6. A REVISION OF THE ASTERINID GENUS
NEPANTHIA GRAY, 1840
(ECHINODERMATA: ASTEROIDEA), WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF
THREE NEW SPECIES

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SUMMARY
The genus Nepanthia Gray, 1840 is revised and eight species recognised, including three new species, one from New South Wales, one from north of Sabah, Borneo and one from the Sulu Sea, Philippines. Fisher’s opinion that Parasterina erassa should be referred to Nepanthia is supported and the species is here included. Variation in the species N. belcheri (Perrier) is discussed and the species N. brevis (Perrier), N. suffaricinata Sladen, N. joubini Koehler, N. variabils H. L. Clark and N. magnispina H. L. Clark are considered conspecific with it. A key is given for the eight species recognised.

INTRODUCTION
Gray (1840; 1866), described the genus Nepanthia, in the family Pentacerotidae, for two species N. tessellata (from an unknown locality) and N. maculata (From Migupou, Philippine Islands).

Müller and Troschel (1842) referred these species to Chaetaster which they described a few months prior to Gray’s Nepanthia in 1840, considering Gray’s species to be congeneric with C. subulata (Lamarck) (type-species of Chaetaster by monotopy).

Perrier (1875), placed Chaetaster in the family Astropectinidae, synonymising Nepanthia tessellata with C. longipes (Retzius). He considered Nepanthia to be a subgenus of Asterina (family Asterinidae; in which family it has since remained) recognising the validity of A. (N.) maculata, the type-specimen of which he examined. He described two new species A. (N.) belcheri and A. (N.) brevis. This action leaves N. maculata as type species of Nepanthia, failing Gray’s nomination of a type-species from either of the two he included in his genus.

Viguier (1878), placed Chaetaster in the family Linkiadae of his subclass of asteroids (Stellérides) “Astéries adambulacraires” (characterised by the predominence of the adambular plates in the mouth ring), listing Nepanthia as a synonym of Chaetaster. He did not discuss the genus or its species.

Perrier (1884), in his remarkable classification of asteroids, based on the form of the pedicellariae, without comment listed Nepanthia in the family Asterinidae, Order “Stelléridae Spinulosae” (p. 164, referred to as Echinulatae in subsequent pages).

Sladen (1889), considered the skeletal features of the species of Nepanthia to be sufficiently distinctive to “warrant the retention of Nepanthia as an independent genus”, in the family Asterinidae (subfamily Asterininae) of the new order Phanerozoania.

Gray, 1847 described Patria? crassa from Western Australia in a third group of species (P. ocellifera, P. obtusa and P. ? crassa) of his genus Patria. These were characterised by having 5