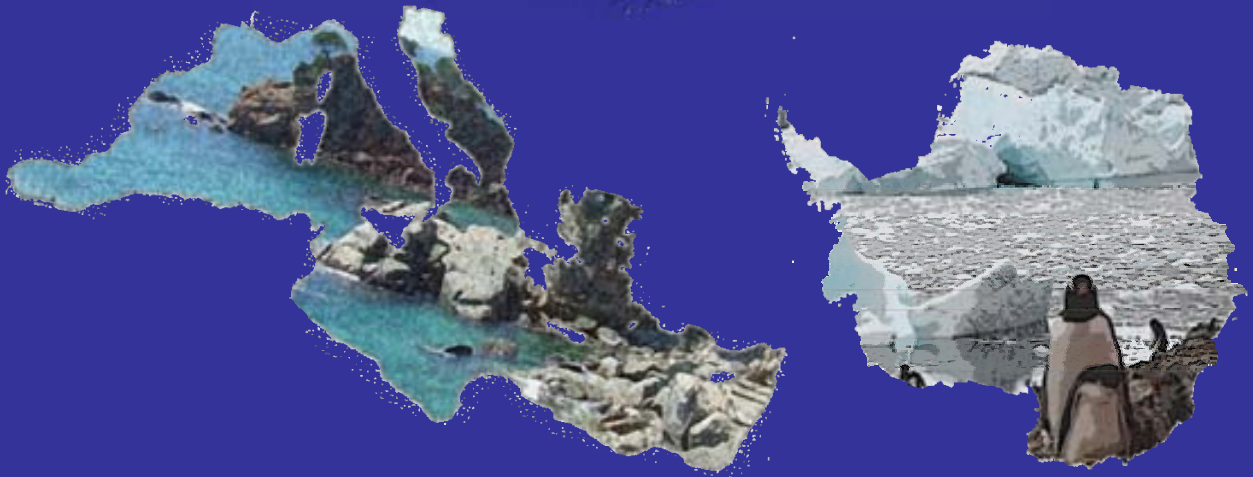


Tesi doctoral

Contribució a l'estudi de les aranyes de mar
(Pycnogonida): biogeografia de les espècies antàrtiques
i biologia alimentària de les espècies mediterrànies



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Unitat de Zoologia

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Contribució a l'estudi de les aranyes de mar (Pycnogonida):
biogeografia de les espècies antàrtiques i biologia
alimentària de les espècies mediterrànies

Memòria de tesi doctoral presentada per Anna Soler i Membrives per a optar al grau de
Doctor en Zoologia sota la direcció del Dr. Tomás Munilla León.

Aquesta tesi s'ha inscrit dins del programa de doctorat d'Aqüicultura, amb menció de
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El director
Tomás Munilla León

La doctorand
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A la meva família

Al mar i a tots els que en ell hi viuen

Sembla que no pugui ser que hagin passat tan ràpid aquests anys! I encara no m'acabo de creure com fa res vaig sortir de port, amb rumb però sense coordenades, i ara ja s'ha acabat aquesta gesta!

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“Fa milions d’anys que les flors fabriquen punxes. Fa milions d’anys que els xais es mengen les flors. I no n’és de seriós, tractar de comprendre per què les flors es preocupen tant de fabricar punxes que no els serveixen de res?”

“I si jo conec una flor, única al món, que només es troba al meu planeta, i que un xai se la pot menjar d’una mossegada. No n’és d’important això?”

El Petit Príncep, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

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Pycnogonida (Latreille 1810) or sea spiders are one of the most intriguing groups of marine arthropods; they are bizarre, fascinating and very primitive animals of highly controversial affinities. They are found worldwide, and more than 1300 species and 80 genera are described to date. This report summarizes the studies carried out to provide a better insight of the biogeography, bathymetric distribution and the feeding biology of this group.

Antarctic waters are characterized by the high levels of species richness and endemism, and Antarctic sea spiders are excellent representatives of this highly diversification. To date 264 austral species have been recorded, accounting for 19.6% of the species recorded worldwide; 107 of them are endemic to Antarctic waters, while 63 are common in the sub-Antarctic and Antarctic regions. The richest genus is *Nymphon*, with 67 species.

The benthic insular refuge hypothesis is proposed as an explanation for the southern distribution of the present pycnogonid fauna, with an origin in the Scotia Arc. This hypothesis together with the migration from the Magellan zone would explain the extremely high species richness of the Scotia Sea. Results conclude that nearly the 30% of the species present a circumpolar distribution; a tendency toward circumpolarity of species and subsequent decrease of zonal endemism is noticed, probably due to the increasing expeditions with more sampling.

Basic information regarding bathymetric distribution patterns, diversity of species, and community composition is scarce in this group. The geographical distribution remarks on the species in the present study contribute to the better understanding of Antarctic pycnogonid distributions. *Pallenopsis kupei* is new for Antarctic waters, and six species have not been found previously in the Weddell Sea. Bathymetric patterns of distribution are analyzed in the Weddell Sea showing a difference in the composition between the continental shelf (from 100 to 900 m depth) and the slope (below 900 m). Most of the species are confined to the continental shelf boundaries, whereas the deep sea is dominated by the genus *Nymphon*. Thus, depth seems to be an influential factor in the structure of pycnogonid assemblages. These findings support the hypothesis that these taxa have evolved and radiated on the shelf and later submerged in the deep sea.

The central Bransfield Strait Basin is dominated by series of isolated volcanoes and associated ridges. Here, the fauna from volcanic structures is analyzed to deduce whether the volcanoes were active or inactive during the sampling period. The most abundant families are Nymphonidae and Colossendeidae, though biomass is much greater for the Colossendeidae. This indicates that colossendeids are probably employing the *K*-strategy instead of the *r*-strategy, which is typical for smaller pycnogonids such as nymphonids. The volcanic structures sampled were inactive during 1996, since none of the specimens showed signs of hydrothermal phenomena. This collection is typically representative of the west Antarctic benthic zone.



Nymphon australe Hodgson 1902 is the most abundant species of sea spiders in the Southern Ocean. The species is recognized as highly morphologically variable, circumpolar and eurybathic. In this study, we investigate the genetic structure of *N. australe* populations around Antarctica by using mitochondrial DNA data. Results support the circumpolarity supposed for *N. australe*, without indication of cryptic speciation. However, the Antarctic Peninsula, the Weddell Sea and the East Antarctica populations of *N. australe* are effectively isolated, indicating that gene flow is limited. Furthermore, there is some genetic structure among populations within zones. We conclude that *N. australe* has successfully colonized large parts of the Antarctic marine ecosystem, despite its limited dispersal abilities.

The digestive system of sea spiders (Pycnogonida) presents peculiarities that have not been discussed in the context of their ecology or feeding behavior. The digestive system of two Mediterranean species, *Ammothella longipes* (Hodge 1864) and *Endeis spinosa* (Montagu 1808), is investigated and the ongoing digestive process observed. Major differences are observed in the proboscis, reflecting adaptation to their diet. The structures of mouth and pharyngeal filter as well as musculature of the proboscis are the main differential elements when comparing *A. longipes* to *E. spinosa*. Salivary products play an important role in the oral digestion. The digestive process in sea spiders differs from most marine arthropods mainly because of the absence of midgut gland cells and the presence of a unique multifunctional type of midgut epithelial cell. Epithelial cells are present in a small 'resting' form during starvation periods. During digestion, secretory granules are released to the midgut lumen and secondary lysosomes are formed, where digestion occurs. Residual bodies formed within the epithelial cell are released to the midgut lumen to be transported towards the hindgut.

Fatty acid analysis has been largely proven to be helpful in determining seasonal trophic links and the feeding behavior in organisms in which diet cannot be inferred from stomach content analyses. Seasonal variations in total fatty acid content (TFA) and fatty acid composition of *Ammothella longipes* are analyzed to establish its trophic links. The results of this study reveal that *A. longipes* may change its feeding behavior depending on the season and available food. This pycnogonid species appears as a carnivore during spring and early summer, but it seems to feed on detritus when availability of prey diminishes during winter. Notable high amounts of odd-chain fatty acids are found in summer-autumn for this species, which may come from bacteria acquired from the detrital diet or from *de novo* biosynthesis from propionate. TFA content of *A. longipes* did not present seasonal variations. This is in accordance to its reproductive activity, which occurs throughout the year except from May to July, period in which they adopt a carnivory diet.

Les aranyes de mar o Pycnogonida (Latreille 1810) són un extraordinari grup d'artròpodes marins; són estranys, fascinants i animals força primitius, fet que comporta una alta controvèrsia quant a afinitats amb altres grups. Estan distribuïdes per tot el món, i fins a dia d'avui, s'han descrit més de 1300 espècies i 80 gèneres. El següent resum sintetitza els treballs realitzats per tal de contribuir en l'estudi de la biogeografia i distribució batimètrica de les espècies antàrtiques, així com aportar nous coneixements sobre a la biologia alimentària de les espècies mediterrànies:

Les aigües antàrtiques estan caracteritzades pels alts nivells de riquesa específica i d'endemismes, i els picnogònids antàrtics són excel·lents representants d'aquesta alta diversificació. Avui dia s'han descrit 264 espècies en aigües australs, que representen el 19.6% de les espècies mundials; 107 espècies són endèmiques d'aigües antàrtiques, mentre que 63 són comunes a ambdues zones, antàrtica i sub-antàrtica. El gènere amb major riquesa és *Nymphon*, que compta amb 67 espècies. S'ha proposat la hipòtesi del refugi insular bentònic com a explicació de la distribució actual de les aranyes de mar australs, proposant com a origen l'Arc d'Escòcia. Aquesta hipòtesi, juntament amb la migració des de la zona magallànica, podria explicar la riquesa específica extraordinàriament alta del Mar d'Escòcia. Els resultats conclouen que gairebé el 30% de les espècies presenten una distribució circumpolar; l'augment de les expedicions que impliquen un major nombre de mostrejos ha fet que augmenti la circumpolaritat, i per tant, davallí la endemicitat zonal.

La informació bàsica sobre els patrons de distribució batimètrica, la diversitat d'espècies i la composició de la comunitat és escassa per a aquest grup. Les aportacions d'aquest treball quant a la distribució geogràfica contribueixen a comprendre millor les distribucions dels picnogònids antàrtics. *Pallenopsis kupei* és nou per a aigües antàrtiques, i sis espècies no s'havien trobat mai fins ara en aigües del Mar de Weddell. S'ha analitzat els patrons de distribució batimètrica en el Mar de Weddell, mostrant que la composició específica de la plataforma continental (des dels 100 fins als 900 m de fondària) difereix respecte a la del talús (a partir dels 900 m). Mentre que la majoria d'espècies estan confinades als límits de la plataforma continental, el talús està dominat bàsicament pel gènere *Nymphon*. Així, la profunditat sembla ser un factor important quant a la distribució de les aranyes de mar. Aquests resultats suporten la hipòtesi que els picnogònids antàrtics han evolucionat i diversificat a la plataforma continental, i posteriorment s'han submergit als fons profunds.

La conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield està caracteritzada per una sèrie de volcans isolats. La fauna d'aquestes estructures volcàniques s'ha analitzat per intentar esbrinar si els volcans eren actius durant el període mostrejat. Les famílies més abundants són Nymphonidae i Colossendeidae, tot i que la biomassa és molt major pels colossendeids. Això indica que aquests probablement estan utilitzant l'estratègia de la *K*, enlloc de l'estratègia de la *r* que és més típica dels petits nymphonids. La col·lecció és representativa del bentos de la zona



oest de l'Antàrtica. Les estructures volcàniques de la zona no estaven actives durant el mostreig.

Nymphon australe Hodgson 1902 és l'espècie més abundant d'aranya de mar a l'Oceà Austral. Aquesta espècie està considerada com a circumpolar, euribàtica i morfològicament variable. En aquest estudi, s'investiga l'estructura genètica de les poblacions de *N. australe* al llarg de l'Antàrtica, utilitzant dades d'ADN mitocondrial. Els resultats suporten la circumpolaritat suposada per aquesta espècie, sense indicació d'especiació críptica. No obstant, les poblacions de la Península Antàrtica, el Mar de Weddell i l'Est Antàrtic estan efectivament aïllades, indicant que el flux genètic és limitat. A més a més, existeix una certa estructura genètica entre poblacions dins d'una mateixa zona. Es conclou que *N. australe* ha colonitzat amb èxit gran part de l'ecosistema marí antàrtic, tot i la seva limitada capacitat de dispersió.

El sistema digestiu de les aranyes de mar no ha estat discutit en el context de la seva ecologia i comportament alimentari. S'ha estudiat el sistema digestiu de dues espècies, *Ammothella longipes* (Hodgson 1864) i *Endeis spinosa* (Montagu 1808), així com el procés digestiu que s'hi dona. Les diferències més importants s'han observat en la probòscide, reflectint adaptacions segons la dieta. L'estructura de la boca i del filtre de la faringe, així com la musculatura de la trompa, són els trets més diferents alhora de comparar les dues espècies. Els productes salivals juguen un paper important en la digestió oral. El seu procés digestiu dels picnogònids difereix del de la majoria de crustacis i xifosurs marins, bàsicament per l'absència de cèl·lules glandulars en el digestiu mig, i la presència d'una cèl·lula digestiva multifuncional. Les cèl·lules epitelials presenten un estat de repòs durant els períodes de dejú. Durant la digestió, els grànuls secretors són alliberats al lumen intestinal, i es formen els lisosomes secundaris, on es dona la digestió. Finalment, s'alliberen els cossos residuals al lumen per a ser excretats a través de l'anús.

L'anàlisi d'àcids grassos ha estat demostrat com una bona eina per a determinar les relacions tròfiques i el comportament alimentari dels organismes, dels quals la seva dieta no pot ser inferida a partir del contingut estomacal. Les variacions estacionals en el contingut d'àcids grassos totals (TFA) i la composició d'àcids grassos ha estat analitzada en *Ammothella longipes* per tal d'establir les seves relacions tròfiques. Els resultats revelen que *A. longipes* és capaç modificar la seva dieta depenent de l'època de l'any, i l'aliment disponible. Aquesta espècie sembla ser carnívora durant la primavera i primers d'estiu, però s'alimenta de detritus quan les preses ja no són tan assequibles, durant l'hivern. S'han detectat alts nivells de cadena senar durant l'estiu i tardor, que són indicadors de bacteris adquirits a través de la dieta detritívora, o bé a través de la síntesi *de novo* a partir de propionat. El contingut TFA en *A. longipes* es manté durant tot l'any. Aquest fet concorda amb la seva activitat reproductora, que té lloc durant tot l'any excepte de maig a juliol, període durant el qual, adquireix una dieta carnívora.

II.1. LES ARANYES DE MAR (PYCNOGONIDA)

Les aranyes de mar o Pycnogonida Latreille 1810 són un extraordinari grup d'artròpodes marins que conté més de 1300 espècies i 80 gèneres (Arango i Wheeler 2007; Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009) distribuïdes des de les aigües polars a les tropicals, des de les més abissals fins a les aigües someres a la línia de la costa (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Arango 2002; Munilla 1999). Les aranyes de mar adultes varien des d'un mil·límetre amb les potes esteses, en la majoria d'aigües tropicals i temperades, fins a 75 cm en alguna espècie antàrtica.

Després de les monografies més importants, com les de Hoek (1881, amb l'expedició del Challenger), Dohrn (1881, d'espècies de Nàpols), Sars (1891, de Noruega), Loman (1908, amb l'expedició del Siboga) i Bouvier (1923, amb espècies de França), la classe ha estat revisada per Helfer i Schlottke (1935), Fage (1949), King (1973) i Bamber (2007). Aquests treballs estaven basats en taxonomia i la descripció d'espècies.

Avui dia el classe Pycnogonida està definida per una sèrie d'autoapomorfies, les quals donen plenament suport a la monofília d'aquest grup (Dunlop i Arango 2005). Algunes d'aquestes autoapomorfies són la reducció del tronc (obligant el sistema digestiu i reproductor a migrar a les prolongacions laterals de les potes), la prominent probòscide externa, l'abdomen extremadament reduït, i la presència d'ovígers (parell d'apèndixs ventrals situats al segment cefàlic, on els mascles acostumen a portar les postes) (Fig. 1). Un altre aspecte peculiar i únic d'aquest grup que suporta la monofília és la presència d'algunes espècies polimèriques, amb un o dos segments extrems del cos, donant lloc a espècies amb 10 o 12 potes, respectivament (Arnaud i Bamber 1987).

