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# A new species of *Biemna* Gray, 1867 (Demospongiae, Poecilosclerida) from the north coast of Brazil

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## Abstract

*Biemna spinomicroxea* sp. nov. is described from the coast of Amapá State, Brazil. It differs from all other *Biemna* species in lacking smooth sigmas. The spiculation consist of oxea megascleres, spined small sigmas and microxeas. A key to the tropical West Atlantic species of *Biemna* is provided.

**Key words**: Porifera, Desmacellidae, *Biemna*, new species

## Introduction

The sponge fauna of the north coast of Brazil consist of only a few records. Poecilosclerids in this area have been reported by Hajdu & Desqueyroux-Faúndez (1994): *Mycale* (*Mycale*) *quadripartita* (Boury-Esnault, 1973); Mothes *et al*. (2004c): *Biemna microacanthosigma*; and Mothes & Campos (2004): *Biemna trisigmata*. The Amapá State coast is influenced by the Guiana current, which arises from a bifurcation in the South Equatorial current bifurcation (originating at the Gulf of Guinea, Africa), flowing northwest along the South American coast, and characterized by warm waters and relatively high salinity (Ekman, 1953). The discharge of two large rivers in this region, Amazon and Orinoco, is responsible for the absence of a firm substrata and for a decrease in the salinity at areas in proximity to the coast (Vannucci, 1964). Probably in this section of the coast the sponge fauna does not reflect the effects of these barriers for dispersal from the middle shelf (Hajdu & Desqueyroux-Faúndez, 1994; Mothes *et al*. 2004b).

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