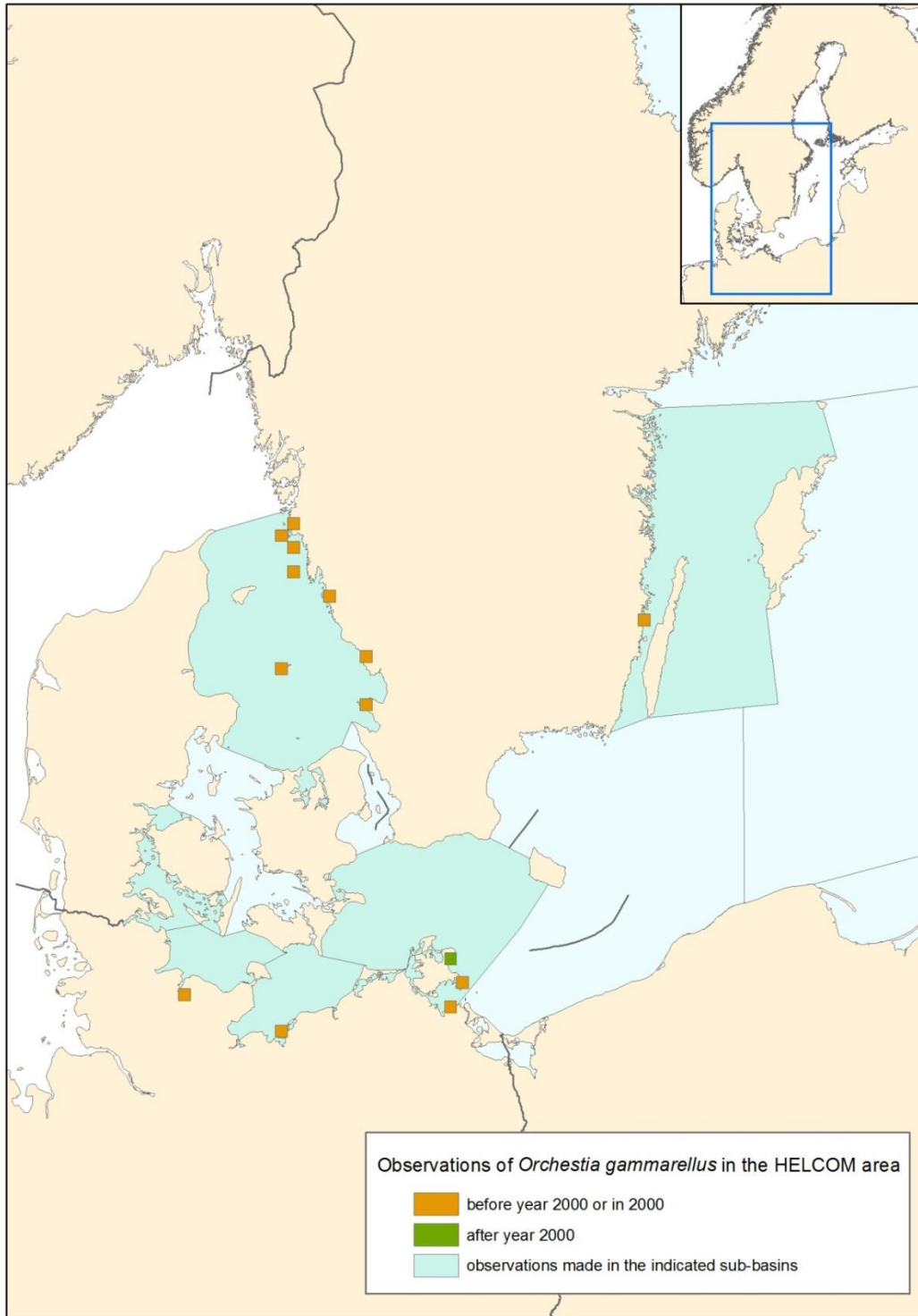
Outside the HELCOM area the species is transatlantic. The species is widespread and frequently recorded on European coasts from western Norway and Iceland to Mediterranean and Black Sea; also South-West Africa.

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### Distribution map

The georeferenced records of species compiled from Persson (1999) and from the databases of the Swedish Species Information Centre (Artportalen) and the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research (IOW).



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### Habitat and Ecology

The species has a wide habitat range from shallow water and intertidal marine and estuarine areas, to damp semi terrestrial habitats well away from water. It can most frequently be found beneath decaying debris around the high water mark on shingle shores. In the daytime it stays in holes/caves, and comes to feed on shoreline debris in night-time.

### Description of major threats

The species may have suffered from various forms of coastal exploitation which have destroyed or deteriorated its habitats. As it is dependent on the decaying algae on shores, it suffers also from cleaning of beaches. The main habitat of the species, exposed shingle shores, are nowadays usually fenced by coastal constructions like spur dykes to avoid land damage.

### Assessment justification

The only recent finding for the species is from Germany. The Swedish data is entirely from the 1920s and 1930s but on the other hand the species has not necessarily been looked for more recently. There is also no Swedish expert opinion available. The current distribution is not known and it is not possible to estimate the decline in the population size. The species lives in a potentially deteriorated habitat and population declines are suspected. The species is categorized as Data Deficient (DD) in the HELCOM area.

### Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

It is necessary to improve the knowledge of the biology of the species and of the pressures that have affected the population before any specific recommendations can be given.

### Common names

Denmark: mørk sandhopper, Estonia: –, Finland: –, Germany: –, Latvia: –, Lithuania: –, Poland: –, Russia: –, Sweden: –

### References

- Henzler, C. M., Ingólfsson A. 2008. The biogeography of the beachflea, *Orchestia gammarellus* (Crustacea, Amphipoda, Talitridae), in the North Atlantic with special reference to Iceland: a morphometric and genetic study. *Zoologica Scripta*, Vol. 37, Issue 1, pages 57–70, January 2008  
IOW database. Observational data from the database of the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research. Marine Species Identification Portal. Available at [http://species-identification.org/species.php?species\\_group=crustacea&id=479](http://species-identification.org/species.php?species_group=crustacea&id=479)
- Persson, L.E. 1999. Growth and reproduction in two brackish water populations of *Orchestia gammarellus* (Amphipoda: Talitridae) in the Baltic Sea. *Journal of Crustacean Biology* 19: 53–59.
- Rachor, E., Bönsch, R., Boos, K., Gosselck, F., Grotjahn, M., Günther, C.-P., Gusky, M., Gutow, L., Heiber, W., Jantschik, P., Krieg, H.-J., Krone, R., Nehmer, P., Reichert, K., Reiss, H., Schröder, A., Witt, J. & Zettler, M. L. 2012. Rote Liste und Artenliste der bodenlebenden wirbellosen Meerestiere. Vierte Fassung, Stand Dezember 2007, einzelne Aktualisierungen bis 2012. *Naturschutz und Biologische Vielfalt* 70(2). Bundesamt für Naturschutz.
- Swedish Species Gateway. Swedish Species Information Centre and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Available at [www.artportalen.se](http://www.artportalen.se).
- World Register of Marine Species WoRMS. Available at <http://www.marinespecies.org/aphia.php?p=taxdetails&id=103202>.