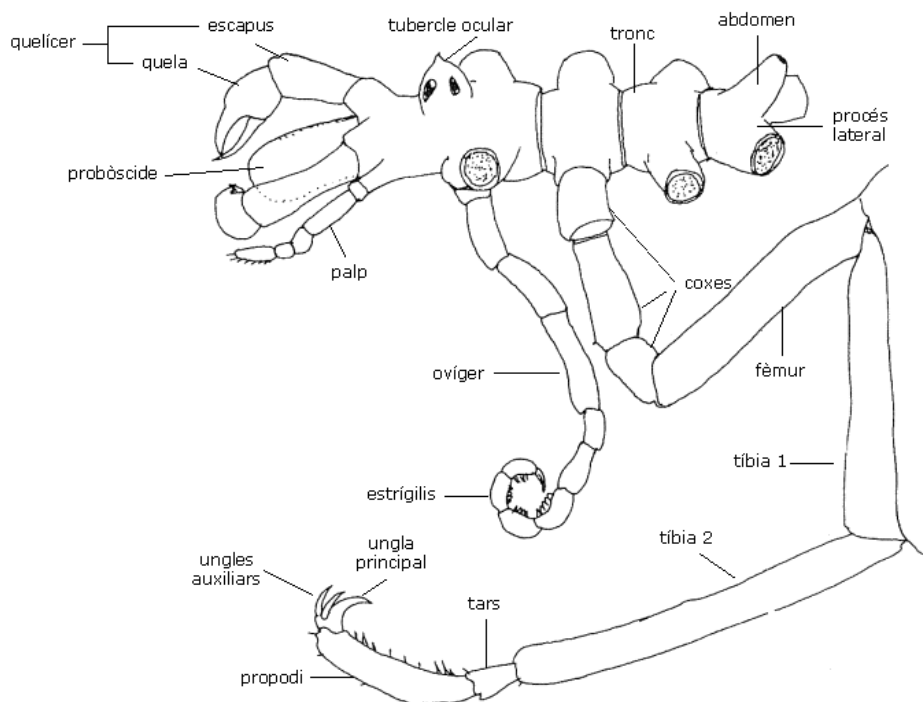


Figura 1. Aspecte general d'un pycnogònid, mostrant els noms de la terminologia emprada per aquest grup (modificat d'Arnaud i Bamber 1987).



II.1.1. Revisió sistemàtica i filogenètica

En els últims temps, s'està adquirint informació important de la història evolutiva de les aranyes de mar mitjançant les tècniques moleculars, que permeten distingir entre taxons i la relació d'aquests amb els canvis biològics i climàtics (Mahon et al. 2008; Arango et al. 2010; Krabbe et al. 2010). Els resultats revelen la presència d'espècies críptiques, suposant una important ampliació en el número d'espècies dins del taxó, així com un millor coneixement de la història evolutiva (Krabbe et al. 2010).

No obstant, la sistemàtica i filogenètica dels picnogònids ha estat durant molt de temps, i ho continua estant, en constant revisió.

II.1.1.1. Principis i mètodes actuals

Els estudis anteriors fets fins ara fa pocs anys estaven basats en la taxonomia clàssica (veure apartat II.1 per els treballs més importants). Recentment, s'han començat a desenvolupar estudis utilitzant l'anàlisi cladístic.

No obstant, l'anàlisi cladístic d'alts nivells de filogènia en els picnogònids utilitzant la morfologia presenta algunes dificultats associades al gran nombre de dades o caràcters que es codifiquen d'absències i als caràcters amb estadis transitoris (Hedgpeth 1955). Altres dificultats sorgeixen de la simplicitat morfològica externa dels picnogònids, i la manca d'informació de caràcters no relacionats amb estructures "inestables" (ex. palps, quelícers o ovígers; Arango 2003).

Aquests obstacles han propiciat la recerca de nous conjunts de caràcters que permetin donar suport o rebutjar les afinitats suggerides per la morfologia externa. Així, els estudis de filogènia molecular a alt nivell de relacions filogenètiques en picnogònids pot ajudar a resoldre algunes controvèrsies en la filogènia d'aquest grup, com ara la determinació de la família més primitiva (Ammotheidae proposat per Stock (1994) en estudis taxonòmics, o Austrodecidae proposat per Arango (2002) gràcies als anàlisis cladístics), o bé la discussió sobre la possible monofília (Stock 1994) o parafília (Arango 2002) dels Ammotheidae.

Tot i així, encara queden aspectes importants que s'han de resoldre necessàriament abans de proposar una nova filogènia del grup: és necessari un millor mostreig de diferents taxons dins dels picnogònids, així com l'addició de nous caràcters informatius, i la utilització de múltiples marcadors moleculars. Amb tot, els estudis integrats dels anàlisis filogenètics moleculars (amb múltiples marcadors) juntament amb els anàlisis de caràcters morfològics (ex. Arango i Wheeler 2007), auguren esperances en resoldre l'actual problemàtica en la filogènia de les aranyes de mar.

Paral·lelament, unes temàtiques que han restat oblidades durant els últims anys, donat l'important interès que ha despertat les noves eines moleculars, han estat l'ultraestructura comparada, i l'embriologia i desenvolupament larvari. L'actual coneixement del desenvolupament embriològic i larvari, així com la morfologia interna dels picnogònids està

basat en relativament pocs estudis (Jarvis i King 1972, 1975, 1978; King 1973, 1975; Miyazaki i Bilinski 2006; Fahrenbach i Arango 2007; Soler-Membrives et al. 2010a, quant a ultraestructura; Sanchez 1959; King 1973; Bain 2003; Gillespie i Bain 2006; Bogomolova 2007; Brenneis et al. 2008 quant a embriologia i desenvolupament larvari). La simplicitat morfològica externa incita a buscar en l'estructura interna i larvària altres caràcters que ens permetin comparar les aranyes de mar amb altres artròpodes propers (euquelicerats, euartròpodes o inclús altres grups externs més basals com ara tardígrads o onicòfors), així com entre famílies dins del mateix grup. Així, les característiques internes úniques en aquest grup, com ara l'aparell reproductiu de les femelles i mascles, l'oogènesi en femelles i el desenvolupament post embrionari en els mascles, l'estructura i funció del sistema digestiu, o bé la innervació dels quelícers durant el desenvolupament embrionari (veure revisió d'Arnaud i Bamber 1987 així com Brenneis et al. 2008), entre d'altres, són aspectes necessaris d'estudiar amb detall i que poden donar noves pistes alhora de clarificar la posició d'aquest grup en relació amb els altres artròpodes, i les relacions filogenètiques dins del mateix grup. Per últim, els treballs a través dels Hox gens (Jager et al. 2006; Manuel et al. 2006), implicats en el desenvolupament embrionari, són de gran utilitat alhora d'estudiar les homologies dels apèndixs anteriors en artròpodes, sobretot quan a l'esmenada innervació dels quelícers; per tant, per a la correcta classificació i posicionament dels picnogònids dins dels euartròpodes també sembla important l'aprofundiment en el coneixement dels Hox gens.

II.1.1.2. Relació amb els quelicerats (Chelicerata)

Recentment, l'interès vers els picnogònids ha anat creixent, donada la manca de certesa alhora de posicionar aquest grup dins els artròpodes. Alguns autors han realitzat estudis tant morfològics, com moleculars, incloent-hi registres fòssils i grups externs. En resum s'han proposat dues alternatives: per una banda, diversos estudis relacionen els picnogònids amb els quelicerats (Wheeler i Hayashi 1998; Giribet et al. 2005; Dunn et al. 2008), basant-se en el fet que comparteixen un primer apèndix quelat com a potencial sinapomorfia, a més de la pèrdua d'antenes i la tagmosi del cos prosoma-opistosoma (Fig. 2a); per altra banda, els picnogònids han estat proposats com a taxó germà de tots els altres euartròpodes existents (Giribet et al. 2001; Scholtz i Edgecombe 2006; Bamber 2007; Ungerer i Scholtz 2009), definint-los com a grup basal d'artròpodes (Fig. 2b). L'escassa existència de registres fòssils no ha ajudat a resoldre aquesta controvèrsia sobre la història evolutiva dels picnogònids.

El nom Cormogonida Zrzavý, Hypsa i Vlášková 1998 fou proposat com a taxó que inclou els euquelicerats i els euartròpodes mandibulats (ex. miriàpodes, insectes i crustacis). Així, els picnogònids seria un grup germà dels euartròpodes quedant així: (Pycnogonida (Euchelicerata + Mandibulata)); aquest fet implica que els Chelicerata *sensu lato* (Pycnogonida + Euchelicerata) seria un grup parafilètic.

Un estudi recent ha aplicat tècniques immunohistoquímiques en larves protonymphes i estadis embrionaris de diferents espècies d'aranyes de mar, per tal entendre com es dona el



desenvolupament neural dels quelícers (Brenneis et al. 2008). L'estudi conclou que els quelícers dels picnogònids corresponen clarament als quelícers dels euquelicerats i a les antenes dels mandibulats, però no a les antenes del onicòfors. Així aposten per un enllaç més aviat basal amb els actuals euartròpodes. No obstant, els autors admeten que resta per respondre si el primer parell d'apèndix quelats és una apomorfia dels quelicerats, o bé un caràcter plesiomòfic en el gran grup dels euartròpodes.

Recentment, Dunlop (2010) en un treball d'història geològica a través de fòssils afirma que, suposant que els picnogònids són quelicerats, i tenint un registre fòssil cambrià, llavors les aranyes de mar representen l'ocurrència més antiga dels Chelicerata *sensu lato*.

Amb tot, la controvèrsia continua; el més recent estudi dut a terme per Regier et al. (2010) basat en l'anàlisi filogenètic de gens nuclears codificants de proteïnes, relaciona els picnogònids amb els quelicerats, considerant-los com a grup germà dels euquelicerats. No obstant, els autors mateixos reconeixen que aquesta hipòtesi és la que resulta més recolzada pels seus anàlisis que no pas la de situar els picnogònids en un grup encara més basal, però accepten que el valor de suport (o *bootstrap*) és tant sols entre 74 i 49%, per sota del que normalment es considera vàlid, així que conclouen l'apartat sense resoldre la problemàtica.

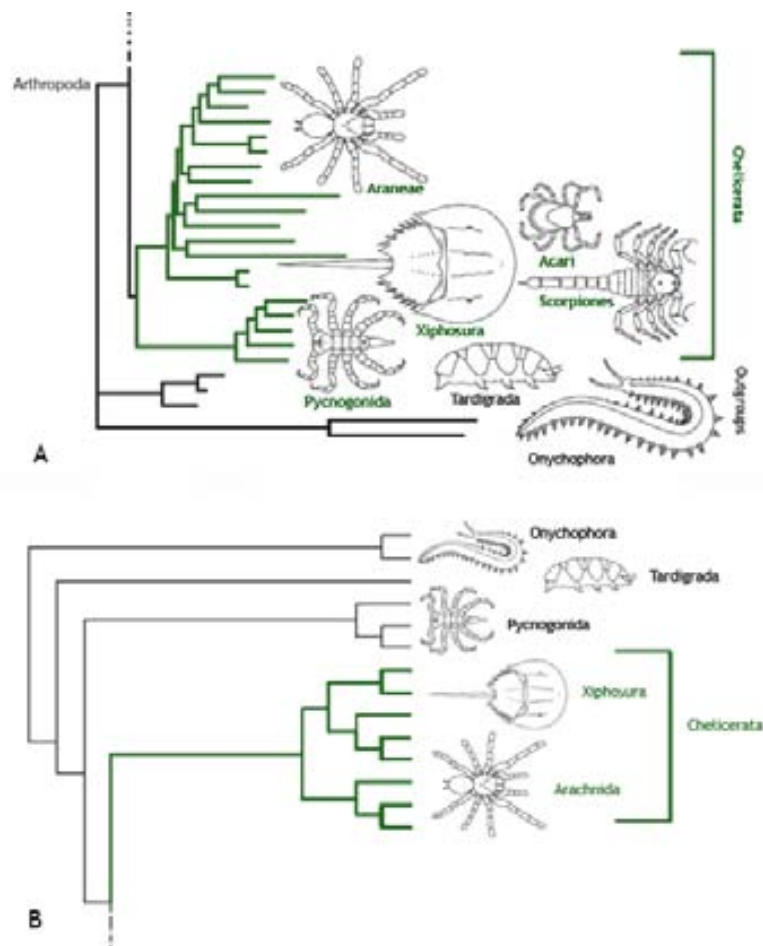


Figura 2. Possibles relacions filogenètiques dels picnogònids dins dels artròpodes. A: mostra la relació dels picnogònids amb els quelicerats, considerant-los com a grup germà dels euquelicerats (modificat de Regier et al. 2010). B: mostra la relació dels picnogònids com a grup basal dins dels euartròpodes, fora dels quelicerats (modificat de Giribet et al. 2001).

II.1.1.3. Els picnogònids, un grup monofilètic

La posició incerta de les aranyes de mar no tan sols es veu reflectida alhora d'analitzar les relacions d'aquest grup dins dels artròpodes, sinó que també queda palesa en la manca d'enteniment de les relacions filogenètiques dins del mateix grup.

Alguns estudis s'han emmarcat en les relacions filogenètiques dels picnogònids a nivell de família, però cap d'ells ha utilitzat un anàlisi cladístic explícit (però veure Lovely 1999). El primer en fer una filogènia d'aquest grup fou Hedgpeth (1955), qui va proposar la presència de vuit famílies, basant-se en presència i complexitat de quelícers, palps i ovígers. Tot i així, ell mateix deixava palesa la quasi impossibilitat de dibuixar els arbres filogenètics, en referir-se a la difícil inclusió en famílies els gèneres “de transició”, com ara *Pallenopsis* (Hedgpeth 1947), que actuaven més aviat com a connectors entre famílies.

Fou el mateix Hedgpeth qui va parlar de l'evolució del grup basada en la reducció dels apèndixs cefàlics. Així doncs, els Nymphonidae seria un grup dels més basals i més diversificat, amb la presència de quelícers funcionals, palps llargs i ovígers amb 10 artells; per contra, l'absència d'apèndix seria considerada com a estat apomòrfic i, per tant, els Pycnogonidae serien considerats com el grup més evolucionat, amb la total absència d'apèndixs cefàlics. No obstant, l'autor conclou que no gosa situar les famílies en nivells alts o baixos en una escala vertical evolutiva, i proposa una diversificació de les famílies en totes direccions, a partir d'un nucli central.

En Fry (1978) va examinar les similituds morfològiques entre les aranyes de mar per reclssificar el grup, utilitzant una aproximació fenètica. Els resultats d'aquest anàlisi van donar lloc a l'aparició de 20 noves famílies, fet que va provocar el baix suport d'altres especialistes (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Munilla 1999).

Un recent estudi (Stock 1994) basat en la comparació dels picnogònids existents amb el fòssil *Palaeoisopus problematicus*, va reprendre la hipòtesi basada en la reducció dels apèndixs cefàlics; en aquest cas, però, s'assumia els apèndixs amb 10 artells com a estat plesimòrfic. Així doncs, es proposava als Ammotheidae com a llinatge basal d'aquest grup monofilètic, amb *Eurycyde* com a possible gènere actual més primitiu (veure Fig. 3A). Altres autors, com Munilla (1999) també van donar suport a aquesta filogènia basada en la “evolució regressiva”, o pèrdua gradual dels apèndixs i nombre de parells de porus genitals al llarg del temps evolutiu (Fig. 3B). No obstant, la hipòtesi d'una tendència evolutiva en la successiva reducció del nombre d'artells dels apèndixs no havia estat testada amb les actuals tècniques cladístiques, fins els recents estudis d'Arango (2002, 2003). Aquests treballs no suporten aquesta hipòtesi, ja que el resultat més parsimoniós relaciona els Nymphonidae amb els Callipallenidae i els situa en una posició relativament derivada.

