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A new species of *Pontonema* (Oncholaimidae, Nematoda) and a redescription of *Pontonema incisum* Wieser, 1953 from Santa Cruz and Chubut Provinces, Argentina

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Abstract

Pontonema golfonuevensis sp. nov. from Chubut Province, Argentina is described and a description of the male of *Pontonema incisum* Wieser, 1953 from Chubut and Santa Cruz Provinces is provided. *Pontonema golfonuevensis* sp. nov. is characterized by having the slender sub-ventral teeth 25 µm long located at 24 % of stoma length, a short, broad dorsal tooth at 60 % of stoma length, excretory pore opening at level of base of the buccal cavity, and by having a ventral pre-cloacal sensory field with four papillae and a glandular sub-ventral area with seven papilliform sensillae. The male of *P. incisum* has long slender sub-ventral teeth at 36 % of stoma length, a short broad dorsal tooth at 72 % of stoma length, excretory pore about two buccal cavity lengths from the anterior end, and a ventral pre-cloacal sensory field without papillae and a glandular sub-ventral area with twelve to fourteen papilliform sensillae. A key for identification of males of *Pontonema* is presented.

Key words: marine nematode, description, systematic, key

Introduction

During an ecological and taxonomical study of the meiobenthos from Argentine coasts new free-living marine nematodes were found. In this study, the species were collected during a physiographic survey by the vessel "Puerto Deseado" at 141 meters depth in Golfo Nuevo and by diving at 5 meters in Golfo Nuevo and in the port of Puerto Deseado (Santa Cruz Province), Argentina.

The genus *Pontonema* Leidy, 1855 is classified in the family Oncholaimidae. The potentially useful diagnostic features of the genus are: the relative position of the teeth, position and size of the amphids, position of the excretory pore (distance from the anterior end to the excretory pore), relative length of the tail, form of the spicules and gubernaculum, and presence or absence, position and number of the pre-cloacal sensory fields. Some species of the genus, such as *P. vulgare* (Bastian, 1865) from the Baltic, *P. alaeospicula* Bett & Moore, 1988 from the UK sites, and *P. mediterranea* Warwick & Robinson, 2000 from the Mediterranean, form mass aggregations in organically polluted environments (Lorenzen *et al.* 1987).

The first review of the genus was made by Gerlach & Riemann (1974), who assigned 31 species to the genus *Pontonema*. However, Bett & Moore (1988) considered only 25 species to be valid. They added *P. subtilis* Belogurova, 1978 to the genus, and described *P. alaeospicula* Bett & Moore, 1988. Later, Warwick & Robinson (2000) described a further species, *P. mediterranea*.

At present, we consider 26 species as valid within *Pontonema*. Here, we describe one new species of *Pontonema*. We also collected males of *P. incisum* Wieser, 1953, now described for the first time.

Material and methods

Collection sites. Samples were collected from "Punta Cascajo" (47° 45' S; 65° 53' W) and "Isla de los Pájaros"