NOTES AND NEWS

NOTES ON *STENOPUS SCUTELLATUS* RANKIN AND *NEOPONTONIDES BEAUFORTENSIS* (BORRADAILE) FROM THE NORTHERN GULF OF MEXICO

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A number of crustaceans either new or seldom recorded from the northern Gulf of Mexico have been collected during recent offshore ecological studies near Grand Isle, Louisiana. Two of these, both representing significant extensions of known distribution, are reported here.

A single *Stenopus scutellatus* Rankin (GCRL 162 : 562) with a carapace length of 15.8 mm (including rostrum) was trawled in a depth of 16.5 meters on 29 April 1959. Bottom salinity and temperature were 35.5‰ and 20.0° C., respectively. Other shrimp taken in the same collection were *Penaeus setiferus* (L.), *P. duorarum* Burkenroad, *Trachypeneus constrictus* (Stimpson), *T. similis* (Smith), *Sicyonia dorsalis* Kingsley, and *Solenocera vioscai* Burkenroad, all normal components of the local crustacean fauna.

Stenopus scutellatus has been listed from Gulf waters by Rathbun (1919), Holthuis (1946, 1959) and Springer & Bullis (1956), but, except for the latter reference, locality data have not been given. In order to more precisely determine distribution within the Gulf of Mexico, the writer, through the kindness of Dr. Fenner A. Chace, Jr., obtained a list of specimens in the collections in the U. S. National Museum. These, which include the material referred to by Rathbun (1919), together with the present specimen, apparently represent the known distribution of the species in Gulf waters (Table I). Eight of the nine collections are from off the coast of Florida, three near Cape San Blas in the northern Gulf and the remainder from south Florida offings between 26° N. and the Dry Tortugas region. The present collection is the first from west of the Mississippi River delta and represents a westward range extension of some 250 miles. Recognition

TABLE I

Known localities and specimens of *Stenopus scutellatus* from the Gulf of Mexico

U.S.N.M. Cat. No.	N. Lat.	W. Long.	Depth (meters)	Date	Collector	No. of specimens
9610	29°17′00″	85°30′45″	47.5	Feb. 7, 1885	"Albatross"	1
9787	28°45′00″	85°02′00″	54.9	Mar. 15, 1885	,,	1
11305	26°00′00″	82°57′30″	43.9	Mar. 19, 1885	,,	2
23336	28°42′30″	85°29′00″	160.9	Mar. 15, 1885	,,	1
23560	25°02′49″	83°14′00″	58.5	Feb. 16, 1889	"Grampus"	1
23561	25°23′30″	83°17′00″	61.3	Feb. 28, 1889	,,	1
23562	25°50′15″	83°41′30″	89.6	Mar. 11, 1889	,,	1
91133	25°55′	83°53′	113.4	June 24, 1950	"Oregon"	1
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162 : 562	29°09′00″	89°54′10″*	16.5	Apr. 29, 1959	C. E. Dawson	1

* approximate position

of but two specimens in Gulf of Mexico collections since 1889 testifies to the apparent rarity of *Stenopus scutellatus* in Gulf waters. Although common in intertidal and shallow Bahamian waters (Limbaugh et al., 1961), present depth records of 16.5 to 160.9 meters suggest that the species is restricted to deeper waters within the Gulf. Whereas *S. scutellatus* is usually associated with coral and sponge habitats (Holthuis, 1946; Limbaugh et al., 1961), the mud bottoms off Grand Isle are characteristically devoid of such protective environments.

Holthuis (1959) has shown many of the distinguishing characters of *S. scutellatus* and *S. spinosus* Risso to be subject to overlapping variation, and the present specimen further demonstrates the degree of variability of *S. scutellatus*. Whereas the species is normally considered to have but one lateral spine on the rostrum, this specimen has two strong spines and a minute spinule for a total of three lateral rostral projections. There are both dorsal and ventral spines on the third antennular segment rather than only the dorsal spine described for the species. The scaphocerite bears three spinules on the outer margin and there are spinules on both the upper and lower surface. *S. scutellatus* usually has one marginal spinule and the upper surface is generally smooth. The uropodal endopod and exopod are both armed with spinules on the lower surface rather than smooth as described. Dr. Holthuis (personal communication) has questioned the separate identity of *S. spinosus* and *S. scutellatus* but, pending collection of further comparative material, the present specimen is referred to *S. scutellatus* primarily on the basis of its small size and its apparent origin in American waters. *S. spinosus* attains a much larger size (up to 73 mm) and is known only from the Mediterranean and the Red Sea (Holthuis, 1946).

On 14 December 1959 five specimens of *Neopontonides beaufortensis* (Borradaile) were collected by the writer from fouling collectors which had been exposed since 15 November 1959. The cylindrical metal collector was suspended ten feet below mean sea level in a water depth of approximately 45 feet some 7.5 miles south of Grand Isle. Hydrographic data are not available for the date of collection, but surface observations on 19 November and 20 December were 32.7 ‰-19.0° C. and 35.9 ‰-18.3° C., respectively. Principal fouling organisms settling during the exposure period were *Gonothyraea gracilis* (Sars), *Balanus improvisus* Darwin and an unidentified species of *Corophium*. Holthuis (1951) reports the distribution of *N. beaufortensis* from the east coast of the United States (North Carolina to the Dry Tortugas), the West Indies and Panama. Dr. Chace advises (personal communication) that one specimen, referable only to the genus, was taken in the Gulf at 29° 26′ N., 87° 35′ W. in a depth of 73.2 meters by the M/V "Oregon" on 9 January 1957. The present specimens, however, represent the first definite record of *N. beaufortensis* from the Gulf of Mexico and constitute a minimum range extension of some 450 miles. Three specimens have been deposited in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie; the remainder are in the collections of this laboratory (GCRL 161 : 543).

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