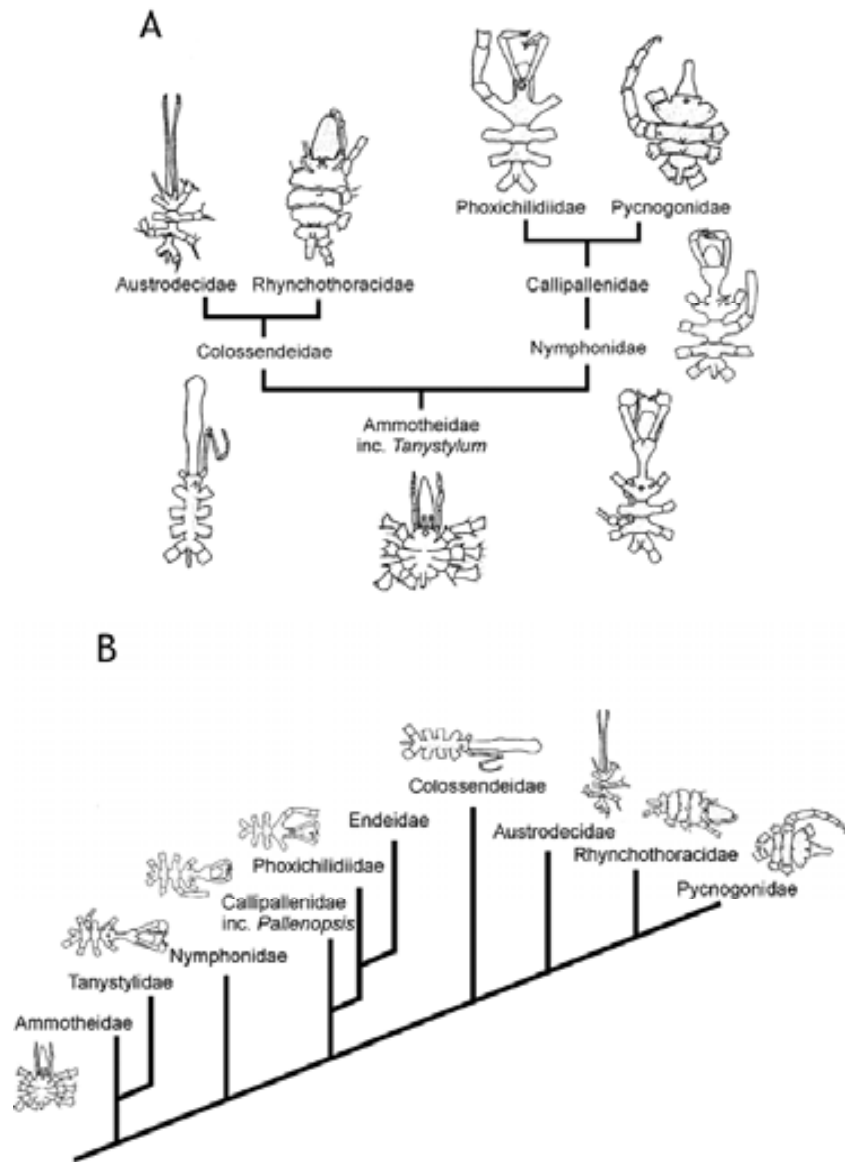


Figura 3. Hipòtesis més recents de relacions filogenètiques entre les aranyes de mar. A: esquema proposat per Stock (1994) després de la seva reclassificació basada en la hipòtesi de reducció d'apèndixs. B: modificació de Munilla (1999). Il·lustracions de Hedgpeth (1948) i Stock (1989, 1991).

La filogènia més recent proposada per Arango i Wheeler (2007), usant estudis integrats d'anàlisi filogenètics moleculars (amb múltiples marcadors) juntament amb l'anàlisi cladístic de caràcters morfològics, tampoc suporta la tendència de reducció evolutiva dels apèndixs. Així, la reducció o pèrdua de quelícers dels Ammotheidae seria una tendència que es donaria en taxons no relacionats, enlloc de ser un dels caràcters diagnòstics més importants en la família Ammotheidae, com fins ara proposava la taxonomia tradicional. Per tant, la validesa de la família Ammotheidae com a grup monofilètic havia de ser revisada. El mateix treball proposa la família Callipallenidae (excepte el gènere *Pallenopsis*) com a monofilètica, considerant un node amb quatre sinapomorfies morfològiques, i un clade sòlid format per Nymphonidae i Callipallenidae, mai proposat abans, explicat per quatre transformacions de caràcters morfològics. En aquest treball també, la segmentació extra del tronc en els

Nymphonidae resulta com un esdeveniment independent no relacionat amb els Colossendeidae i Pycnogonidae, així la polimeria de segments del tronc no pot ser considerat com una sinapomorfia de les tres famílies. La figura 4 mostra la darrera filogènia fins avui dia, tot i que futurs estudis més exhaustius, tant en augmentar el nombre d'espècies de diferents famílies, com en incloure més caràcters no genotípics, seran necessaris per augmentar l'estabilitat dels clades proposats en aquesta filogènia.

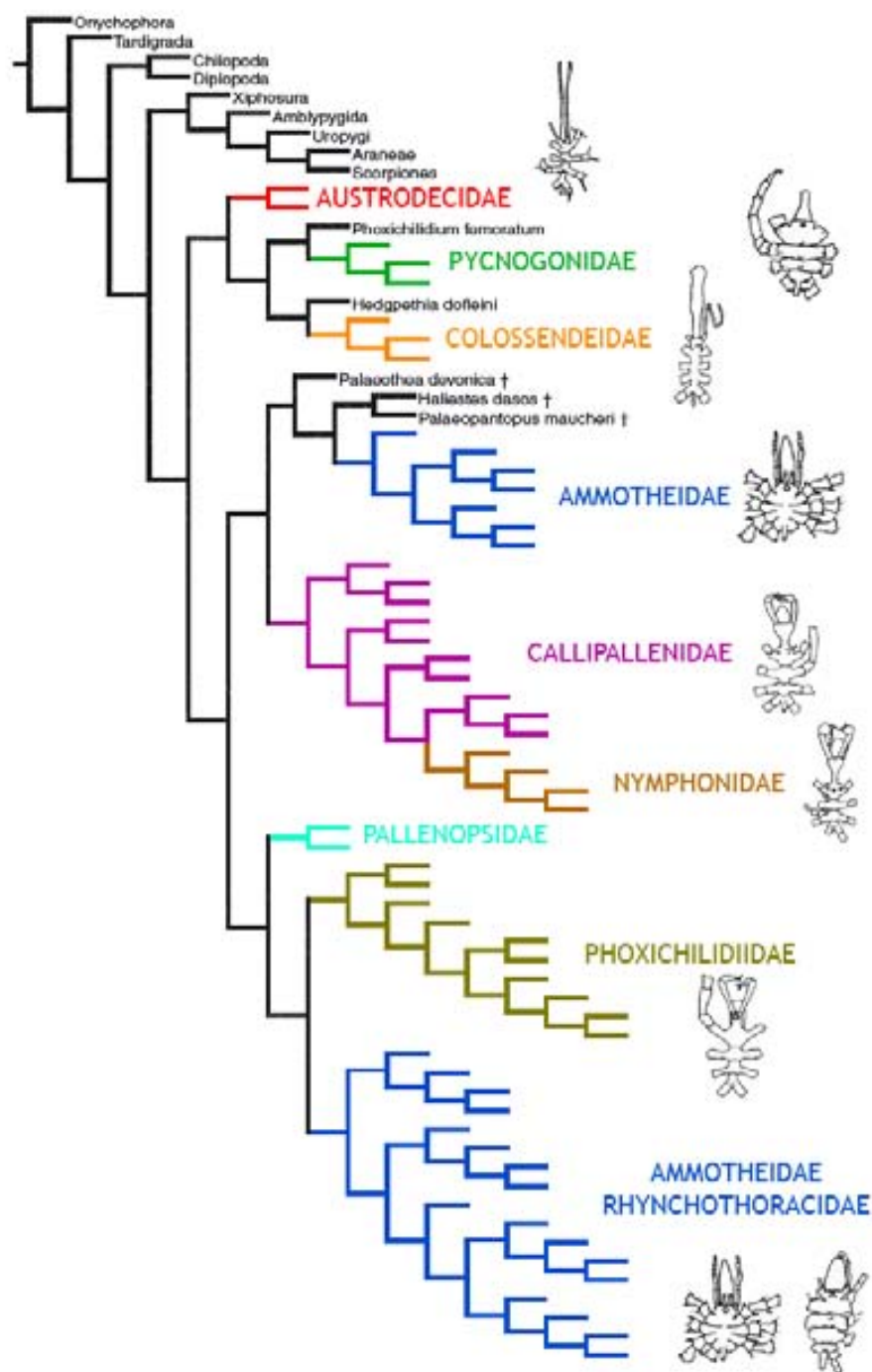


Figura 4. Filogènia actual de les aranyes de mar proposada per Arango i Wheeler (2007). Il·lustracions de Hedgpeth (1948) i Stock (1989, 1991)



II.1.2. BIOGEOGRAFIA

II.1.2.1. Hàbitat

Els picnogònids han colonitzat tots els mars i oceans coneguts; es troben tant a les aigües més costaneres com als fons abissals, i tant en les aigües gèlides polars (àrtiques i antàrtiques) com en els mars més tropicals (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Arango 2003). Tot i ser un grup prou antic, es caracteritza per presentar una gran plasticitat per adaptar-se a l'ambient en el que es troba. En funció de l'hàbitat que ocupen acostumen a presentar adaptacions morfològiques concretes (Arnaud i Bamber 1987). Per exemple, els especialitzats en els ambients abissals acostumen a ser cecs (ex. *Nymphon australe* de profunditats); les espècies lliures de les barreres de coralls, on la batuda de les onades és important, presenten el cos compactat, espai reduït entre els processos laterals, i potes curtes però robustes; espècies atlàntiques i mediterrànies, també exposades a la batuda de les onades, presenten adaptacions com les prèviament esmenades (ex. *Pycnogonum litorale*), però també potes llargues i corbades, i ungles auxiliars per ancorar-se bé a les algues típicament arborescent on són freqüents (ex. *Ammothella longipes*).

Tot i que sempre es parla de les aranyes de mar com exclusivament marines, certes espècies es consideren força eurihalines, ja que també s'han citat en estuaris (ex. *Nymphon rubrum* a Holanda); en aquestes, el rang de tolerància salina pot arribar al 11-12 ‰ (Wolff 1976), tot i que la majoria d'espècies atlàntiques i mediterrànies són capaces de suportar salinitats fins al 15 ‰ (ex. *Achelia echinata*, *Callipallene brevisrostris*, *Pycnogonum litorale*). Per altra banda, espècies típiques de llacs salats, com ara *Tanystylum conirostre*, pot suportar salinitats del 45 ‰ (Pérez-Ruzafa i Munilla 1992).

La majoria de picnogònids els trobem en ambients rocosos, sobre algues o sobre invertebrats bentònics, però també n'hi ha especialitzats en zones sorrenques, com ara *Nymphonella tapetis*, *Ascorhynchus arenicola* i *A. simile*, presentant inclús especialitzacions morfològiques d'un tipus de vida infaunal (ex. manca de pigment, reducció ocular o cecs i cutícula tova i glabre) (Arnaud i Bamber 1987).

Les aranyes de mar mediterrànies litorals han estat relativament ben estudiades durant els últims 20 anys. Treballs com els d'Arnaud (1976, 1987), Krapp (1973), Munilla (1993a i b), Chimenz (2000), i Chimenz i Lattanzi (2003), donen força coneixement sobre la picnogonifauna de la conca occidental de la Mar Mediterrània, mentre que la conca oriental resta molt més poc estudiada, bàsicament tan sols amb els treballs de Krapp-Schickel i Krapp (1975) i Krapp et al. (2008). Concretament, els picnogònids de les comunitats vegetals fotòfiles de la Mar Catalana han estat descrites per de Haro (1965, 1966a i b, 1978) i Munilla (1981, 1982). La taula I mostra les diferents espècies de picnogònids mediterranis trobats en les principals comunitats vegetals (algals i fanerogàmiques) de les aigües infralitorals catalanes. L'alga bruna *Halopteris scoparia* és la més rica quan a riquesa específica, però també quant a abundància relativa (de Haro 1966a, 1967; Munilla 1978; Munilla i de Haro

1984); així, es denota que la morfologia arborescent d'aquesta alga proporciona cobert, aliment i protecció als picnogònids, més que no pas *Padina pavonica* o *Corallina mediterranea*, la morfologia de les quals no ofereix protecció per a les aranyes de mar.

Taula I. Presència i absència dels picnogònids del litoral català en funció del substrat on s'han citat. A la part inferior de la taula es mostra la proporció d'espècies presents en cada hàbitat respecte el total de les espècies. +: presència; -: absència.

	<i>Halopteris scoparia</i>	<i>Cystoseira sp.</i>	<i>Padina pavonica</i>	<i>Corallina mediterranea</i>	<i>Jania rubens</i>	<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>
<i>Ammothella longipes</i>	+	+	+	-	+	+
<i>Ammothella biunguiculata</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Ammothella uniunguiculata</i>	+	+	+	-	+	-
<i>Achelia echinata</i>	+	-	-	+	-	+
<i>Achelia langi</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-
<i>Achelia simplex</i>	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Achelia vulgaris</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Ascorhynchus castelli</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Tanystylum conirostre</i>	+	+	+	+	-	-
<i>Tanystylum orbiculare</i>	+	+	-	+	+	+
<i>Trygaeus communis</i>	+	+	-	+	+	-
<i>Anoplodactylus angulatus</i>	+	+	+	-	+	+
<i>Anoplodactylus petiolatus</i>	+	-	-	+	-	+
<i>Anoplodactylus pygmaeus</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-
<i>Anoplodactylus virescens</i>	+	+	+	+	-	+
<i>Endeis spinosa</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Pycnogonum pusillum</i>	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Pycnogonum littorale</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Pycnogonum nodulosum</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Callipallene brevirostris</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Callipallene emaciata</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-
<i>Callipallene phantoma</i>	-	+	+	-	-	+
	20/22	13/22	8/22	8/22	9/22	9/22

No obstant s'han descrit, encara que amb ocurrències menys freqüents, algunes espècies mediterrànies arenícoles, com ara *Ascorhynchus arenicola* de poca fondària, o *A. simile* (5-90 m de fondària) (Arnaud i Bamber 1987).

Quant a les espècies batials i abissals de la Mediterrània, és necessari dur a terme mostrejos específics, ja que és molt limitat el coneixement que es té de les aranyes de mar de profunditat d'aquestes aigües.

Les espècies antàrtiques, en canvi, acostumen a habitar sobre el mateix fons marí, tant sobre substrat rocós com fangós, o bé sovint sobre altres invertebrats marins com ara equinoderms, esponges, briozous, hidrozous o antozous, entre d'altres (veure Fig. 5).



Figura 5. Dalt d'esquerra a dreta: *Ammothea clausi* sobre esponges, antozous, i equinoderms en fons rocós, respectivament. Baix esquerra i mig: *Decolopoda australis* sobre esponges i fons rocós, respectivament; dreta: *Nymphon australe* sobre briozous i equinoderms. Copyright © David Cothran.

Així els picnogònids que viuen a la superfície d'esponges, hidrozous o briozous podrien fer servir els hostes tan sols com a substrat dur, o bé també es podrien afavorir de l'aportació d'aigua oxigenada i aliment dels corrents induïts per aquests invertebrats filtradors o suspensívors (Arnaud i Bamber 1987). Les aranyes de mar que s'han trobat sobre equinoderms sembla que viuen en una aparent simbiosi; així els picnogònids netegen la superfície oral dels asteroides mentre que s'alimenten, els quals ofereixen protecció a canvi. També són importants en aigües antàrtiques els epibionts dels picnogònids (Arnaud 1972), en els que s'hi inclouen esponges, hidrozous, briozous, braquiòpodes, foraminífers, serpúlids, cirrípedes, nematodes lliures i inclús mol·luscs prosobranquis (Hedgpeth 1964). També s'ha citat puntualment l'ocurrència de sangoneres sobre els grans colossendeïds i ammotheïds, fent-los servir com a vehicle de transport entre hoste i hoste (Schiaparelli, comunicació personal).

