

**FIRST RECORD OF THE SPECIES *Microjassa cumbrensis*
(STEBBING & ROBERTSON, 1891)
(AMPHIPODA, ISCHYROCERIDAE)
FROM THE CANARY ISLANDS (NE ATLANTIC OCEAN)**

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ABSTRACT

The amphipod species *Microjassa cumbrensis* (Stebbing & Robertson, 1891) is first recorded for the Canarian archipelago. This species has been commonly collected in the East Atlantic Ocean (coasts of France and England) and the Mediterranean Sea throughout the last decades. Moreover, accompanying fauna data and sedimentary characteristics of the sampling station are presented.

Key words: Amphipoda, Gammaridea, *Microjassa*, La Gomera, Canary Islands.

RESUMEN

Se cita por primera vez la especie *Microjassa cumbrensis* (Stebbing & Robertson, 1891) para las islas Canarias. Esta especie se ha colectado de forma periódica en las últimas décadas en las costas de Francia e Inglaterra, así como en el mar Mediterráneo. Además, se aportan datos de la fauna acompañante y de las características del sedimento de la estación de muestreo.

Palabras clave: Amphipoda, Gammaridea, *Microjassa*, La Gomera, Islas Canarias.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decades, sandy seabeds have been neglected in ecological and taxonomic studies in the Macaronesian region. However, several recent papers have been published related to ecology and taxonomy of macro- and meiofaunal assemblages, mainly focussed on polychaetes (Madeira, NÚÑEZ *et al* [4]; Selvagens Islands (NÚÑEZ *et al* [5]; Cape Verde Islands, NÚÑEZ *et al* [6] and the Canarian archipelago, BRITO *et al* [2]). Unfortunately, there are still scarce information about other macrofaunal components (e.g. Amphipoda, Oligochaeta) of the infauna from sandy subtidal seabeds in the Macaronesian region. Thus, biodiversity records are still far from other extensively studied areas (e.g. Atlantic coasts of France and Britain).

One of the taxonomic groups that belongs to macrofaunal assemblages in sediments are amphipods (gammarids and caprellids). This taxa is mainly composed by surface-deposit feeders that inhabit in the first layers of the sediment surface (BRITO [1]), however, amphipods have been received little attention in the last years in ecological and taxonomic studies (RIERA *ET AL* [8, 9], ORTIZ *ET AL* [7]).

During an ecological study of the sediments in San Sebastián de La Gomera, one specimen of an unpreviously described species of gammarid from the Canary Islands was collected. *Microjassa cumbrensis* has been formerly described in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea (CONRADI & GONZÁLEZ [3]).

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Samples were collected by means of a “Cak Foster” dredge, with 28-litres capacity. Samples were fixed by 4% formaldehyde during 48 hours and then, sieved in a 0.5 mm mesh size. Specimens were separated under a stereomicroscope and preserved in 70° ethanol. Specimens were identified by means of a stereomicroscope Nikon SMZ-800 and pictures were taken with an attached camera (EOS-500D).

The studied specimens were stored in the invertebrate collection of CIMA (Centro de Investigaciones Medioambientales del Atlántico SL).

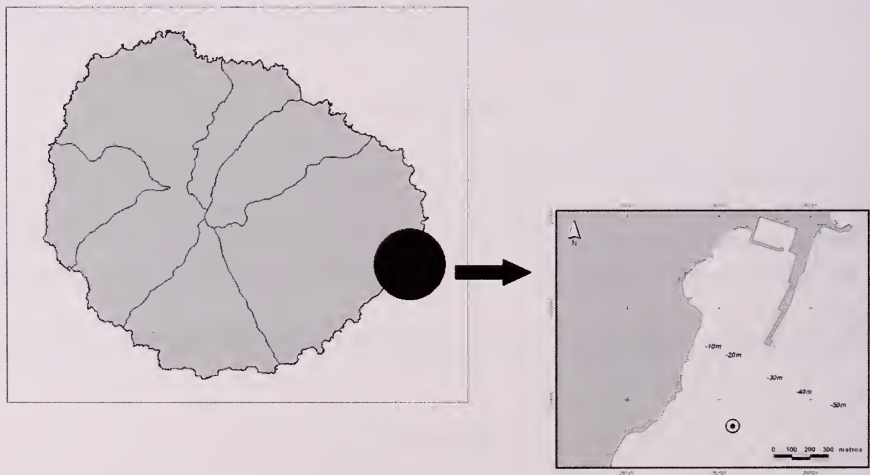


Figure 1.- Map showing sampling station (●).

3. SYSTEMATICS

Order **AMPHIPODA** Latreille, 1816

Suborder **Gammaridea** Dana, 1852

Family **Ischyroceridae** Stebbing, 1899

Microjassa cumbrensis (Stebbing & Robertson, 1891)

(Figure 2)

Podocerus cumbrensis Stebbing & Robertson, 1891: 38.

Microjassa cumbrensis Stebbing, 1899: 240.

Studied material.- La Gomera, off San Sebastián de La Gomera harbour (coordinates: 17°11'08"N/28°07'95"W), 1 female, March 2009, 30 m deep.

Sediment characterization.- Coarse sands (51%). Organic matter (0.58%).

Description.- Length 2.8 mm, whitish. Coxal plate 1 small, plates 2-4 very large and equal, being broad the last one (plate 4). Head triangular, with broad lateral lobes. Eyes large and round. Antennae with few long setae (10-15); antenna 1 short, with flagellum articulated (3-4) and accessory flagellum very small (1-articulate). Antenna 2 almost equal than 1, flagellum articulated (3-4). Gnathopod 1 propod ovoid, palm with 3 slender spines, dactylus slender with inner margin with tooth. Gnathopod 2 similar to 1, except merus with an enlarged posterior lobe. Pereopods long and slender, 5-7 basis broad and slightly oval. Uropods 1-2 with outer ramus slightly shorter than inner. Uropod 3 with elongate peduncle, inner ramus with an apical spine, outer ramus with distal denticles.



Figure 2.- *Microjassa cumbrensis*. Female. Scale: 0.5 mm.

Accompanying fauna.- The sampling station was dominated by the caprellids *Phtisica marina* (33 ind.) and *Pariambus typicus* (30 ind.). Other species with noticeable densities were the gammarid *Megamphopus cornutus* (13 ind.) and the caprellid *Pseudoprotella phasma* (13 ind.).

Distribution.- Mediterranean Sea. East Atlantic Ocean (Conradi & González [3]).

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