



Additions to the sea cucumber fauna of Namibia and Angola, with descriptions of new taxa (Echinodermata: Holothuroidea)

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Abstract

This paper records several species of holothuroid echinoderms dredged from shallow waters of the Angolan-Namibian coastline by the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde in Germany. Altogether seven species are dealt with, including five new species, of which one is referred to a new genus *Lanceophora*. The new species include two in the cucumariid subfamily Colochirinae (*Ocnus placominutus* and *O. paracorbulus*), two in the cucumariid subfamily Cucumariinae (*Panningia pseudocurvata* and *Lanceophora lanceolata*) and one in the family Rhopalodinidae (*Rhopalodinia bocherti*). Other species included are *Pseudocnus thandari* Natasen Moodley, 2008 and an indeterminate species of *Cladodactyla* in the subfamily Cucumariinae and *Trachythyone fallax* Cherbonnier, 1958a in the subfamily Colochirinae.

Key words: Holothuroidea, Cucumariidae, Rhopalodinidae, new taxa, Angola, Namibia

Introduction

The holothuroid fauna of the shallow tropical-subtropical East Atlantic waters is poorly known, leave alone those from Namibia and Angola. No comprehensive paper exists describing in particular the holothuroid fauna of this region. Even Cherbonnier's (1965) comprehensive paper on the holothuroids of the south-east Atlantic Ocean covers less than 20 species, mostly from Congo and a few from Cabinda in northern Angola, while that of Hérouard (1929) records species, mostly from the Atlantic coast of Morocco (not part of the tropical-subtropical East Atlantic Ocean) and a few from Mauritania. There are, however, several other relatively recent papers describing the holothuroids of this region by Panning (1940a, 1940b), Cherbonnier (1949a, 1949b, 1949c, 1950a, 1950b, 1950c, 1958a, 1958b, 1958c, 1958d, 1958e, 1963, 1966 & 1972) and Massin (1993). Because southern Namibia shares some species with South Africa, there are scanty records of holothuroids from this region, mostly due to collections made by the University of Cape Town and the South African Museum (see Cherbonnier 1952; Thandar 1985, 1990 & 1991).

The Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research from Rostock-Warnemünde, Germany, sampled the macrozoobenthos along this coast off Namibia and Angola on two occasions: in 2004 with the research vessel "Alexander von Humboldt" and in 2008 with the "Maria Sybilla Merian". At both sampling cruises one of us (M.L.Z.) was responsible for collecting the material. Triplicate benthic samples were taken with a 0.1 m² van Veen grab at each station. Additionally dredge hauls (containing a net mesh size of 5 mm) were taken for collection of larger, mobile or rare species. All samples were sieved through a 1-mm² screen and animals were preserved on board in 4 % buffered formaldehyde. Sorting procedures were conducted at the laboratory with a stereomicroscope with 10–40x magnification. The station grid and more information on the methods applied can be found in Zettler et al. (2009).