

# SAERI NEWS

## Research Cruise (JR15003)- Ascension Island

### Day 5 – Sample processing

Chester Sands

A lot has been happening in the three days since we disembarked from the RRS James Clark Ross. While images of the sea floor are being analysed, I have been sorting, photographing and identifying the specimens caught in the trawls. When I say “Identifying” what I mean is, getting an idea of what each animal is so that we can find the appropriate taxonomist to send the specific sample to. The most abundant animal in our catch was a shrimp with exceedingly long legs that we believe to be *Nematocarcinus gracilipes*.



Brachiopod – Lantern Shell

In fact, there were five shrimp species collected of which we have been able to assign provisional species names to four. A striking deep sea giant mysid – very much like a shrimp – was also collected and provisionally identified as *Gnathophausia zoea*.



*Gnathophausia sp*

Also amongst the collection were a variety of soft corals, a vibrant orange brittle star, tiny spider crabs, strange worms called sipunculans, delicate feather stars, and large pencil urchins with goose barnacles growing on their spines and the amphipod species used to model the “Alien” monster of Ridley Scott. We have already started sending specimens off to some keen taxonomists in Spain, Australia, Germany, France and Belgium. It may take many weeks for the formal IDs to come in as thorough taxonomic identification is a very precise science bordering on “art”.



*Hyperliidae (salp symbiont)*