ON SOME MORPHOLOGICAL VARIATIONS OF
SYNCYAMUS AEOQUUS LINCOLN & HURLEY, 1981
(AMPHIPODA, CYAMIDAE) FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

BY

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RÉSUMÉ

La présence de l’ectoparasite Syncyamus aequus Lincoln & Hurley, 1981, a été détectée sur le
dauphin bleu et blanc (Stenella coeruleoalba) en Méditerranée. L’étude des spécimens recoltés sur
les dauphins échoués sur les côtes espagnoles a révélé des caractéristiques particulières des
épines de la surface ventrale du corps, dans les deux sexes, différentes de la description
originale.

INTRODUCTION

The only amphipod family adapted to a parasitic mode of life is that of the
Cyamidae Rafinesque, 1815, whose representatives are typically located on the
cetacean skin.

One of the characters used in the taxonomy of Cyamidae is the number and
disposition of the spines arming its body, which serve, like the dactyli, for
attachment to the host (Leung, 1967; 1970).

The presence in the Mediterranean Sea of Syncyamus aequus Lincoln &
Hurley, 1981, was detected by Raga & Raduan (1982). We have had the
opportunity of examining new material (22 ♂♂, 7 ♀♀ and 1 indeterminate)
from Striped Dolphins, Stenella coeruleoalba (Meyen, 1833), stranded on the
coast of Valencia and deposited in the Zoological Department of Valencia
University and from Odontoceti from the coasts of Cataluña, deposited in the
Zoological Museum of Barcelona and the Zoological Department of Barcelona
University.

RESULTS

The specimens studied are small. The body length (from the anterior border
of the head to the posterior border of the last segment of the pereon) of the non-
ovigerous females ranges between 2.2 and 1.9 mm; while that of the males is
somewhat less, viz., between 1.9 and 1.7 mm. The body width (at pereon seg-
ment 5) varies between 0.9 mm in the ovigerous females and 0.7–0.8 mm in
the males (fig. 1).
The antero-lateral lobes of pereon segment 2 show the characteristic asymmetry. Pereon segments 3 and 4 are shorter in females and wider than segment 2; whereas in males these are shorter and narrower than the second segment. In both sexes pereon segment 5 is the widest; segment 6 and 7 are the smallest, and they are fused, no suture line being visible; segments 2 to 5 are free; segment 7 is subtriangular in outline.

The ventral surface of the body presents some spines; number and disposition vary according to sex. In females, there is one pair of spines on the 7th pereon segment, two pairs on the 6th and one pair on the 5th, next to the genital valves. Males have one pair of spines on the 7th pereon segment, two pairs on the 6th and two pairs on the 5th. A very small bilobate pleon can be seen at the end of the last (7th) segment; next to it we find the penis.

Fig. 1. Syncyamus aequus Lincoln & Hurley, 1981. A, dorsal view of female; B, ventral view of female; C, dorsal view of male; D, ventral view of male.