

NEW RECORDS OF ALIEN DECAPODS FROM THE SOUTHWESTERN COAST OF TURKEY

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Abstract

The marine biota off the southwestern coast of Turkey was studied by diving between 1996 and 2003. Six alien decapod crustaceans of Red Sea origin have been noted: one is a new record for the Mediterranean, two constitute new records for Turkey, and for three we report significant range extensions within Turkey.

Key words: Alien, Decapoda, Red Sea, Turkey

The decapod crustaceans of the Mediterranean coast of Turkey have been studied since the early 20th century (1-13). Many of these studies have reported the presence of Red Sea taxa that had invaded the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal. The recent *CIESM Atlas of exotic species in the Mediterranean Sea* (14) recorded the occurrence of 27 Indo-West Pacific and Red Sea decapods along the Turkish coast.

The marine biota off the southwestern coast of Turkey, at depths between 3 and 26 m, was studied by diving between 1996 and 2003. The specimens were photographed *in situ* and some were collected and subsequently deposited in the National Collections, Tel Aviv University, Israel. Six IWP species have been recorded: one is a new record for the Mediterranean, two constitute new records for Turkey, and for three we report westward range extensions within Turkey.

Melicertus hathor (Burkenroad, 1959)

Melicertus hathor was collected from the coast of Israel 70 years after it had been reported from the Suez Canal (15). In May 2002 it was collected Yumurtalik bight, SE Turkey (M. Kumlu, O.T. Eroldogan, M. Aktas and M. Gocer, pers. comm.), but this record is a remarkable extension of its range.

Metapenaeopsis aegyptia Galil, 1990

Metapenaeopsis aegyptia was recently described from Rhodes Island (16). The present report constitute the first record of the species from the Turkish coast. The species is common near Tekirova and Uc Adalar.

Urocaridella antonbrunii (Bruce, 1967)

The specimens collected off the Mediterranean coast of Turkey fit the type's description (17). These nocturnal cleaner shrimps are quite common in Kas, where they were observed on Moray eels, but were mostly occur in small groups (5-6 individuals) in *Posidonia* and *Cymodocea* meadows. The carapace and pereopods are nearly transparent, with a red stripe across the third abdominal segment, the uropodal exopods are red and white, the rostrum with subterminal red band, and the praeopods banded white and red. Widely distributed in the Indo-Pacific: from the Red Sea to Japan, Australia, Palau Island (18). This is the first record of this handsome species from the Mediterranean.

Carupa tenuipes Dana, 1851

The specimen photographed off the Kas Peninsula is similar to the single specimen collected off the Mediterranean coast of Israel (www.ciesm.org/atlas/crustaceans). The species, of nocturnal habits, was collected on biogenic rubble and rocky bottoms in the Mediterranean though it is known to inhabit coral reef and coral rubble bottoms in the IWP. A new record for Turkey, where it has been established as far back as 1996, and is apparently quite common between Kalkan and Tekirova from the evidence of its shed exoskeletons.

Charybdis (Charybdis) hellerii (A. Milne Edwards, 1867)

A westward extension of its range, as it was reported before only from southeastern Turkey (13). The species is quite common off Tekirova.

Atergatis roseus (Rüppell, 1830)

A westward extension of its range, as it was reported before only from southeastern Turkey (12).

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