

A review of the Scleractinia (Cnidaria: Anthozoa) of Chile, with the description of two new species

STEPHEN D. CAIRNS¹, VERENA HÄUSSERMANN² & GÜNTER FÖRSTERRA²

¹ Department of Invertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, W-329, Smithsonian Institution, P. O. Box 37012, Washington, D. C. 20560, U.S.A. (cairns.stephen@nmnh.si.edu)

² Universität München, Department Biologie II, Karlstr. 23–25, 80333 München, Germany; Zoologische Staatssammlung München; Fundación Huinay; Germany (vreni_haeussermann@yahoo.de, gunter_forsterra@yahoo.com)

Abstract

All records of the 23 scleractinian species known to occur off Chile are reviewed, including the first records of seven for this coastline. Two species are described as new: *Caryophyllia huinayensis* and *Tethocyathus endesa*. Additional specimens of 15 of the 23 species are reported. All Chilean species are azooxanthellate, some occurring as deep as 4195 m; only six species occur at SCUBA depth. Three species are reported for the Juan Fernández Islands. The Chilean scleractinian fauna is considered to be depauperate, consisting of only 3% of the known azooxanthellate species.

Key words: Cnidaria, Scleractinia, azooxanthellate corals, Chile, Juan Fernández, new species

Introduction

Although the northwestern coast of Chile extends well into tropical latitudes, the northern flowing Humboldt Current extends the warm temperate realm (Briggs 1974) as far north as 3° S, such that Chile has no tropical coast and thus no tropical zooxanthellate Scleractinia. However, approximately half (669 species) of the known Scleractinia worldwide are azooxanthellate, cold-water species (Cairns 1999), and 23 of these azooxanthellate species are known from the coasts of Chile.

The first scleractinian corals reported from Chile were *Bathycyathus chilensis* and *B. indicus* by Milne Edwards & Haime (1848) from Juan Fernández Islands, the two species later synonymized by Wells (1936). Gay (1854), as well as Philippi (1892), discussed this species, but did not give additional records. As a result of 20 stations made by the *Challenger* expedition in late 1875 to early 1876 (stations 294–313), Moseley (1881) added