II.1.2.2. Distribució geogràfica

La informació disponible de la distribució geogràfica de les aranyes de mar està, o pot estar esbiaixada per la gran intensitat d'estudi i mostrejos en algunes àrees, particularment prop dels centres d'investigació marina (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Coll et al. 2010). Un exemple seria la Mediterrània occidental, que és molt més coneguda que no pas l'oriental, igual que l'Atlàntic Nord ho és respecte l'Atlàntic Sud.

En general, doncs, s'ha observat que, al augmentar el nombre de mostrejos en diferents zones (un major coneixement de la distribució de les espècies), disminueix l'endemisme de les espècies. Un exemple clar d'aquest fet s'ha observat al continent antàrtic. En aquest, fins l'any 2000, s'havia recomptat un total de 52 espècies endèmiques de les diferents regions geogràfiques de l'Antàrtica, i 45 espècies es consideraven de distribució circumpolar (present

en totes les regions geogràfiques); set anys després, al 2007, el recompte de les espècies circumpolars havia augmentat a 55 espècies, i per tant, les espècies considerades endèmiques d'alguna de les regions havia disminuït fins a 42 espècies (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009).

Un problema que porta intrínsec aquest fet, és el gran nombre de sinonímies que s'han detectat en conèixer millor les espècies i les seves distribucions, fent necessària una revisió taxonòmica acurada d'aquest grup. Parcialment, la creació de la "Pycnabase" (Bamber i El Nagar 2007) ha ajudat a resoldre algunes d'aquestes ambigüitats en aquest grup.

Com ja em dit en l'apartat anterior, la fauna litoral de la Mar Mediterrània ha estat força ben estudiada (veure referències en l'apartat II.1.2.1). En resum, un total de 56 espècies han estat citades a la Mar Mediterrània (Chimenz i Lattanzi 2003), 19 de les quals presenten distribució atlàntica-mediterrània, mentre de 14 són endèmiques de la Mediterrània. Els gèneres amb major riquesa específica són *Anoplodactylus* (presentant 10 espècies), *Callipallene* (6 espècies) i *Ammothella* i *Rhynchothorax*, amb 5 espècies cadascun. La colonització de les aigües mediterrànies ha estat per una banda a través de l'estret de Gibraltar, provenint de les atlàntiques (ex. *Rhynchothorax mediterraneus*, *R. Monnioti*, *R. Anophthalmus*). Més important és encara la colonització d'espècies indo-pacífiques per la migració lessepsiana provinent del Mar Roig (ex. *Anoplodactylus digitatus*, *A. portus*, *Pigrogromitus timsanus*), a través del Canal de Suez (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Chimenz i Lattanzi 2003). No obstant, poden trobar-se cites puntuals provinents del transport amb els cascos dels vaixells, com és el cas de la troballa d'*Ammothea hilgendorfi* al mar Adriàtic, quan és una espècie molt freqüent en aigües pacífiques (Krapp i Sconfiatti 1983). *Pycnogonum nodulosum* és la única espècie mediterrània comuna amb la fauna sud-africana. En la Mar Catalana, 34 de les 56 espècies mediterrànies (60%) han estat descrites (Projecte Picnolb, resultats preliminars); els gèneres amb major riquesa específica també són *Anoplodactylus* (amb 6 espècies), i *Callipallene* i *Ammothella*, amb 5 i 4 espècies respectivament; 12 espècies presenten una distribució atlàntica-mediterrània, tan sols dues espècies són endèmiques mediterrànies (*Trygaeus communis* i *Rhynchothorax voxorinum*) i cap de les espècies lepsiànes ha colonitzat fins avui dia aquestes aigües.

L'Antàrtica està sent cada vegada més estudiada, tot i que encara resten zones poc explorades, com ara la Zona Est i la mar d'Amundsen (Barnes i Conlan 2007). Les aigües antàrtiques són més riques que les àrtiques, segurament gràcies a que han estat més mostrejades, així com gràcies a la seva història geològica (veure apartat II.2.1), i inclou la majoria d'espècies polimèriques (ex. *Pentanympyon antarcticum*, *Decolopoda australis*, ambdues amb 10 potes, i *Dodecolopoda mawsoni* de 12 potes) (Arnaud i Bamber 1987). Aquestes últimes són molt rares, i a causa de la seva gran mida que fa difícil que passin desapercebudes en les mostres, la seva singularitat s'accentua. Les espècies més comunes en les aigües antàrtiques són les que pertanyen al gènere *Colossendeis* i *Nymphon* (Soler-Membrives et al. 2009), sent *Nymphon australe* la més freqüent (Child 1995). La fauna sub-antàrtica té origen en la fauna antàrtica, amb gèneres compartits, però la isolació que ha patit el continent ha permès una certa diferenciació a nivell d'espècies (Arango et al. 2010).



Tot i l'aïllament antàrtic, les isolades illes sub-antàrtiques romanen sota la influència de la plataforma continental antàrtica, probablement per migracions al llarg dels crestes oceàniques.

Generalment, els picnogònids tenen una capacitat migradora força limitada, donada l'absència d'un estat larvari planctònic, fet que els proporcionaria una alta taxa d'isolació i possiblement d'especiació (Arango et al. 2010); no obstant, el gènere de gran mida *Colossendeis*, pot arribar a caminar relativament llargues distàncies a través del fons marí (Chimenz i Gravina 2001). Per altra banda, s'ha observat que algunes espècies batipelàgiques i bentòniques poden separar-se del substrat i ser transportades per els corrents marins a mitja o llarga distància, ja sigui damunt d'algues o altres animals, o de manera lliure. Altres excepcions a la limitada capacitat de dispersió són aquelles espècies, o les seves larves, que parasiten meduses, i per tant, poden ser transportades amb els moviments planctònics (Child i Harbison 1986).

II.1.2.3. Distribució batimètrica

Les distribucions batimètriques conegudes dels picnogònids també poden patir el biaix anteriorment esmenat; així, tenim un millor coneixement dels picnogònids de les aigües costaneres, que no pas de les espècies profundes de mar obert. També, les expedicions a les aigües més profundes acostumen a resultar amb l'aparició de noves espècies, o espècies ja descrites que amplien el seu rang de distribució geogràfic (Soler-Membrives et al. 2009). No obstant, algunes espècies de les infravalorades aigües profundes presenten distribucions mundials (ex. *Colossendeis angusta*, *Pallenopsis mollissima*) (Hedgpeth 1948; Bamber 1985a).

Generalment s'entén per "aigües profundes" aquelles que estan per sota de la plataforma continental, situada als 200 m de profunditat (mitja mundial); així la fauna batial és aquella situada al talús, entre els 200 m i els 4000 m de profunditat, i per sota del talús, fins als 6000 m de profunditat s'anomena ja fauna abissal; les poques espècies presents per sota dels 6000 m s'anomenen espècies hadals. Fins avui dia s'han descrit unes 96 espècies mundialment abissals (Arnaud i Bamber 1987).

La Mar Mediterrània és una mar formada molt recentment des del punt de vista geològic. Així les aigües profundes són força pobres, ja que provenen de la recolonització de l'Atlàntic a partir de les aigües superficials. Un clar exemple n'és l'espècie més profunda resident d'aigües mediterrànies, *Paranympyon spinosum*, present per sota dels 1000 m de profunditat (Munilla 1993b), i que també es troba a ambdós cantons de l'Atlàntic. Per altra banda el fet que una tercera part de les espècies descrites a la Mar Mediterrània presentin distribució atlàntica-mediterrània recolza també aquesta via de colonització.

La plataforma continental antàrtica presenta una característica excepcional respecte a la resta de plataformes dels altres mars i oceans; aquesta es troba excepcionalment profunda, sobre els 800-900 m de fondària, com a conseqüència de les grans capes de gel antàrtics que fan pressió sobre la plataforma (Brandt et al. 2007; Clarke 2003) (veure apartat II.2.1). Molt

l·ligades a aquestes fondàries es troben les diferents comunitats d'aranyes de mar; un estudi batimètric dut a terme en aigües del Mar de Weddell (un dels més ben mostrejats, i que pot servir d'exemple als altres mars antàrtics) per Soler-Membrives et al. (2009) descriu un clar patró de distribució batimètric en el que es distingeixen tres comunitats diferents: una comunitat d'aigües someres (entre els 100 i 200 m), una comunitat de plataforma, i una tercera comunitat menys diversa i abundant que l'anterior, la profunda o de talús, a partir dels 800-900 m de fondària.

II.1.3. ECOLOGIA

Les aranyes de mar són un grup poc estudiat, segurament perquè és considerat com un petit grup aberrant d'artròpodes que, tot i habitar tots els ambients bentònics marins, usualment es troben en baixes abundàncies, molt ben camuflats, i per manca d'importància econòmica (Arango 2003). El seu efecte com a predadors no ha estat encara determinat; no obstant, en hàbitats profunds on pocs altres animals són capaços de viure, o inclús a l'Antàrtica, on són molt abundants, poden jugar un paper important en certs microhàbitats de l'ecosistema bentònic.

La majoria dels picnogònids són de vida lliure, tot i que s'han descrit algunes formes comensals i paràsites (Arnaud 1978; Benson i Chivers 1960; Russell i Hedgpeth 1990) associades amb hostes celenterats, porífers, mol·luscs i equinoderms; són generalment epibèntoniques, amb algunes excepcions batipelàgiques (Child i Harbison 1986, Pagès et al. 2007).

II.1.3.1. Biologia alimentària

La dieta i les relacions tròfiques de la majoria de les aranyes de mar romanen encara desconegudes. Tot i així, diversos estudis basats en el comportament alimentari (Bain 1991; Stock 1978; Wyer i King 1974) van comprovar que els picnogònids poden obtenir energia d'altres fonts d'aliment que el detritus i algues. Són coneguts com a depredadors voraçs de diversos invertebrats sèssils o amb poca capacitat de moviment, com hidroids (Fry 1965; Prell 1909; Russel i Hedgpeth 1990; Bain 1991), antozous (Bamber 1985b; Arango 2001; Braby et al. 2009), briozous (Fry 1965) i mol·luscs bivalves i nudibrànquis (Lotz 1968; Rogers et al. 2000; Arango i Brodie 2003); sorprenentment tot i la escassa capacitat de moviment de les aranyes de mar, altres cites han descrit els picnogònids depredant preses molt mòbils, com ara petits poliquets (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Soler-Membrives et al. 2010a) i crustacis copèpodes (Lotz 1968) entre d'altres. En total s'ha descrit 49 espècies de picnogònids depredant 64 espècies de preses diferents; 19 de les espècies s'alimenten d'hidroids, 8 són carronyaires i 6 detritívores. S'ha descrit 22 espècies paràsites, bàsicament de mol·luscs i equinoderms, de les quals s'alimenten.



No obstant, donat que no s'ha trobat restes de les preses difícilment digeribles (setes, quitina, etc.) a l'interior del digestiu dels picnogònids, sembla ser que les espècies depredadores no ingereixen completament tota la presa, sinó que insereixen la seva probòscide a les parts més toves de la presa, i succionen els seus líquids (Arnaud i Bamber 1987; Soler-Membrives et al. 2010a). Encara més excepcional és la cita de Sheerwood et al. (1998) en la que observa als picnogònids obtenint metabòlits i toxines de les seves preses.

El sistema alimentari comença a la boca, situada a l'extrem distal de la probòscide de simetria triradiada (Schlottke 1935; Sanchez 1959; King 1973; Miyazaki 2002); a continuació comença la faringe que té forma de sac buit, i al qual a diferents alçades en funció de l'espècie, presenta un filtre (també anomenat *oyster basket sieve*) amb la funció d'evitar que partícules que poden danyar el digestiu continuïn el seu pas cap al curt esòfag (Schlottke 1933); la boca, faringe i esòfag formen la part anterior del sistema digestiu (*o foregut*), tota ella recoberta internament per una fina capa cuticular. Tot seguit, separat per una valva tripartida, comença el digestiu mig o *midgut*. Aquest tub digestiu mig recorre tot el tronc i s'estén a través de cecs cap a les extremitats; aquests cecs, en funció de les espècies, poden estendre's fins a diferents nivells o artells de la pota, i en algunes espècies pot inclús estendre's cap a la probòscide o quelícers (Richards i Fry 1978; veure taula II). El tub digestiu mig es connecta al digestiu posterior o *hindgut*, situat al reduït opistosoma, a través d'una altra valva tripartida. Aquest digestiu posterior, també d'origen ectodèrmic i per tant recobert internament per una estreta capa de cutícula, acaba amb l'anús que no és res més que una petita comissura oberta a la part distal de l'opistosoma (Fahrenbach i Arango 2007).

Taula II. Extensió dels cecs intestinals en algunes espècies de picnogònids; modificat de Richards i Fry (1978).

S'estenen cap a la probòscide		Fins al final del propodus	
<i>Colossendeis</i> ssp.	<i>Nymphon gracile</i>	<i>Pallenopsis vanhoffeni</i>	<i>Nymphon rubrum</i>
<i>Endeis spinosa</i>	<i>Phoxichidium femoratum</i>	<i>Achelia echinata</i>	<i>Ammothea carolinensis</i>
<i>Nymphon brachyrhynchum</i>		<i>Endeis spinosa</i>	<i>Colossendeis proboscidea</i>
		<i>Nymphon australe</i>	<i>Colossendeis wilsoni</i>
		<i>Nymphon gracile</i>	<i>Decolopoda australis</i>
		<i>Nymphon hirtipes</i>	<i>Colossendeis australis</i>
		<i>Nymphon orcadense</i>	
Fins al 2n segment de les potes			
	<i>Rhynchothorax mediterraneus</i>		
Fins al 4rt segment de les potes			
	<i>Pantopipetta</i> ssp.		
Fins al 6è segment de les potes			
<i>Nymphopsis</i>	<i>Pycnogonum littorale</i>		
<i>Phoxichidium femoratum</i>			

Ben poc es coneix sobre l'alimentació de les larves. Mentre que les larves de la família Ammotheidae aparenten alimentar-se del mateix que els adults, sembla ser que no succeeix el mateix pel que fa les larves d'Endeidae, Phoxichilidiidae i Pycnogonidae (Fry 1965).

II.1.3.2. Altres aspectes biològics

Els treballs més representatius quant a aspectes biològics de les aranyes de mar són els de King (1973) i Arnaud i Bamber (1987). El sistema nerviós dels picnogònids no és tan peculiar com altres aspectes de la biologia d'aquests grup, sinó que segueix l'estructura general d'un artròpode; així, consta d'un protocervell que enerva als ulls i la part dorsal de la probòscide, un deutrocervell molt reduït que enerva els quelícers, un minúscul tritocervell que enerva els palps, un gangli subesofàgic que enerva els ovígers i la part ventral de la probòscide, i la cadena nerviosa ventral, amb un parell de ganglis per a cadascun dels metàmers troncal (Fig. 6) que s'encarreguen d'enervar les potes; l'abdomen està enervat per un o dos nervis terminals que provenen del parell de ganglis més posteriors de la cadena ventral. El tubercle ocular, que pot variar des d'una protuberància alta i punteguda a un tubercle baix, generalment conté els quatre ulls pigmentats, tot i que espècies psammòfiles o abissals poden ser cegues (ex. *Nymphon australe* var. *caecum*), o bé presentar ulls no pigmentats.

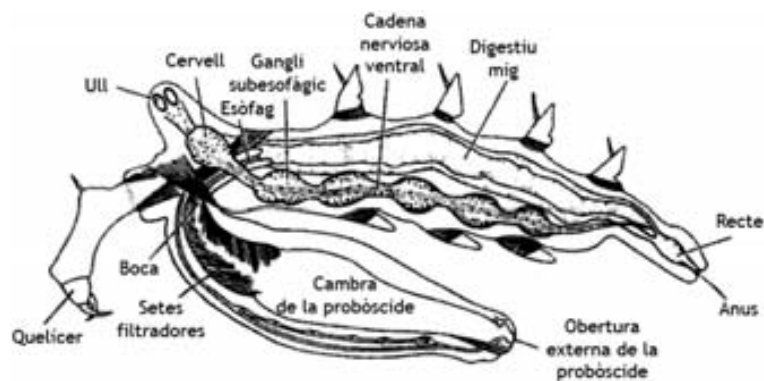


Figura 6. Tall longitudinal d'una aranya de mar mostrant el canal alimentari, la cadena nerviosa ventral, i la probòscide amb el filtre de la faringe; modificat de Fage (1949).

