

Redescription of *Echinolaophonte armiger* (Gurney) (Copepoda: Harpacticoida) from the Gulf of Mexico

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Abstract

Echinolaophonte armiger (Gurney, 1927) is redescribed from the Texas coast (Gulf of Mexico). The species has a simple but strong dorsal spinous process on the cephalosome and the pairs of minute, spiny processes along the posterodorsal margins of the prosomites and urosomites. This is the first full description of the species since Gurney's (1927) original report from the Suez Canal. The previous reports of *E. armiger* are reconsidered based on new morphological characters revealed in the present study. As a result, *Echinolaophonte hystrix* (Brian, 1928) is revived as a valid species, and the status of closely related species, formerly known as *E. armiger*, is also discussed.

Key words: *Echinolaophonte armiger*, Laophontidae, marine harpacticoid copepods, Gulf of Mexico

Introduction

Since Gurney (1927) described *Echinolaophonte armiger* as *Laophonte armiger* from the Suez Canal, the species has been reported from the Tyrrhenian Sea (Brian 1928; Pesta 1959), Bermuda (Willey 1930), Western Australia (Nicholls 1945), the Brazilian coast (Carvalho 1952), the Caroline Islands (Vervoort 1964), the Californian coast (Lang 1965) and the eastern central Atlantic (Marinov 1977).

In 1941, Nicholls proposed the genus *Echinolaophonte* for several species previously assigned to *Laophonte*, including *L. armiger*. The other species Nicholls (1941) placed in his new genus were: *Laophonte horrida* Norman, 1876 (which he designated the type