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PhD project: Phyllodocida (Annelida, Polychaeta) of the North East Atlantic as model for the investigation of cryptic species

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Summary: The discovery of cryptic species has grown exponentially over the past decades. Within marine benthic invertebrates, polychaetes in particular, are a phenotypically and genotypically diverse group making it a good model for the study of cryptic lineages. As a complement to the morphological work, molecular approaches have been efficient in the unravelling of latent biodiversity, clarifying taxonomic ambiguities and detecting potential cryptic evidence. Using both morphological and molecular data and focusing on the polychaete order Phyllodocida, mainly from Portugal and the NE Atlantic waters, we aim to investigate comprehensively cryptic species in this group while addressing several questions concerning cryptic diversity. In addition to the investigation of geographical and taxonomic patterns of cryptic species incidence in Phyllodocida, this study will provide a comprehensive revision of the biodiversity of key species from the NE Atlantic, which is pertinent data for the application in marine biodiversity management, conservation and biomonitoring in Europe.

