

First record of the mangrove crab *Goniopsis cruentata* (Latreille, 1803) (Brachyura: Grapsidae) in Atol das Rocas, Brazil.

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Abstract

The mangrove crab, *Goniopsis cruentata* (Latreille 1803), which is known to occur from the States of Para to Santa Catarina as well as in the Archipelago of Fernando de Noronha, was collected for the first time from Atol das Rocas (03°51'03"S and 33°40'29"W) where it was observed under vegetation *Sesuvium portulacastrum* (Aizoaceae) during low tide. Besides extending its distribution to Atol das Rocas, its presence outside its normal habitat of mangrove areas and muddy beaches is of interest.

Key words: Atol das Rocas, *Goniopsis cruentata*, Brazil.

Atol das Rocas, the single atoll in the Western South Atlantic, is located 144 nautical miles from Natal (03°51'03"S and 33°40'29"W), off northeast of Brazil (Oliveira-Filho and Ugadim, 1976). It has an ellipsoidal shape with an internal area of approximately 5.5 square kilometers (Andrade, 1960; Kikuchi and Abdon, 1991) and is bathed by the southern branch of South Equatorial Current. Since 1979, the area is legally protected, but an effective control and research began only in 1991 when a field station was established by IBAMA, the Brazilian environmental agency. Commercial and recreational fisheries, as well as touristic activities are not permitted within the Reserve, from the reefs to depths of 1.000 meters. Only scientific and educational activities are allowed.

Coelho (1965) and Teixeira (1992) recorded two species of grapsoid crabs: *Grapsus grapsus* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *Pachygrapsus transversus* (Gibbes, 1850) from Atoll das Rocas. *Goniopsis cruentata* (Latreille 1803), another grapsoid species of mangroves and widely distributed in the mangrove areas from Florida across the Caribbean to Santa Catarina, Brazil in the Western Atlantic and from Senegal to Angola in the Eastern Atlantic, is reported here for the first time from the Atol das Rocas. Its presence outside the normal habitat of mangrove areas and muddy beaches is also of interest.

Three male specimens of *G. cruentata* were collected during the low tide under the vegetation within the Biological Reserves of Atol das Rocas, mainly from the lagoon close to the the laboratory of the Station ReBio. They measured between 40.0 and 41.0 mm in carapace width and between 29.0 and 30.0 mm in carapace length. These specimens are deposited in the reference collection of IBAMA, Natal, Brazil.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to the IBAMA through M. B. Silva, for logistic facilities and help in the field. C. Sankarankutty critically read the manuscript and provided valious comments and suggestions.

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Received: 13th Nov 2001

Accepted: 30th Apr 2002