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Some hydrozoans (Cnidaria) from King George Island, Antarctica

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Abstract

Twenty one species of shallow-water, benthic hydrozoans, belonging to nine families and fourteen genera, were found in a collection gathered from King George Island, South Shetland islands, during 2010 and 2011. *Hydractinia angusta* Hartlaub, 1904, *Staurocladia charcoti* (Bedot, 1908), *Candelabrum penola* (Manton, 1940), *Orthopyxis norvegiae* (Broch, 1948), and *Silicularia pedunculata* (Jäderholm, 1904) are redescribed. Additional notes are provided on *Schizotricha turqueti* Billard, 1906. *Sertularella gaudichaudi* (Lamouroux, 1824) is recognized as one of the most widely-distributed member of its genus in Antarctic waters. Taxonomic notes and updated synonymy are provided for some species.

Key words: Hydrozoa, hydroids, hydromedusa, South Shetland islands

Introduction

A number of hydrozoan samples from Fildes (Maxwell) Bay, King George Island, South Shetland islands, were gathered in the frame of an ongoing monitoring project of the Chilean Antarctic Institute, which compares the shallow-water invertebrate and macroalgae species composition and communities of Antarctica and continental Chile. The project uses an underwater georeferencing method coupled to image analyses to assess species distributions with an error range of less than 10 m (Schories & Niedzwiedz 2012). Most of the invertebrate samples were taken by scuba divers to facilitate analysis of the quantitative images taken along GPS routes from the shore down to 40 m depth. GPS routes included all types of substrates present in the bay at both sheltered and exposed sites. Investigations took place at sites with moderate inclination, as well as on vertical cliffs, whereas locations directly in front of glaciers were not sampled.

Fourteen samples of hydrozoans were gathered in 2010 (Ant.01/2010 to Ant.14/2010), as well as 35 in 2011 (Ant.01/2011 to Ant.35/2011). Their examination revealed the presence of 21 hydrozoan species, 20 hydroids and one hydromedusa. Well-known species are simply mentioned or listed together with brief remarks supplementing earlier descriptions, lesser known species are redescribed, and uncertain species are fully described. Taxonomic notes and synonymy are provided for some of them. With a few exceptions, almost all the species are illustrated, and data on the cnidome composition are given when necessary. Representative parts of the present material have been deposited in the *Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle* of Geneva, Switzerland, and registration numbers are indicated by the abbreviation MHNG-INVE-, followed by a number.

List of stations

Sampling was conducted by SCUBA diving at King George Island (62°02' S, 58°21' W), the largest of the South Shetland islands, situated *ca*. 120 km off the northern coast of the Antarctic Peninsula (Fig. 1). A total of seven stations were selected at Fildes Bay, a 16 km long bay opening South-East, and lying between King George and Nelson islands. The Chilean research base Escudero, from where diving operations were undertaken, is located at the

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