NEW RECORDS OF SPECIES OF THE GENUS *MESOCYCLOPS* (COPEPODA, CYCLOPOIDA) FROM CUBA

BY

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ABSTRACT

We report new records of copepods of the genus *Mesocyclops* from Cuba. In the tropics, several species of *Mesocyclops* have shown promise as biological control agents for the larvae of disease-bearing mosquitoes. *Mesocyclops aspericornis* is considered pan-tropical, but has not previously been recorded here. *Mesocyclops reidae*, now found in a new locality, was previously reported from Cuba under the name *M. ellipticus*. We briefly review pertinent aspects of the taxonomic history, geographical distribution, and biology of these two species and of the two other members of the genus that are currently known to inhabit Cuba.

RESUMEN

Reportamos nuevos registros de copépodos del género *Mesocyclops* en Cuba. En los trópicos, algunas especies de *Mesocyclops* se han mostrado como agentes prometedores para el control biológico de larvas de mosquitos transmisores de enfermedades. *Mesocyclops aspericornis* es considerado una especie pan-tropical, pero no ha sido previamente reportada aquí. *Mesocyclops reidae*, ahora encontrado en una nueva localidad, fue previamente reportado para Cuba bajo el nombre de *M. ellipticus*. Revisamos brevemente aspectos de la historia taxonómica, distribución geográfica y biología de estas dos especies y otros dos miembros del género, que actualmente habitan en Cuba.

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INTRODUCTION

Most large species of cyclopoids are voracious predators of first instar mosquito larvae, and are more effective for biological control than any other predatory invertebrates. The potential of cyclopoids as biological control agents for disease-bearing mosquitoes has been actively investigated in several countries. Members of the large, primarily tropical genus *Mesocyclops* have shown particular promise in several studies, most successfully in Vietnam and Laos (Vu et al., 2000; Kay & Vu, 2005; see review by Marten & Reid, 2007).

Surveys in several localities in western Cuba revealed the presence of *Mesocyclops pehpeiensis* Hu, 1943, which was recorded for the first time in Cuba (Menéndez et al., 2006). In the middle part of the country (fig. 1), surveys were carried out with the purpose of collecting cyclopoids in order to evaluate their predatory capacity on larvae of *Culex quinquefasciatus* (Say, 1823) under laboratory conditions.

Fig. 1. Localities that were surveyed in Sancti Spiritus Province: 1, Arroyo Lajas, Cabaiguán (*Mesocyclops reidae* Petkovski, 1906 and *Mesocyclops aspericornis* (Daday, 1906)); 2, Los Olivos, Sancti Spiritus (*Mesocyclops reidae* and *Mesocyclops aspericornis*); 3, Poza Azul, Jatibonico.