

Redescription of *Chrysaora lactea* Eschscholtz, 1829 (Cnidaria, Scyphozoa) from the Brazilian coast, with designation of a neotype

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Abstract

A redescription of the species *Chrysaora lactea* from the western South Atlantic is given based on live and preserved specimens from the Brazilian, Uruguayan and Argentinean coasts, and a neotype specimen is designated. The species is one of the commonest scyphomedusae in Brazilian coastal waters, reaching up to 25 cm in bell diameter with several different colour patterns (mainly milky-white). The species is recorded with certainty from Jamaica to the northern coast of Argentina, and can be distinguished from its congeners primarily by the order of the development of tentacles (2nd, 3rd, 1st, 3rd, 2nd).

Key words: Discomedusae, Semaestomeae, Pelagiidae, taxonomy, systematics, jellyfish, scyphomedusae, South Atlantic

Introduction

The scyphomedusa *Chrysaora lactea* Eschscholtz, 1829 is one of the commonest and most widely distributed scyphozoans on the Brazilian coast, but little information exists on its biology. The life cycle of the species was only recently described from scyphistomae obtained in the laboratory following the mixing of mature medusae (Morandini *et al.*, 2004). The species has sometimes been misidentified as one or another of its congeners *Chrysaora hysoscella* (Linnaeus, 1767) and *Chrysaora quinquecirrha* (Desor, 1848) along the western South Atlantic (Goy, 1979). In the South Atlantic Ocean, the three *Chrysaora* species quoted above were mentioned in a recent identification and distribution paper and