En canvi, la reproducció de les aranyes de mar presenta uns trets i peculiaritats exclusives d'aquest taxó. Els picnogònids presenten sexes separats i dimorfisme sexual. La gònada està situada al tronc, té forma tubular, de vegades bifurcada en U, i amb prolongacions dins les potes. Presenten d'un a quatre parells de gonòpors localitzats a la zona ventral de les segones coxes de les potes. Existeixen uns trets característics de dimorfisme sexual: per una banda, els mascles sovint presenten unes glàndules femorals del ciment, que evacuen els seus continguts generalment a través de porus tubulars; per altra banda, els gonòpors masculins són més petits i rodons, a diferència dels femenins que són més grans i ovalats, i que es troben a totes les potes. A més, durant el període reproductor les femelles tenen els fèmurs dilatats, com a conseqüència dels òvuls que maduren al seu interior; en canvi, els mascles es diferencien perquè acostumen a aglutinar les postes (ous fecundats) en forma de boles, amb ajuda del contingut de les glàndules del ciment, i les porta com un braçalet als ovígers, fins i tot un cop eclosionades i durant els primers estadis de les larves protonímfon (Arnaud i Bamber 1987). El mascle pot portar diverses postes a cada ovíger, cada



posta correspon a la fertilització d'una femella. Les postes es situen cronològicament de la part més proximal de l'ovíger a la més distal, i s'ha observat mascles que presenten alhora postes amb larves ja eclosionades juntament amb postes d'ous encara poc desenvolupats. El tipus principal de larva emergeix de l'ou generalment amb un parell d'apèndixs quelats que donaran lloc als quelícers dels adults, un segon parell locomotor que correspondrà als palps i un tercer parell també locomotor que representa els ovígers dels adults, i encara restarà algun temps sota la protecció del mascle progenitor. La cura paternal de la posta ha donat lloc a taxons en els que les femelles no tenen ovígers, i en canvi els mascles sí (ex. *Pycnogonum*, Phoxichilidiidae, Endeidae). I tant són d'intrigants les aranyes de mar, que aspectes tan bàsics com la reproducció encara es desconeixen en una de les famílies més freqüent, els Colossendeidae; el què passa a partir del moment en què els òvuls es desenvolupen al fèmur de les femelles, si la fecundació és interna o externa, i on van a parar les postes, són aspectes que encara romanen per respondre, ja que no s'han observat mascles amb postes, ni s'han vist mai larves d'aquest grup. Munilla (1991) va proposar per *Colossendeis robusta* una fertilització interna dels òvuls, seguida per una curta incubació dels ous als fèmurs de les femelles; a continuació es donaria la posta, dipositada al sediment, de la càpsula femoral que conté els òvuls que acabaran el desenvolupament larvari i post-larvari; finalment, l'eclosió seria directa de juvenils que queden lliures al sediment.

II.2. ELS DOS ECOSISTEMES

II.2.1. L'Antàrtica

Les àrees costaneres del continent antàrtic presenten trets biogeogràfics particulars, que tan sols en les últimes dècades es comencen a conèixer amb més detall.

L'oceà Austral (aigües antàrtiques i sub-antàrtiques) està format per l'extrem sud dels oceans Pacífic, Atlàntic i Índic, constituint un anell que rodeja l'Antàrtica, des del front Polar Antàrtic (aproximadament entre les latituds 50° i 60°S) fins al continent antàrtic. Els vents provinents de l'oest (*WWD*, *West Wind Drift*) produeixen un important corrent que viatja cap a l'est, el Corrent Circumpolar Antàrtic (ACC). En canvi, prop del continent antàrtic, el vent que prové de l'est crea el corrent polar, de flux contrari a l'ACC. Tant el WWD com l'ACC han estat responsables de l'aïllament tèrmic i refredament del continent, fet que ha atret considerable atenció pel que fa als mecanismes d'isolació i la influència en la distribució de la biota antàrtica (Barnes i Conlan 2007). La zona oceànica on conflueixen els dos corrents que es mouen en sentits contraris s'anomena Divergència Antàrtica (AD), i és entre ella i el continent on es formen alguns girs ciclònics, com ara el Gir de Weddell i el Gir de Ross (Fig. 7).

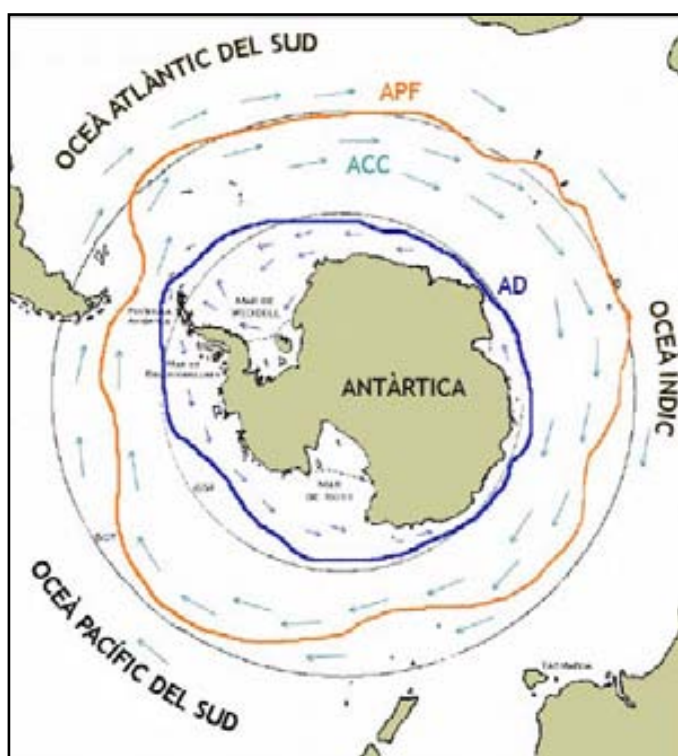


Figura 7. Circulació superficial de l'Oceà Austral, indicant el Front Polar Antàrtic (APF, taronge), el Corrent circumpolar antàrtic (ACC, blau clar), la Divergència antàrtica (AD, blau fosc).

En la Divergència Antàrtica es dona l'aflorament de les masses d'Aigua Circumpolar Profunda, que són molt riques en nutrients, en canvi al Gir de Weddell és on es genera la major part d'Aigua Antàrtica de Fons, com a resultat de la formació anual de gel a les capes



superficials, ja que l'aigua circumdant és més salina, densa i freda, i s'enfonsa més avall de l'Aigua Circumpolar Profunda, fins el fons austral.

L'Oceà Austral, geològicament el més jove dels oceans, es va formar entre l'eocè i l'oligocè, quan es va fragmentar Gondwana, i l'Antàrtica i Amèrica del Sud van separar-se per donar lloc a l'obertura del Passatge de Drake, fa aproximadament 30 milions d'anys. La separació dels continents va permetre la formació del Corrent Circumpolar Antàrtic. En aquell moment, l'Antàrtica va quedar aïllada tèrmicament de les aigües més càlides i es va refredar, a través d'una reducció de la transferència de calor entre l'Equador i el Pol Sud, permetent que es formés el gel marí (Barnes i Conlan 2007).

Aquest aïllament, que es manté avui dia gràcies a l'ACC, ha convertit a l'Antàrtica en un laboratori natural per a treballs evolutius. Gràcies als processos d'especiació que van provocar la diferenciació de la fauna d'aquest continent, l'Antàrtica s'ha convertit en un indret que presenta una biota rica en taxons endèmics, sistemes bentònics marins d'alta diversitat tant a les plataformes continentals com en aigües profundes.

L'Antàrtica està rodejada per una plataforma continental tres vegades més profunda que la majoria de les plataformes continentals dels altres mars i oceans, a causa la de força que exerceix el pes del gel sobre el continent (Brandt et al. 2007; Clarke 2003). El punt d'inflexió entre la plataforma continental i el talús antàrtic (també conegut com a *shelf break-point*) es troba al voltant dels 600 m de fondària (Van Der Molen 2003), arribant a majors fondàries en mars els quals la major part de l'any es cobreixen completament pel glaç, com ara el Mar de Weddell.

Així, els patrons de distribució de les comunitats bentòniques vindran marcats no tan sols per l'aïllament biogeogràfic i l'ACC, sinó també per aquest gradient vertical.

II.2.2. La Mediterrània i la Mar Catalana

La Mar Mediterrània és una mar semitancada, relativament petita, que s'estén entre Europa i Àfrica (entre els 32 i 45° nord), que té una superfície aproximada de $2,5 \cdot 10^6$ km², i una profunditat mitjana de 1500 m (Tixeront 1970) (Fig. 8).

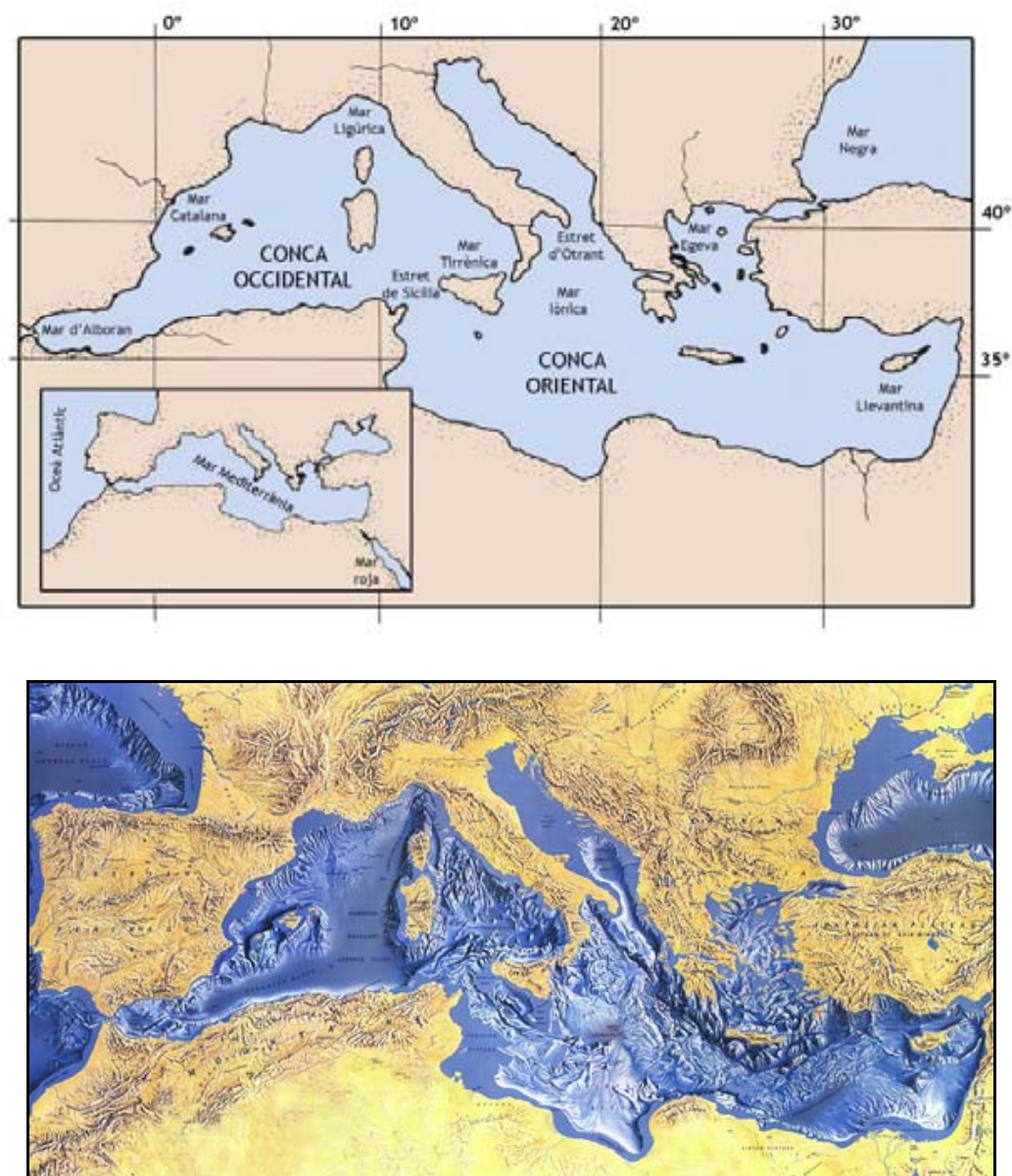


Figura 8. Dalt: Principals sectors geogràfics de la conca Mediterrània (modificat de Rodríguez 1984). Baix: Mapa del perfil batimètric de la conca Mediterrània.

Aquesta mar es divideix en dues conques, conegudes com occidental i oriental, que estan unides per l'estret de Sicília. La conca occidental està unida a l'oceà Atlàntic per l'estret de Gibraltar, on es dona l'intercanvi d'aigües entre l'oceà Atlàntic i la Mar Mediterrània.

La Mar Mediterrània és una conca de concentració, ja que l'aportació anual de rius i pluges és menor que la taxa anual d'evaporació. El dèficit es compensa amb l'entrada d'aigua a través de l'Estret de Gibraltar, motiu pel qual la salinitat incrementa conforme ens desplaçem cap a l'est. Hi ha la tendència a definir la Mar Mediterrània com una mar oligotròfica, és a dir, "pobre en nutrients". Aquesta oligotròfia es deu a que la concentració de nutrients és baixa en superfície ja que la mar es troba estratificada, en major o menor grau, gran part de l'any. Tot i la oligotròfia, es pot afirmar que la Mar Mediterrània exporta



nutrients cap a l'Oceà Atlàntic. L'aigua superficial atlàntica entra cap a la conca Mediterrània, mentre que aigua profunda Mediterrània (més rica en nutrients que la superficial atlàntica que entra) surt cap a l'oceà Atlàntic (Cruzado 1985; Coll et al. 2010).

La Mar Catalana es l'àrea de la Mar Mediterrània occidental situada entre part de la costa est de la Península Ibèrica i l'arxipèlag Balear. Té una superfície aproximada de 74000 km² i una profunditat màxima de 2500 metres.

El seu límit nord està delimitat per la línia que va del Cap de Sant Sebastià (costa catalana) al Cap de Favàritx (costa de Menorca). El límit sud-est està delimitat per la línia que va del Cap de Favàritx al Cap de Sant Antoni (al País Valencià), incloent les costes de les Illes Balears i els canals d'Eivissa, Mallorca i Menorca (Fig. 9 esquerra) (Font 1986; Acosta et al. 2009).

A la conca de la Mar Catalana es troben dos fronts permanents, localitzats sobre el talús continental del marge peninsular i de les illes, anomenats fronts Català i Balear (Fig. 9 dreta).

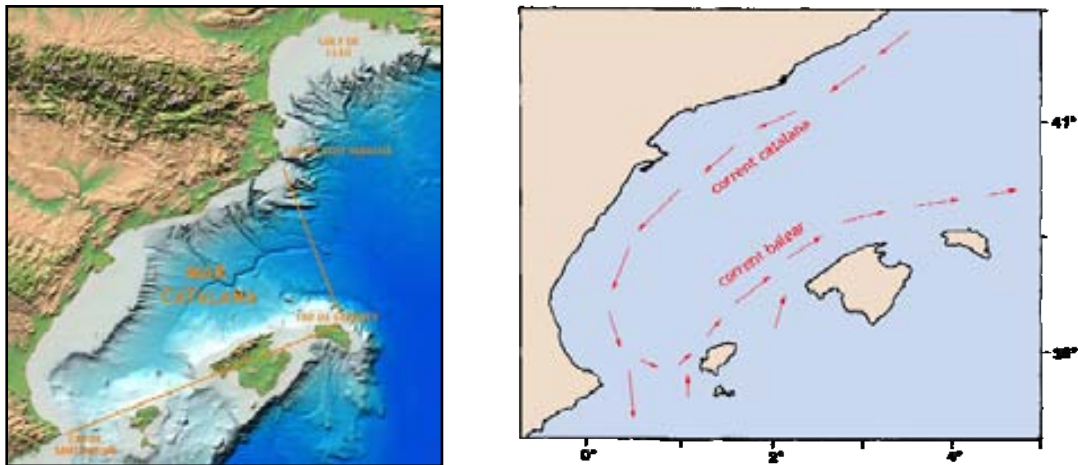


Figura 9. Esquerra: topografia submarina de la Mar Mediterrània Nord - Occidental (Grup de Geologia Marina, Institut de Ciències del Mar : <http://www.icm.csic.es/geo/gma/>), on s'indiquen els tres caps que delimiten la Mar Catalana. Dreta : principals corrents superficials a la Mar Catalana.

