

NOTA BREVE

**MOLTING CYCLE IN *Metamysidopsis munda*  
(CRUSTACEA: MYSIDACEA).**

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*Metamysidopsis munda* Zimmer, 1918, was first recorded for the Rio Grande State coast by Tavares and Bond-Buckup (1991). Very little is known of its biology, including molt cycle. In Mysids, molting occurs frequently and at regular intervals until sexual maturity (12-14d), after which it becomes less frequent and asynchronous, coinciding with brood release for females (Lussier *et al.*, 1988).

The objective of this note is to give a brief description of *M. munda* molting cycle, providing background information for further studies.

Juveniles of different females of *M. munda* collected in the surf zone of Cassino Beach, Rio Grande, RS, were selected and placed in individual recipients. Each recipient contained approximately 200 ml of seawater filtered on a 1 µm filter. Salinity was kept at 30±1 and temperature maintained constant at 20°C (±1°C) in a temperature controlled room, with a 12:12 hour photoperiod. Water was changed every other day and a surplus of food (*Artemia* sp. nauplii, Salt Lake City Brand) was added daily.

*Metamysidopsis munda* molt cycle was variable between individuals born from different females, with individuals reaching their sexual maturity after their 5th molt (Table 1). From the first female that released their offspring, individuals' molt cycle lasted between 13 and 14 days, and from the second female, molt cycle lasted between 11 and 12 days. It can be seen in Table 1 that molting varied from offspring of different females within a 1 to 2 day period.

Table 1. Molt periods for juveniles of the different females of *Metamysidopsis munda*, until they reached sexual maturity in laboratory.

Molt	Days for Molting (Juveniles 1st Female)	Days for Molting (Juveniles 2nd Female)
1 <sup>st</sup>	2-4	2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	5-7	4-5
3 <sup>rd</sup>	7-8	6-7
4 <sup>th</sup>	10-11	8-10
5 <sup>th</sup>	13-14	11-12

Clutter and Theilacker (1971) observed that the first four to six molts of the congener species *M. elongata* had intermolt periods between 3 and 4 days at temperatures ranging from 14-20°C. Our results showed that *M. munda* intermolt period was similar to the one found by Clutter and Theilacker, with intermolt periods of 2 to 3 days at 20°C. Lussier et. al. (1988) found that another mysid, *Mysidopsis bahia*, in culture at 25°C and 30 salinity, molted 9 times in their first 18 days of life, with a mean intermolt period of 2.3 days. *M. munda* mean intermolt period ranged from 2.2 to 2.6 days in 20°C and 30 salinity, a very close result to the one found by Lussier for *M. bahia*. Like the above mentioned species, *M. munda* has a regular moulting cycle, reaching its sexual maturity in the first 14 days of life.

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