

A report on the marine crab *Planes cyaneus* Dana (Brachyura, Grapsidae) in Caeté Bay, Bragança, Pará, Brazil.

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Abstract

For the first time *Planes cyaneus* Dana, 1851 (Brachyura, Grapsidae) is registered in Pará State, Brazil. This occurrence extends the northern distribution of this species in the Brazilian coast.

Key words: Brachyura, Grapsidae, *Planes cyaneus*, Pará, Brazil

The Infraorder Brachyura has a large geographic distribution, occurring in all oceans. According to Melo (1996), 302 species of crabs are known to the Brazilian coast, and 22 of them are included in 15 genera registered for the family Grapsidae.

Grapsoid crabs are best known from the marine intertidal and supratidal (Schubart *et al.*, 2000), however the species of the genus *Planes* Bowdich, 1825 are considered an exception. They are pelagic crabs that have the curious habits of travel on floating objects. Probably, the failure of registers about this group can be related with the low interest of navigators to collect and to analyze the objects that float in the sea surface (Spivak, 1999).

Planes cyaneus Dana, 1851 is a pelagic species that depends on marine currents. Its geographic distribution in Brazil extend from Rio Grande do Norte to Rio Grande do Sul (Melo, 1996).

With the register of *Planes marinus* Rathbun, 1914 for the first time at the Brazilian littoral (Melo *in press*), *P. cyaneus* are not the only one species of this genus anymore collected in Brazil at the moment.

One female of *P. cyaneus* (18.03 and 17.66 mm of width and length of the carapace, respectively) was sampled in a drift bottle in the Caeté Estuary, Bragança, Pará State, North Coast of Brazil, near from Ajuruteua Beach (00°49'26"S and 46°35' 59"W) on 10 April 2001 during a field work on marine biology research in that region. Abiotic factors were registered at the moment of collect of this crab. They were the following: 28.3°C of temperature, 1.13‰ of salinity and 4.76 mg/L of oxygen dissolved.

The Caeté Estuary is part of the east Amazonian littoral. Its upper reaches are less than 300 m wide in the vicinity of Bragança and its mouth gradually widens to approximately 13 km as it enters the sea (Barletta-Bergan, 1999). The Caeté Estuary has a sort of river channels and tidal creeks, that are influenced by semidiurnal tides (with a range of more than four meters) and by rain of this amazon region. These environmental factors cause part of temporal and space variability like as salinity, temperature and nutrients concentration, that have direct influence in the organisms aquatics community. Water from the South Equatorial Current is deflected in the vicinity of Cabo de São Roque northwards, as the Guyana Current influences this region hydrologically (Kempf *et al.*, 1967).

The Northern distribution of *P. cyaneus* is enlarged for the North coast of Brazil. The rain period, with higher intensity between December and May, can contribute to the alteration of the water coast circulation in this period. During the rainy period, currently known as "winter" in the North of Brazil and in the sizigia tides (February and March), that are observed the large alterations in the coast circulation. It is still unknown how the specimen appears in such region, but probably as extensions of existing Brazilian population.

The specimen collected is deposited in the crustacean collection of the Laboratory of Fisheries Biology and Management of Aquatic Resources of Federal University of Pará.

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