El front Català és un front causat per la diferència de salinitat entre aigües continentals i aigües més salades del centre de la conca, mentre que el font Balear està causat per la diferència de temperatura i salinitat entre les aigües Atlàntiques i les del centre de la conca (Font et al. 1988). Associada al front Català hi ha el corrent Català (15 - 30 cm/s), que en realitat és una extensió del corrent Lliguro-Provençal (també conegut com "Northern Current"), paral·lel a la isòbata de 1000 m. Un cop arribada al Golf de València una part d'aquest corrent inicia un gir ciclònic davant del canal d'Eivissa i es desvia cap al nord-oest al llarg del talús Balear. Aquest flux (corrent Balear), contrari a l'inicial, incorpora aigües atlàntiques que entren pels canals de Mallorca i Eivissa (Milot 1987; Font et al. 1988; Salat 1995).

El corrent Català té una variació estacional marcada, incrementant d'intensitat a la tardor i disminuint des de l'hivern fins a un mínim a l'estiu (Font et al. 1995). La circulació general a la Mar Catalana és de caràcter ciclònic, consistent en una massa d'aigua central densa rodejada per aigües més lleugeres continentals i Atlàntiques (Font et al. 1988). El corrent Català és discontinu donada l'existència de diversos canals submarins (Canals et al. 1982), els quals afavoreixen els fluxos d'aigua rics en nutrients en les dues direccions. Estructures relacionades amb canvis en la topografia del fons i amb la morfologia de la costa provoquen la desviació del flux, la formació de remolins que afavoreixen l'entrada de nutrients a la zona superficial, i per tant afavoreixen un augment de producció primària superficial (Prieur i Tiberti 1984; Estrada i Margalef 1988; Salat 1995; Estrada 1996; Granata et al. 2004).

Aquest patró de circulació d'aigua, juntament amb les fluctuacions de les aportacions continentals provoquen una alta variació estacional que es reflecteix en les dinàmiques de les poblacions de molts dels organismes marins que habiten en aquests indrets (Ros et al. 1985; Sardà et al. 1999; Coma et al. 2000; Coll et al. 2010). Així, hi ha un període d'alta disponibilitat d'aliment entre finals d'hivern i primavera (Grémare et al. 1997), contrastat amb un període durant el qual l'aliment és més difícil d'obtenir, principalment finals de tardor i primers d'hivern, el què alguns autors han descrit com la crisi tròfica de tardor (Herrera i Muñoz 1963; Establier 1969; Rossi et al. 2006; Rossi i Tsounis 2007), període en que l'energia de reserva de molts organismes costaners disminueix fins a valors mínims. Per tant, els blooms fitoplanctònics i conseqüentment, els cicles de producció fitodetritus d'alta qualitat són essencials en la determinació de les distribucions, creixement, alimentació i reproducció de diverses espècies bentòniques (Rossi i Gili 2005; Jeffreys et al. 2009).

L'objectiu principal d'aquesta tesi és aportar nous coneixements sobre els picnogònids, un dels grups que encara ara romanen desconcertants i intrigants. Hi ha molts aspectes d'aquest grup que encara es desconeixen; la reproducció d'algunes famílies força abundants (Colossendeidae i Austrodecidae), les seves relacions filogenètiques dins dels artròpodes i inclús dins del seu mateix grup, els cariotips de quasi totes les espècies, els processos ontogènics, la presència de patrons biogeogràfics i batimètrics, i alguns aspectes taxonòmics i alimentaris són algunes de les moltes llacunes que estan pendents d'esbrinar.

En aquesta tesi es pretenen abordar i donar a conèixer dos aspectes bàsics d'aquest grup. Un, relatiu als aspectes biogeogràfics i de distribució batimètrica. L'altre, relatiu a la seva biologia alimentària: el com i de què s'alimenten, quin lloc ocupen en les xarxes tròfiques, i com es dona el procés de la digestió en les aranyes de mar.

Per assolir aquests aspectes, s'han detallat uns objectius concrets:

- Estudiar la distribució geogràfica i batimètrica de les aranyes de mar australs:
 - Obtenir un “punt de partida” de la situació actual dels picnogònids antàrtics i sub-antàrtics: esbrinar quines espècies estan presents en aigües antàrtiques i sub-antàrtiques, quins són els límits geogràfics i batimètrics de cadascuna, i proposar les possibles vies de colonització i dispersió dels picnogònids antàrtics.
 - Estudiar la possible existència de patrons de distribució batimètrica a l'Antàrtica, prenent el Mar de Weddell com a escenari model.
 - Estudiar la possible especiació o diferent distribució d'espècies en ambients volcànics.
 - Estudiar la possible especiació geogràfica en *Nymphon australe*, la aranya de mar més comuna de l'antàrtica i que presenta distribució circumpolar.
- Estudiar la biologia alimentària dels picnogònids, prenent com a model les aranyes de mar d'un clima temperat, la Mar Mediterrània:
 - Descriure el sistema digestiu d'*Ammothella longipes* i *Endeis spinosa*, dos dels picnogònids mediterranis més comuns, pertanyents a dues famílies taxonòmicament bastant diferenciades.
 - Descriure el procés digestiu en un ambient temperat.
 - Caracteritzar els canvis estacionals en la dieta i les connexions tròfiques d'*Ammothella longipes* a través de l'anàlisi de la composició d'àcids grassos.

Per aconseguir aquests objectius, s'han realitzat una sèrie de treballs, que engloben la present tesi. La estructuració és la següent:

El primer capítol és un recull bibliogràfic de la situació actual dels picnogònids australs. Un *check-list* que detalla quines espècies de picnogònids hi ha en aigües antàrtiques i sub-antàrtiques, i quines distribucions geogràfiques i batimètriques són conegudes per a cada una de les espècies. En aquest treball es proposa les vies de colonització dels picnogònids en aigües antàrtiques, tant provinents d'aigües profundes i d'altres continents, a partir de la



separació del continent Gondwana. Es proposa la hipòtesi del refugi bentònic insular com a punt calent (també conegut com a *hot-spot*) i font d'especiació i colonització.

Munilla, T., Soler-Membrives, A. Check-list of the pycnogonids from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters: zoogeographic implications. January 2009. *Antarctic Science*, 21: 99-111.

Un cop tenint el llistat de la distribució geogràfica i batimètrica de les espècies antàrtiques, el segon capítol s'enfoca en les distribucions batimètriques d'aquestes espècies. S'estudia si aquestes distribucions segueixen algun patró, en funció de la família taxonòmica a la que pertanyen, i per tant, s'avalua si hi ha taxons més únics d'aigües profundes i d'altres que veuen limitada la seva distribució en aigües someres. En aquest treball també s'avalua l'euribatia de les espècies més freqüents.

Soler-Membrives, A., Turpaeva, E., Munilla, T. Pycnogonids of the Eastern Weddell Sea (Antarctica) with remarks on their bathymetric distribution. April, 2009. *Polar Biology*, 32: 1389-1397.

El Tercer treball es centra en la zona de la conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield, on estan descrites estructures d'origen volcànic. S'estudiarà una taxocenosi d'aranyes de mar provinents d'aquestes muntanyes submarines volcàniques per veure si els ambients volcànics ofereixen un nínxol ecològic únic en el que els pycnogònids s'hagin pogut especiar, i per tant, veure si hi ha espècies típiques amb adaptacions d'aquests ambients extrems.

Munilla, T., Soler-Membrives, A. The occurrence of pycnogonids associated with the volcanic structures of Bransfield Strait central basin (Antarctica). December 2007. *Scientia Marina*, 71: 699-704.

El quart treball, seguint amb l'aspecte de distribucions biogeogràfics està centrat en una espècie, *Nymphon australe*, l'espècie més comuna a l'Antàrtica. Aquest és un treball que combina la morfologia amb les eines moleculars, per tal d'estudiar les diferències genètiques en diferents zones de l'Antàrtica. En aquest treball es pretén esbrinar en quina de les següents tres situacions es troba aquesta espècie: que *N. australe* presenta realment una distribució circumpolar, amb poca diferenciació genètica entre zones; que aquesta espècie, tot i considerar-la la mateixa espècie, està en vies d'especiació al·lopàtrica, donada la diferenciació genètica en les zones estudiades; o bé, si hi ha tanta especiació que ja es poden parlar d'espècies diferents endèmiques de les diferents zones, i per tant descartant que *N. australe* sigui una sola espècie circumpolar.

Arango, C.P., Soler-Membrives, A., Miller, K. 2010. Genetic differentiation in the Circum-Antarctic sea spider *Nymphon australe* (Pycnogonida; Nymphonidae). Deep-Sea Research II. Published on-line June 2010; doi:10.1016/j.dsr2.2010.05.019

Els dos últims treballs estan centrats en l'altre aspecte objecte d'estudi d'aquesta tesi: la biologia alimentària dels picnogònids. En aquests, l'escenari d'estudi ha estat el sector nord occidental de la Mar Mediterrània, donat que les metodologies necessàries per dur a terme aquests treballs requerien d'uns mostresos seriatos i un processat dels exemplars impossible de dur a terme en aigües antàrtiques.

El cinquè treball estudia l'estructura del sistema digestiu de dues aranyes de mar (*Ammothella longipes* i *Endeis spinosa*) molt comunes en aigües mediterrànies. Per dur a terme aquest estudi s'han utilitzat diverses tècniques de microscòpia tant òptica com electrònica de transmissió. S'estudia la histologia de l'aparell digestiu amb l'objectiu d'esbrinar com es dona el procés de la digestió des que l'animal ingereix l'aliment fins que l'excreta. En aquest estudi es proposa l'esquema bàsic de la digestió en picnogònids.

Soler-Membrives, A., Arango, C.P., Cuadrado, M., Munilla, T. Anatomy and ultrastructure of the digestive system from two Mediterranean sea spiders (Arthropoda; Pycnogonida). Invertebrate biology, Under review.

En el sisè i últim treball, s'estudia l'ecologia alimentària dels picnogònids dins d'un ecosistema temperat com és la Mar Mediterrània. Aquest treball, centrat en *Ammothella longipes*, pretén avaluar si existeixen canvis la dieta alimentària d'aquesta espècie al llarg de l'any en funció de la disponibilitat d'aliment, així com estudiar les connexions tròfiques dels picnogònids dins del seu microecosistema. Per dur a terme aquest estudi s'ha utilitzat la metodologia de l'anàlisi de la composició d'àcids grassos.

Soler-Membrives, A., Rossi, S., Munilla, T. Feeding ecology of Mediterranean sea spider *Ammothella longipes* (Pycnogonida): Characterizing temporal diet and trophic links through the fatty acid composition. Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science, Under review.

CAPÍTOL I

Check-list of the pycnogonids from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters:
zoogeographic implications

Check-list of the pycnogonids from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters: zoogeographic implications

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Abstract: This study contains the current list of the austral pycnogonids together with details of their depth range and distribution. To date 264 species have been recorded, accounting for 19.6% of the 1344 species recorded worldwide. One hundred and eight species are endemic to Antarctic waters, 62 to the sub-Antarctic, 63 are common in both regions, and 55 are circumpolar. The richest genus is *Nymphon*, with 67 species and the richest area is the Scotia Sea. Comparing species lists between the years 2000 and 2007 shows that increased expeditions with more sampling has increased the circumpolarity of species and decreased zonal endemism. The benthic insular refuge hypothesis is proposed as an explanation for the southern distribution of the present pycnogonid fauna, with an origin in the Scotia Arc.

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Key words: benthic insular refuge hypothesis, biogeography, circumpolarity, endemism

Introduction

Pycnogonids (Chelicerata, Arthropoda) from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters have been studied more extensively than those from any other ocean of a similar size. Exploration of this area began with the American expedition of Nathaniel Palmer whose naturalist, James Eights (1835), described and drew the first Antarctic pycnogonid *Decolopoda australis* on a serolid and some fossils. Pycnogonids have been collected by many scientists but the main monographs are by Hoek (1881), Möbius (1902), Hodgson (1907, 1927), Bouvier (1913), Calman (1915), Gordon (1932, 1938, 1944), Fry & Hedgpeth (1969), Pushkin (1993) and Child (1994a, 1994b, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). The most detailed information about the historical background of several families is contained in the Child papers, whilst the Pushkin monograph shows the geographical distribution of many species. The two latest Antarctic species to be described are *Ammothe bigibossa* Munilla, 2005 and *Ammothea victoriae* Cano & López-Gonzalez, 2007 from the Antarctic Peninsula and the Ross Sea respectively. The aim of this paper is to provide a complete up-to-date list of austral pycnogonids and, using zoogeographical information consider hypotheses describing their geographical distribution.

Material and methods

This paper is an analysis of published data. The works mentioned above, as well as the Müller catalogue (1993) and many others (Hoek 1898, Hodgson 1902, 1904, 1908, 1914, 1915, Bouvier 1905, 1906, Loman 1923, Calman 1933, Stephensen 1947, Hedgpeth 1950, Fage 1952a, 1952b, Utinomi 1959, Stock 1965, Arnaud 1972a, 1972b, Pushkin 1974, 1975a, 1975b, 1976, 1977, 1982, 1984a, 1984b, 1990, Turpaeva 1974, 1990, 1998, 2000, Krapp 1980, Child 1987,

1998, Pushkin 1988, Munilla 1989, 1991, 2000, 2001b, 2002, 2005, Stiboy-Risch 1992, 1993, 1994, Bamber 1995, 2007, Bamber *et al.* 2001, Chimenz & Gravina 2001), were used to compile the species list. The main zoogeographical works about pycnogonids are those of Fry (1964), Fry & Hedgpeth (1969), Hedgpeth (1969a, 1969b, 1971) and Munilla 2001a. Other works (Clarke & Crame 1989, 1997, Barnes & De Grave 2000, Clarke & Johnston 2003, Arntz *et al.* 2005, 2006, Barnes 2005, 2006, Clarke *et al.* 2005, Moyano 2005, Thatje *et al.* 2005, Gili *et al.* 2006, Linse *et al.* 2006), contain particular zoogeographical reviews of some zoological groups or global and evolutionary reviews of benthos. A total of 98 papers were consulted.

