CATALOGUE OF BRACHYURAN CRABS (DECAPODA) OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN: PART I. THE ARABIAN SEA COAST (DHOFAR, AL-WUSTA, SOUTHERN PART OF SHARQIYA)

BY

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ABSTRACT

The brachyuran fauna of the Arabian Sea coast of the Sultanate of Oman is reviewed, and 120 true crab species (Brachyura) belonging to 84 genera and 27 families are documented based on literature records and new collections. Twenty-seven species are added as new records for the region in addition to the 93 species of crabs recorded by Hogarth (1989, 1994), Clayton (1996) and Creasey et al. (1997).

Key words. — True crabs, Brachyura, north-western Indian Ocean, southern Oman

RÉSUMÉ


Mots clés. — Crabes vrais, Brachyura, Océan Indien nord-occidental, Oman méridional

INTRODUCTION


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of brachyuran crab from the Sultanate of Oman. Hogarth collected crabs during the 1983 and 1985 surveys of the Tropical Marine Research Unit (TMRU) of the University of York. Crabs were sampled by different techniques before and after the monsoon period. About 87 species of true crabs were reported and deposited in the British Natural History Museum and the Oman Natural History Museum. Clayton (1996) confirmed the presence of five species in Oman, including one new finding, a species previously recorded from India. During the RRS “Discovery” 211th cruise abundant samples of spider crabs were collected on the continental slope south of Masira Island off the coast of the Sultanate of Oman (Creasey et al., 1997).

The present study aimed to review and document the brachyuran fauna of the Arabian Sea (Part I) and the Sea of Oman, Strait of Hormuz and Arabian Gulf coasts (Part II) of the Sultanate of Oman based on literature records and new collections.

MATERIAL EXAMINED

The recent material was collected by the RV “Al-Mustaqilla 1” during the Fish Resource Survey from the Oman coast of the Arabian Sea by the New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) in 2007-2008. The cruise trawl sampling resulted in the collection of mid- and deep-water true crabs.

The present collection of true crabs was gathered within the framework of the project of the Marine Science Fisheries Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth of Sultanate of Oman “Experimental study of crustacean fishery in Omani waters” in 2011-2012. The samples were collected using various types of traps and by hand. Both collections of crabs are deposited in the Marine Science Fisheries Centre (Muscat, Sultanate of Oman). The given dimensions of the specimens are the carapace width and lengths, respectively.

Taxa are placed in the catalogue in accordance with Ng et al. (2008).

Species marked with one, two and three asterisks were reported by Hogarth (1989, 1994), Clayton (1996) and Creasey et al. (1998), respectively.

COLLECTING SITES

The Arabian Sea coast is a major fishing region of Oman. There is approximately 1200 km of Omani coast on the Arabian Sea, extending from Ra’s Al-Hadd in the north to the Oman-Yemen border in the south. This area is characterized by significant shallow coastal waters, a moderate area of continental shelf, and a steep continental slope, which is very close to the coast in the south (Smith et al.,