NEW RECORDS OF DECAPOD CRUSTACEANS FROM THE DEEP AEgeAN SEA OF TURKEY

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The northern Aegean Sea is one of the most poorly studied areas of the Mediterranean. Decapod crustaceans have been consistently studied, mainly from a systematic point of view, but existing information on the deep Aegean Sea still proves to be rather limited and also scattered over many smaller, primary publications.

Yet, many studies have been carried out on decapod crustaceans of the Turkish seas since the 1960s. Two detailed lists of decapod species found along the Turkish coast were presented by Kocataş & Katan (2003) and Atşe et al. (2010).

In the past, only few, mainly French and Russian, expeditions visited the deep eastern Mediterranean Sea. Albartelli et al. (1990) carried out the first quantitative investigation in the deep Aegean Sea in 1989, as did Sokolova et al. (2001) in 1992 in the eastern Levantine Sea. The macrofauna communities of the Cretan slope down to 1600 m depth have been investigated since 1990 (Tselepides & Eleftheriou, 1992; Karakassis & Eleftheriou, 1997; Duineveld et al., 2000). The first quantitative investigations in the Levantine Sea down to depths exceeding 4000 m were made during the “Meteor” cruise in January 1987, which was carried out for taxonomic purposes (Müller, 1989). The main objectives of the present paper are to provide new information on the decapod fauna of the deep Aegean Sea. Indeed, the study of the deep sea off the northern region of Turkey called Gökçeada, added new data on decapod crustaceans for the Aegean Sea.

The benthic samplings yielded Gennadas elegans (Smith, 1882) and Pandalina profunda Holthuis, 1946, that are reported for the first time from the Aegean Sea off the Turkish coast, while Monodaeus guinotae Forest, 1976 and Odontozona

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minoica Dounas & Koukouras, 1989 are recorded for the first time for Turkish waters. Finally, a rare morph of Acanthephyra pelagica (Risso, 1816) is recorded in this study.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Samples were collected between May 2010 and November 2011 in the north-eastern Aegean Sea trench by baited trap at depths ranging from 1000 to 1480 m (fig. 1).

The survey was carried out with a fishing boat (12 m long, 120 hp). We used 30 × 30 × 60 cm rectangular cuboid shaped traps, made from iron bars and covered with a 7 mm mesh polypropylene net. A funnel-shaped opening allowed the entrance of animals through each trap. The baits consisted of fishes, discarded by other fisheries and offal. Traps were linked to each other with a nylon rope (8 mm). We set a line of 10 traps, each of which were connected through a ground line and spaced at about 50 m from each other. The traps were kept on the bottom for 24 hours subject to air conditions. Coordinates were recorded via a Garmin GPS at the end of the fishing operations for each trap line. The materials are deposited at Gökçeada Marine Research Department, Canakkale. The higher classification for these five species follows Martin & Davis (2001).

![Fig. 1. Sampling stations from which the new records reported in this paper originate.](image_url)