Results and discussion

Historical research and specific richness

This analysis of the austral pycnogonids covers 172 years, 16 countries and more than 42 ships or expeditions. So far 40 000 specimens have been found in the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters, (termed the Austral Ocean by Jacques & Treguer 1986, p. 133) at about 2100 sampled stations. The Southern Ocean usually contains the Antarctic waters south of the Polar Front and does not include sub-Antarctic localities between this front and the Subtropical Convergence (D. Barnes, personal communication 2007). This sub-Antarctic zone contains many islands with pycnogonids (see legend, Table I) and the South American zone (Magellan and Falkland zones). Bouvet Island is just south of the Polar Front, but given its isolation and that it acts as a link between sub-Antarctic and Antarctic fauna (Arntz *et al.* 2006), I consider it as another sub-Antarctic island. Moreover, the general composition of the actual



Table I. Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
<i>Achelia</i>	80	12 (15.4)				
<i>A. assimilis</i> (Haswell, 1875)			0–903		s,n	also west Pacific and Australia
<i>A. communis</i> (Bouvier, 1906)			0–714	C	s,t	<i>A. brucei</i> Calman, 1915
<i>A. dorhni</i> (Thompson, 1884)			0–192		n	
<i>A. hoekii</i> (Pfeffer, 1889)			5–256	Sc,p,b	s	
<i>A. lagena</i> Child, 1994a			23–137		s	
<i>A. megacephala</i> (Hodgson, 1915)			shallow water		k	
<i>A. parvula</i> (Loman, 1923)			0–267	p	s	also in Peru-Ecuador-Argentina
<i>A. quadridentata</i> (Hodgson, 1910)			0–21		St.PI + A	
<i>A. serratipalpis</i> (Bouvier, 1911)			64–361	Sc,p,b,e.		also on Angola coast
<i>A. spicata</i> (Hodgson, 1915)			0–1138	C		described as <i>Austrothea</i>
<i>A. sufflata</i> Gordon, 1944			0–300	w,e		e: 40–100°E
<i>A. transfuga</i> Stock, 1954			2–10		n	muddy bottom
<i>Ammothea</i>	40	25 (62.5)				Magnammothea and Biammothea
<i>A. adunca</i> Child, 1994a			185–800	w	k	
<i>A. allopodes</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			210–2000	C	b	<i>A. bicorniculata</i> Stiboy-Risch, 1992
<i>A. antipodensis</i> Clark, 1972			0–24		n	
<i>A. armentis</i> Child, 1994a			230–380		k	
<i>A. bentartica</i> Munilla, 2001			167–335	Sc		Livingston. Island, mud
<i>A. bigibbosa</i> Munilla, 2005			517	p		
<i>A. calmani</i> Gordon, 1932			99–1408	Sc,p,b,r,w		
<i>A. carolinensis</i> Leach, 1814			3–670	C	b	
<i>A. clausi</i> Pfeffer, 1889			3–860	C	s	
<i>A. cooki</i> Child, 1987			1463–2992		n	
<i>A. dubia</i> (Hedgpeth, 1950)			106	r		described as <i>Boehmia</i>
<i>A. gibbosa</i> Bouvier, 1913			439–567		b	recorded as <i>Colossendeis gibbosa</i> Möbius, 1902
<i>A. gigantea</i> Gordon, 1932			99–1116	C		145°E–178°W. <i>Magnammothea gigantea</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969
<i>A. glacialis</i> (Hodgson, 1907)			0–640	C		
<i>A. gordonae</i> Child, 1994a)			348–732	Sc,r		
<i>A. hesperidensis</i> Munilla, 2000			30–439	Sc		Livingston. Island, mud
<i>A. longispina</i> Gordon, 1932			57–1454	C	s	
<i>A. meridionalis</i> (Hodgson, 1915)			10–454	C		
<i>A. minor</i> (Hodgson, 1907)			8–473	C		
<i>A. sextarticulata</i> Munilla, 1989			5–516	C		also on South Georgia, <i>Biammothea brevipalpa</i> Puskhin, 1993
<i>A. spinosa</i> Hodgson, 1907			76–1679	Sc,p,w,r	s	also in Argentine Basin
<i>A. striata</i> Möbius, 1902			72–567	C	b	
<i>A. stylirostris</i> Gordon, 1932			165–494	Sc,w,p	s	
<i>A. tetrapora</i> Gordon, 1932			105–303	Sc	s	
<i>A. tibialis</i> Munilla, 2002			710	Sc		
<i>A. victoriae</i> Cano & López, 2007			360–366	r		
<i>Ascorhynchus</i>	75	6 (8.0)				
<i>A. antipodus</i> Child, 1987			5340		n	
<i>A. cooki</i> Child, 1987			1463–2992		n	
<i>A. cuculus</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			993–4008	Sc		also in Argentine Basin
<i>A. hedgpethi</i> Turpaeva, 1974			3700–3910	Sc		
<i>A. inflatum</i> Stock, 1963			2743–6070	Sc		also in Peru–Chile trench, South Africa, Kurile trench
<i>A. ornatum</i> (Helfer, 1938)			90–108		k	also in South Africa

Continued

CHECK-LIST OF ANTARCTIC AND SUB-ANTARCTIC PYCNOGONIDS

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Table I. (Continued) Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
Austroraptus	5	5 (100)				
<i>A. calcaratus</i> Gordon, 1944			143–219	r,e		e: 65°E
<i>A. juvenilis</i> Calman, 1915			3–500	C		e: 92°E, 145°E
<i>A. polaris</i> Hodgson, 1907			10–569	Sc,p,b,r,e		e: 78°E. Possibly C
<i>A. praecox</i> Calman, 1915			6–260	C		
<i>A. sicarius</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			220–380	Sc,r		
Cilunculus	31	4 (12.9)				
<i>C. acanthus</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			2440–2818	b		also in Argentine Basin
<i>C. cactoides</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			38–540	Sc,p,e	n	
<i>C. kravcovi</i> Pushkin, 1973			255–309		c,M + PE	
<i>C. spinicristus</i> Child, 1987			476–540		n	
Dromedopycnon	2	1 (50)				
<i>D. acanthus</i> Child, 1982			124–903		s	also in Brazilian slope
Eurycyde	21	1 (4.8)				
<i>E. antarctica</i> Child, 1987			527–714	r		
Sericosura	6	1 (16.7)				
<i>S. mitrata</i> (Gordon, 1944)			106–2154	r		also in Walvis Ridge (South Africa)
Tanystylum	45	10 (22.2)				
<i>T. antipodum</i> Clark, 1977			shallow water		n	
<i>T. brevicaudatum</i> (Fage & Stock, 1966)			0–15		St.P + A	also in Cape Verde Island
<i>T. brevipes</i> (Hoek, 1881)			45–100		p,St + A	also in South Africa
<i>T. bueroisi</i> Arnaud, 1974			80–100		St.P + A.	
<i>T. cavidorsum</i> Stock, 1957			0–245	Sc	s,M + PE,c,n	also in southern Chile
<i>T. pfefferi</i> Loman, 1923			2–100	Sc		<i>T. dohrni</i> Schimkewitsch, 1889
<i>T. neorhetum</i> Marcus, 1940			0–410	Sc	s,k,n,t	
<i>T. oedinotum</i> Loman, 1923			0–183		s,k	
<i>T. ornatum</i> Flynn, 1928			46–560		M + P.E	
<i>T. styligerum</i> Myers, 1875			0–200	p	s,k,n	
Austrodecus	42	22 (52.4)				
<i>A. breviceps</i> Gordon, 1938			0–298	Sc	k,n	
<i>A. calcaricauda</i> Stock, 1957			73–1373	Sc,p	s	
<i>A. cestum</i> Child, 1994b			86–207		n	
<i>A. crenatum</i> Child, 1994b			1–360	Sc,p		
<i>A. curtipes</i> Stock, 1957			0–903	Sc,w	s,k	
<i>A. elegans</i> Stock, 1957			99–606		M + PE	
<i>A. fagei</i> Stock, 1957			26–3400	C		
<i>A. fiyi</i> Child, 1994b			112–859		n	
<i>A. glabrum</i> Stock, 1957			18–277	Sc		
<i>A. glaciale</i> Hodgson, 1907			0–2100	C		
<i>A. goughense</i> Stock, 1957			42–120		St.P + A	also in Gough Island among kelps
<i>A. kelpi</i> Pushkin, 1977			shallow water	Sc		
<i>A. longispinum</i> Stock, 1957			91–325		k	
<i>A. macrum</i> Child, 1994b			1442–2350	r		
<i>A. profundum</i> Stock, 1957			920	p		mud & stones, Graham Land
<i>A. pushkini</i> Child, 1994b			60–903		s	southern Argentina
<i>A. serratum</i> Child, 1994b			79–124		n	Macquarie Island
<i>A. simulans</i> Stock, 1957			91–545	b,w	k	
<i>A. sinuatum</i> Stock, 1957			shallow water		n	
<i>A. tristanense</i> Stock, 1955			0–70		M + PE,t	
<i>A. varum</i> Child, 1994b			443–549		n	Macquarie Island
Pantopipetta	20	4 (20.0)				

Continued



Table I. (Continued) Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
<i>P. australis</i> (Hodgdon 1914)			680–5340	Sc,r	M + PE,n	
<i>P. buccina</i> Child 1994b			3193–3423	Sc		also in Concepción waters, Chile
<i>P. lata</i> Stock 1981			523–3655	b,w		also in Cape Basin, South Africa
<i>P. longituberculata</i> Turpaeva, 1985			567–6700	Sc		also in SW Africa, Pacific & all Atlantic
						<i>P. brevicauda</i> Stock, 1963
Austropallene	11	10 (90.9)				
<i>A. brachyura</i> Bouvier, 1913			85–920	C		<i>A. spicata</i> Hodgson, 1915 <i>Pseudopallene brachyura</i> Bouvier, 1911 holotype without figures
<i>A. buccera</i> Pushkin, 1993			3–280	Sc,e		
<i>A. calmani</i> Gordon, 1944			163–2955	C		
<i>A. cornigera</i> (Möbius, 1902)			3–1180	C	b,c	
<i>A. cristata</i> Bouvier, 1911			104–2100	C		
<i>A. gracilipes</i> Gordon, 1944			45–645	C		
<i>A. spinicornis</i> Pushkin, 1993			1200–1280	Sc		holotype without figures
<i>A. tcherniai</i> Fage, 1952			50–580	C		
<i>A. tenuicornis</i> Pushkin, 1993			580–1180	e		holotype without figures
<i>A. tibicina</i> Calman, 1915			45–550	Sc,r	n	
Callipallene	35	1 (2.9)				
<i>C. margarita</i> Gordon, 1932			73–578	p	s	also at 23°S (off Brazil)
Cheilopallene	7	1 (14.3)				
<i>Ch. gigantea</i> Child, 1987			581–3777	P,w		
Oropallene	6	3 (50)				
<i>O. dimorpha</i> (Hoek, 1898)			3–415		k,n	
<i>O. dolichodera</i> Child, 1995c			112–2612		n	
<i>O. metacaula</i> Child, 1995c			1586		n	
Pseudopallene	16	2 (12.5)				
<i>P. centrotus</i> Pushkin, 1990			250	Sc		
<i>P. glutus</i> Pushkin, 1975			320		c	
Seguapallene	6	1 (16.7)				
<i>S. insignatus</i> Pushkin, 1975			3–30		k	
Pallenopsis	86	18 (20.9)				
<i>P. boehmi</i> Schimkewitsch, 1930			35–383	Sc	s	also in waters of Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina e: 69°S–14°E also in Surinam & W. Atlantic
<i>P. bupthalmus</i> Pushkin, 1993			104–830	Sc,w,p,e		
<i>P. candidoi</i> Mello-Leitao, 1949			0–430	Sc		
<i>P. gurjanovi</i> Pushkin, 1993			65–600	Sc		
<i>P. kupei</i> Clark, 1971			146–1530	w	n	
<i>P. latefrontalis</i> Pushkin, 1993			115–260	Sc,p		
<i>P. lateralia</i> Child, 1995c			2273–2421	r		
<i>P. lattina</i> Pushkin, 1993			117–430	Sc		Holotype with figures
<i>P. leiopus</i> Pushkin, 1993			15–275	Sc,w,e		
<i>P. longiseta</i> Turpaeva, 1958			1228–3060	Sc	n	also Subarctic & Gulf of Panama
<i>P. macronix</i> Bouvier, 1911			100–1138	Sc,p,r,w		<i>P. knipovitchi</i> Turpaeva, 1974
<i>P. oblicua</i> Thompson, 1884			0–400		n	rock & algal bottoms
<i>P. patagonica</i> (Hoek, 1881)			3–4540	C	s	described as <i>Phoxichilidium patagonicum</i> <i>P. hiemalis</i> Hodgson, 1907 <i>P. glabra</i> Möbius, 1902 <i>P. möbiusi</i> Pushkin, 1975 <i>P. meridionalis</i> Pushkin, 1975 <i>P. hodgsoni</i> Gordon, 1938 <i>Cheilopallene spicata</i> Stock, 1955, <i>Clavigeropallene spicata</i> Pushkin, 1974
<i>P. pilosa</i> (Hoek, 1881)			25–3650	C	b	also in Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina
<i>P. spicata</i> Hodgson, 1914			25–549	C		<i>P. gaussiana</i> Hodgson, 1914
<i>P. tumidula</i> Loman, 1923			42–270	Sc		
<i>P. vanhoeffeni</i> Hodgson, 1915			3–889	C	s	

Continued

CHECK-LIST OF ANTARCTIC AND SUB-ANTARCTIC PYCNOGONIDS

Table I. (Continued) Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
						<i>P. setigera</i> Hodgson, 1914
<i>P. villosa</i> Hodgson, 1907			160–2804	C		
Colossendeis	75	36(48.0)				
<i>C. adelpha</i> Child, 1998			333–341	e		Prydz Bay
<i>C. angusta</i> Sars, 1877			22–5480	Sc		cosmopolitan
						<i>C. gracilis</i> Hoek, 1881
<i>C. arundorostri</i> (Fry & Hedpeth, 1969)			610	r		
<i>C. australis</i> Hodgson, 1907			15–3935	C	k	also in Chile & Argentina
<i>C. avidus</i> Pushkin, 1970			270–426	p,w,e		<i>C. acuta</i> Stiboy-Rich, 1993
<i>C. belekurovi</i> Pushkin, 1993			150–377		c	
<i>C. brevirostris</i> Child, 1995b			5449–604	a		
<i>C. colossea</i> Wilson, 1881			425–4140	Sc,w		cosmopolitan
<i>C. concedis</i> Child, 1995b			2248–2907	Sc,r		
<i>C. drakei</i> Calman, 1915			3–3000	C	s	also in southern Tasmania
						<i>C. smirnovi</i> Pushkin, 1988
<i>C. elephantis</i> Child, 1995b			2384–4795	Sc,e		
<i>C. enigmatica</i> Turpaeva, 1974			315–335	Sc		
<i>C. ensifer</i> Child, 1995b			3250–3285	Sc		
<i>C. fragilis</i> Pushkin, 1992			3–830	Sc,e	s	
<i>C. grassus</i> Pushkin, 1993			315–435	Sc		
<i>C. hoecki</i> Gordon, 1944			120–3112	Sc,w,r	k,n	
<i>C. insolitus</i> Pushkin, 1993					s	47°S, Argentina
<i>C. korotkevichi</i> Pushkin, 1984			132–660	w	k,c	
<i>C. kurtchatovi</i> Turpaeva, 1993			4700		s	
<i>C. leniensis</i> Pushkin, 1993			250–432		52°S–43°E	south of Iles Crozet
<i>C. lepthorynchus</i> Hoek, 1881			561–3675		M + PE,s	cosmopolitan
						<i>C. pennata</i> Pushkin, 1970
<i>C. longirostris</i> Gordon, 1932			2–3700	C	n	also in southern Tasmania
<i>C. macerrima</i> Wilson, 1881			2010–2100		n	cosmopolitan.
						<i>C. japonica</i> , Hoek, 1898, <i>C. spei</i>
<i>C. media</i> Hoek, 1881			3386–5798	Sc		also in Argentina
						<i>C. brevipes</i> Hoek, 1881
<i>C. megalonix</i> Hoek, 1881			7–4900	C	s,k,n	also in South Africa, Madagascar & E. Argentina
						<i>C. rugosa</i> Hodgson, 1907
						<i>C. frigida</i> Hodgson, 1907
						<i>C. orcadense</i> Stock, 1963
<i>C. mica</i> Pushkin, 1970			1400		37°S–22°E	Sub-Antarctic Indian Ocean
<i>C. notialis</i> Child, 1995b			260–380		k	
<i>C. pseudocheilata</i> Pushkin, 1993			125–180	Sc,e		e: 69°S, 11°E
<i>C. robusta</i> Hoek, 1881			0–3610	C	b,k	<i>C. lilliei</i> Calman, 1915
<i>C. glacialis</i> Hodgson, 1907						<i>C. gracillipes</i> Bouvier, 1911
						<i>C. rostrata</i> Turpaeva, 1994
<i>C. scoresbii</i> Calman, 1915			130–5227	Sc,w,r	s	
<i>C. scotti</i> Calman, 1915			35–352	C		
<i>C. stramendi</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969			645–3806		s	
<i>C. tenuipedis</i> Pushkin, 1993			250–860	C	s	also in E. Argentina
<i>C. tethya</i> Turpaeva, 1974			318	Sc,w		
<i>C. tortipalpis</i> Gordon, 1932			160–4026	C	s,k	
<i>C. wilsoni</i> Calman, 1915			60–801	Sc,w,r		also in Adélie Land
Decolopoda	2	2 (100)				
<i>D. australis</i> Eights, 1835			0–1890	Sc,p,b,w,r	k	possibly C
						<i>D. antarctica</i> Bouvier, 1905
<i>D. quasami</i> Sree et al., 1993			150	e		

