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Anthopleura mariscali, a new species of sea anemone (Cnidaria: Anthozoa: Actiniaria) from the Galápagos Islands

MARYMEGAN DALY & DAPHNE G. FAUTIN

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Kansas and Division of Invertebrate Zoology, University of Kansas Museum of Natural History and Biodiversity Research Center, Lawrence, Kansas 66045, USA; dalym@ku.edu; fautin@ku.edu

Abstract

Anthopleura mariscali, a new species of sea anemone (Actiniaria) known only from the intertidal zone of islands in the Galápagos Archipelago, is described and illustrated. The column of a member of *Anthopleura mariscali* is orange to pink, becoming darker distally, and has prominent endocoelic marginal projections, each of which bears an acrorhagus on the oral surface and several verrucae on the adoral surface. Distally, the projections are typically frosted with opaque white patches. Living firmly adherent to the substratum in cracks and crevices, the animal is inconspicuous in life.

Key words: Actiniidae, coelenterates, Pacific Ocean, taxonomy, Zoantharia

Introduction

The marine invertebrate fauna of the Galápagos Archipelago is characterized as a distinct faunal province that comprises elements of the Panamic and Indo-Pacific faunas and endemic species (e.g., Glynn & Wellington 1983; Kay 1991; Zullo 1991). The new species of sea anemone we describe—*Anthopleura mariscali*—appears to be one of the endemic species that comprise this fauna, as it is only known from Pinzón Island, Plaza Island Sur, and Santa Cruz Island in the Galápagos Archipelago.

None of the species having both acrorhagi and verrucae listed by Verrill (1869), McMurrich (1893, 1904), or Carlgren (1899, 1959) in their discussions of the actiniarian fauna of Central and South America have the opaque white patches on the distal column characteristic of *A. mariscali*. Field surveys in Chile have not uncovered any species resembling *A. mariscali* (Sebens & Paine 1979; V. Häussermann, pers. comm.). Similarly, no sea anemone described from the Indo-Pacific has the coloration or anatomy characteristic of *A. mariscali* (DGF, pers. obs., see also England 1987, 1992). However, because *A. mariscali* is small, and inhabits cracks and crevices, it may have been overlooked elsewhere, and may actually have a broader distribution than the Galápagos Islands.

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