



A new species of *Branchinecta* (Crustacea: Branchiopoda: Anostraca) from the Argentinian Tierra del Fuego

ROSA GRACIELA COHEN

Departamento de Biodiversidad y Biología Experimental, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad de Buenos Aires. Ciudad Universitaria. (C1428EHA) Buenos Aires, Argentina. E-mail: cohen@bg.fcen.uba.ar

Abstract

Branchinecta fueguina, a new species of fairy shrimp, was found together with *B. granulosa* in a temporary pond beside Laguna de los Cisnes, 53°47'12"S, 67°46'55"W, Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur Province (Argentina). The male second antennal basal article has a proximal, anteriomedial auriculate welt, covered with sensory setae and a hanging posteriomedial ornamented apophysis bending abruptly anteriorly with a rounded apex. Distally, the basal article has a longitudinal medial crest, proximally produced into a blunt posteriomedially directed point. The distal article is strongly rotated, articulating almost perpendicular to the basal article. The anterior surface of the article is triangular, from its proximal joint to the broadly explanate apex. Distally, the broadened article bends anteriorly forming a complex three-lobed apex. The peculiar joint with the basal article and the distal article shape are unique in the genus.

Key words: *Branchinecta fueguina*, fairy shrimp, taxonomy, neotropical

Introduction

Branchinecta Verrill, 1869, the only genus of the family Branchinectidae, inhabits freshwater temporary biotopes within a wide range of climates. It achieves its greatest diversity (48 described and several undescribed species) in the Americas, with 13 species reported from Argentina. In contrast, *Branchinecta* has only five to six palearctic representatives (Belk & Brtek 1995; Brtek 1997), one holarctic species (found in the Arctic, with extensions to a few USA states and into portions of Russia (Belk & Brtek 1995), and one Antarctic species, whereas Australia lacks representatives of the genus. According to Bănărescu (1990), the Branchinectidae was originally a cold adapted holarctic family, which dispersed along the Andes Range to South America. However, since diverse branchinectid populations thrive under an ample variety of climates, the scarcity of records from southern Mexico to the northern half of South America suggests that more surveys need to be conducted in this zone.

Specimens of a new, herein described, *Branchinecta* species were found in the summer of 2001, in a temporary pond of Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur Province, Argentina, coexisting with adults of *B. granulosa* Daday, 1902.

Material and methods

The new *Branchinecta* specimens were collected on 23 January 2001 by Cristina Marinone, in a temporary pond by Route C, in front of Laguna de los Cisnes, behind Río Grande Airport (53°47'12" S, 67°46'55" W), Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur Province, Argentina. The location of this pond is further