Continued



Table I. (Continued) Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
Dodecolopoda	1	1 (100)				
<i>D. mawsoni</i> Calman & Gordon, 1933			160–549	C		
Heteronymphon	7	1 (14.3)				
<i>H. exiguum</i> (Hodgson, 1927)			3–415	C	n	described as Nymphon
Nymphon	268	67 (25.0)				Chaetonymphon
<i>N. adareanum</i> Hodgson, 1907			1–903	Sc,p,r,e	s	also in SE Argentina, possibly C
<i>N. andriashevi</i> Pushkin, 1993			116–135	p		
<i>N. arcuatum</i> Child, 1995a			38–157		s	
<i>N. articulare</i> Hodgson, 1908			18–910	Sc,p,w	s	
<i>N. australe</i> Hodgson, 1902			8–4136	C	s,n,b	also Indian Ocean & off Argentine–Chilean coasts
<i>N. stylops</i> Bouvier, 1913						
<i>N. biarticulatum</i> Hodgson, 1907			35–889	C	k	
<i>N. bouvieri</i> Gordon, 1932			158–583	Sc,p,e		
<i>N. brachyrhynchum</i> Hoek, 1881			82–430		k	also in Heard Island
<i>N. brevicaudatum</i> Miers, 1875			27–1100	C	k	
<i>N. bucuspidum</i> Child, 1995a			1262		n	
<i>N. chaetodir</i> Utinomi, 1971			995–1110		n	
<i>N. charcoti</i> Bouvier, 1911			3–1200	C		
<i>N. clarencei</i> Gordon, 1932			65–342	Sc		
<i>N. compactum</i> Hoek, 1881			731–3246	Sc	n	also in South Africa
<i>N. eltaninae</i> Child, 1995a			467–1233	Sc,r		
<i>N. forticulum</i> Child, 1995a			438–548		s	s: SE Argentine
<i>N. frigidum</i> Hodgson, 1907			227	r		
<i>N. galathea</i> Fage, 1956			3111–5798	w		
<i>N. gerlachei</i> Giltay, 1937			460–578	p,b		
<i>N. glabrum</i> Child, 1995a			55	Sc		
<i>N. gracilipes</i> Miers, 1875			3–3055	w,e	k	also in Kermadec Trench, (SW Pacific Ocean)
<i>N. gruzovi</i> Pushkin, 1993			250	p,w		holotype is a juvenile
<i>N. hadale</i> Child, 1982			3010–5798	Sc		also in Argentine basin
<i>N. hamatum</i> Hoek, 1881			2502–3400	Sc	c	
<i>N. hiemale</i> Hodgson, 1907			30–1435	C		<i>N. gracillimum</i> Calman, 1915
<i>N. inferum</i> Child, 1995a			2450–3873	Sc, Palmer Is.		
<i>N. inornatum</i> Child, 1995a			513	w		
<i>N. isabellae</i> Turpaeva, 2000			333–571	w		
<i>N. isaenki</i> Pushkin, 1993			500–700		k	
<i>N. lanare</i> Hodgson, 1907			60–848	C		
<i>N. lomani</i> Gordon, 1944			112–714	C	n	
<i>N. longicolum</i> Hoek, 1881			68–4600	C	n	also in Chilean Basin & New Zealand
<i>N. longicoxa</i> Hoek, 1881			318–2998	Sc,b,r	n	also in Argentine Basin
<i>N. longisetosum</i> Hodgson, 1915			385–2450	e		
<i>N. macquarensis</i> Child, 1995a			112–124		n	
<i>N. macrochelatum</i> Pushkin, 1993			540	68°S–32°E,w		
<i>N. mendosum</i> (Hodgson, 1907)			15–555	C		
<i>N. microgracilipes</i> Pushkin, 1993			150–309	B	c	c: 46°S–49°E
<i>N. monatrix</i> Child, 1995a			3495–3514	r		
<i>N. multidentis</i> Gordon, 1944			40–260	Sc,p,b	b	
<i>N. multituberculatum</i> Gordon, 1944			180–640	w,Sc,e		e: 20–140°E
<i>N. neelovi</i> Pushkin, 1993			65–240	Sc	c	
<i>N. neumayeri</i> Gordon, 1932			160–403	Sc,p	s	
<i>N. orcadense</i> (Hodgson, 1908)			18–163	Sc,p	s	

Continued

CHECK-LIST OF ANTARCTIC AND SUB-ANTARCTIC PYCNOGONIDS

Table I. (Continued) Genera and species recorded in Antarctic (A) and sub-Antarctic (S) waters with regard to their depth and various geographical zones. W.sp = number of world species. Antarctic waters: C = circumpolar, Sc = Scotia Sea, p = Antarctic Peninsula, a = Amundsen Sea, b = Bellingshausen Sea, r = Ross Sea, w = Weddell Sea, e = East Antarctic zone. sub-Antarctic waters: s = South America, k = Iles Kerguelen, c = Ile Crozet, n = New Zealand Plateau, t = Tristan da Cunha, b = Bouvet Is., M + PE = Marion & Prince Edwards Is., St.P + A = Saint Paul & Amsterdam Is.

Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
<i>N. pagophylum</i> Child, 1995a			265–1170	Sc,p,w		
<i>N. paucidens</i> Gordon, 1932			22–334	Sc	c	also SE Argentina
<i>N. paucituberculatum</i> Gordon, 1944			180–219	w,e		
<i>N. pfefferi</i> Loman, 1923			12–250	Sc	s	
<i>N. phasmatoides</i> Böhm, 1879			13–94	p,w		also in South Africa; <i>P. capense</i> Hodgson, 1908
<i>N. polare</i> Hodgson, 1915			350	e		
<i>N. premordicum</i> Child, 1995a			2597–3215	Sc		
<i>N. proceroides</i> Bouvier, 1913			91–1180	Sc,p,e		
<i>N. procerum</i> Hoek, 1881			2450–6135	Sc		cosmopolitan
<i>N. proximum</i> Calman, 1915			40–1555	C		<i>N. banzare</i> Gordon, 1944
<i>N. pseudogracilipes</i> Pushkin, 1993			195–216		k	
<i>N. punctum</i> Child, 1995a			415		n	
<i>N. rybakovi</i> Pushkin, 1993			220	Sc,w		
<i>N. sabellum</i> Child, 1995			2872–2928	r		62°S–160°W
<i>N. scotiae</i> Stock, 1981			2960–2980	Sc		<i>N. stocki</i> Turpaeva, 1974
<i>N. subtile</i> Loman, 1923			13–304		s,k	also SE Argentina
<i>N. tenuimanum</i> Hodgson, 1914			1903–3398	r		
<i>N. tenuipes</i> Bouvier, 1911			122–1180	C		also in S. Australia <i>N. soyae</i> Utinomi, 1953
<i>N. trituberculum</i> Child, 1995a			3200–3259	e		
<i>N. typhops</i> (Hodgson, 1915)			2450–2815	Sc,p,w,e		
<i>N. unguiculatum</i> Hodgson, 1927			168–450	Sc		
<i>N. villosum</i> (Hodgson, 1915)			13–636	C		also 10°E
<i>N. zundiamum</i> Pushkin, 1993			160		s	s: near Falkland Islands
Pentanympyon	1	1 (100)				
<i>P. antarcticum</i> Hodgson, 1904			3–3227	C		<i>P. minutum</i> Gordon, 1944
Sexanympyon	1	1 (100)				
<i>S. mirabilis</i> Hedgpeth & Fry, 1964			1687–2897	Sc,p		
Anoplodactylus	140	9 (6.4)				
<i>A. australis</i> (Hodgson, 1914)			15–616	C	t	also in Tasmania
<i>A. californicus</i> Hall, 1912			0–100		s	cosmopolitan; <i>C. projectus</i> Hilton, 1942, <i>C. portus</i> Sawaya 1950
<i>A. lacinosus</i> Child, 1995c			456–540		n	also in Antipodes Island
<i>A. laminifer</i> Arnaud, 1974			80–100		St.P+A	
<i>A. petiolatus</i> (Kröyer, 1844)			0–1180		s	also in Atlantic–Mediterranean
<i>A. speculus</i> Child, 1995c			1586–1640		n	
<i>A. typhlops</i> Sars, 1888			915–3620	Sc	c,n,PE	cosmopolitan <i>A. pelagicus</i> Flynn, 1908 <i>A. neglectus</i> Hoek, 1898
<i>A. vema</i> Child, 1982			90–676		s	
<i>A. virescens</i> (Hodge, 1864)			0–16		St.P+A	also in Atlantic–Mediterranean
Phoxichilidium	14	1 (7.1)				
<i>P. pigordum</i> Child, 1995c			79–124		n	
Endeis	17	2 (11.8)				
<i>E. australis</i> (Hodgson, 1907)			3–1570	C	n,b	
<i>E. viridis</i> Pushkin, 1976			3–377		k,c,M+PE	
Pentapycnon	3	2 (66)				
<i>P. bouvieri</i> Puskin, 1993			90–419	Sc,w		<i>P. bouvieri</i> Child (1993) <i>P. magnum</i> Stiboy-Rish (1994)
<i>P. charcoti</i> Bouvier, 1910			240–1420	Sc,p,r		
Pycnogonum	69	10 (14.5)				

Continued



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Genera/species	W. sp.	A + S sp. & % of W.sp	Depth (m)	Antarctic zone	sub-Antarctic zone	Remarks and synonyms
<i>P. calculus</i> Bamber, 1955			littoral	Sc	s	rock with algae
<i>P. rhinoceros</i> Loman, 1923			30–1115	C		<i>P. diceros</i> Marcus, 1940
<i>P. gaini</i> Bouvier, 1910			24–2495	C	k	
<i>P. gordonae</i> Pushkin, 1984			219–400	w,e		
<i>P. magellanicum</i> Hoek, 1898			85–548		s	
<i>P. magniroste</i> Möbius, 1902			3–309		k,c	
<i>P. paragaini</i> Munilla, 1989			205–440	Sc		
<i>P. platylophum</i> Loman, 1923			0–903	Sc,e	k,c	
<i>P. sivertseni</i> Stock, 1955			102–141		t	
Rhynchothorax	19	4 (21.1)				
<i>R. australis</i> Hodgson, 1907			60–900	C	s,k,n	
<i>R. oblongus</i> (Pushkin, 1977)			100–140		k	described as <i>Austrodecus</i>
<i>R. percivali</i> Clark, 1976			0–101		S,n	also in Mexico
<i>R. philopsammum</i> Hedgpeth, 1951			0–77		s	also in Caribbean Sea, E. Pacific Ocean, Azores, Mediterranean Sea
Total species		264		192	137	

Bouvet fauna is more similar to the Magellan area than the high Antarctic region (Arntz *et al.* 2006).

These individuals belong to 31 genera and 264 different species of pycnogonids (Table I), out of a total number of species worldwide of 1344. They thus represent 19.6% of the actual world species that have been recorded in 21% of the ocean areas (Jacques & Treguer 1986). Figure 1 shows the richness of species and genera for each family. Nymphonidae is the most abundant family (71 species), with *Nymphon* the major genus (67 species), and *N. australe* the most frequently recorded species. Of these 264 species, 108 are endemic in the Antarctic area, 62 are present only in the sub-Antarctic zone and 63 are common to both. Table I shows the current list of the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic species, their synonyms (47), the percentage

of species per genus with respect to their number worldwide, their geographical distribution and bathymetric range. The majority of synonyms have been proposed or recorded in the Child (1994a, 1994b, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c), Pushkin (1993) and Müller (1993) papers. The richest zone, with 89 recorded non-circumpolar species, is the Scotia Sea, followed by the sub-Antarctic islands with 64 species. The circumpolarity criterion is that a species

Table II. Variation in the austral pycnogonid species between 2000 and 2007.

Differences between seven years	2000	2007
Species in the world	1165	1344
Species in the Southern Ocean (<i>sensu lato</i>)	251	264
Species reported in Antarctic waters	180	192
Species reported in sub-Antarctic waters	131	138
Endemic species in Antarctic waters	101	108
Endemic species in sub-Antarctic waters	59	62
Common species	60	63
Circumpolar species	45	55
Circumpolar genera	13	15
Cosmopolitan species	5	7
Endemicity of species from Antarctic zones	2000	2007
Scotia Sea	26	22
Antarctic Peninsula	4	3
Bellingshausen Sea	1	0
Amundsen Sea	1	1
Ross Sea	8	9
Weddell Sea	4	3
East Antarctica	8	4
Total	52	42
Endemicity of species from sub-Antarctic zones		
South America (Magellan region)	10	10
New Zealand Plateau	21	23
sub-Antarctic Islands + Bouvet Island	24	24

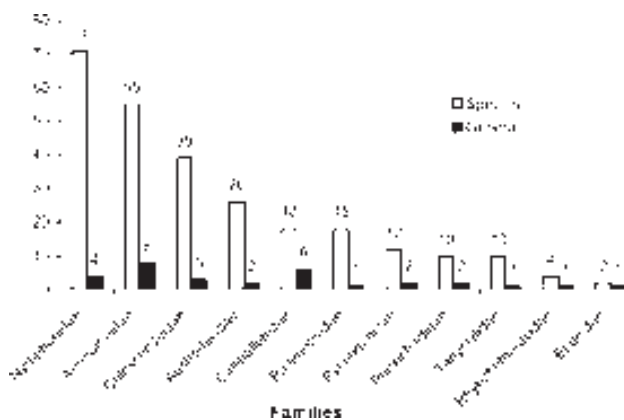


Fig. 1. Richness of species and genera from austral pycnogonid families.

was recorded on one or more occasions in each of the waters to the north, south, east and west of the Antarctic continent, with the east zone the largest one and least sampled (it contains 24 species of which only four are endemic).

Zoogeography

The Antarctic benthos has evolved as a consequence both of the abiotic environmental conditions in the past and of biotic interactions (Arntz *et al.* 1994). The distribution of most of the benthic Antarctic fauna is considered as circumpolar (Hedgpeth 1971, Arntz & Gallardo 1994, Clarke & Crame 1997), almost certainly due to the powerful Antarctic Circumpolar Current (Clarke & Johnston 2003). The circumantarctic element is also the most frequent pattern for pycnogonids (Fry & Hedgpeth 1969, Hedgpeth 1969a, Munilla 2001a), since at present 55 of the 192 (28.7%) Antarctic recorded species are circumpolar.

The comparative data in Table II, based on cruise data and literature dealing with austral pycnogonids over a period of seven years, shows that the number of endemic species for each Antarctic zone is low, with the exception of the Scotia Sea, which could be considered as a sub-centre of speciation. Moreover, this table shows that the circumantarctic pattern for the pycnogonid species has increased over the seven years, and the endemicity of the species from each zone has consequently decreased. In other words, increased sampling has shown more circumpolarity and less zonal endemicity.

Only 10 genera are exclusively from austral waters and four of them (*Dodecolopoda*, *Pentanympyon*, *Sexanympyon*, *Austroraptus*) are endemic to Antarctic waters. Other genera (*Decolopoda*, *Austropallene*) which were considered by Hedgpeth (1969b) as typically Antarctic, have already been found in sub-Antarctic waters, including in the Kuril Islands (*Austropallene likinii* Turpaeva, 2002); the same is true for some species. The genera with the most species in austral

waters are: *Ammothea* (25 species out of 40 in the world; 62.5%), *Colossendeis* (36 out of 75; 48%), *Austrodecus* (22 out of 42; 52.4%), *Nymphon* (67 out of 268; 25.0%) and *Pallenopsis* (18 out of 86; 20.9%). There are not endemic families.

The sub-Antarctic pycnogonid fauna shows origins in the Antarctic fauna at genus level (Arnaud & Bamber 1987). For example, this is true of *Colossendeis* and *Ammothea*, two genera with more than half of their species in the Austral Ocean. Like other genera with abundant species, both have more species in Antarctic than in sub-Antarctic waters. We therefore view the Southern Ocean as a centre of speciation (suggested by Hedgpeth 1969b, and Munilla 2001a) but also of geographic dispersion and evolutive radiation, because of its high relative endemicity (108 Antarctic species versus 62 of sub-Antarctic ones).

The dendrogram (Fig. 2), based on the presence-absence data of the 264 austral species, shows that the Antarctic species form a large zoogeographic group linked to circumpolarity (55 species). Three trends are clear:

- The Scotia Sea is closely linked to other southern zones (60.75% of similarity), indicating some peculiarity of the former.
- Two branches of the Circumpolar Current (with 71% of similarity) have been differentiated: the north-eastern (Antarctic Peninsula–Weddell–East zones) and the southern (Bellingshausen–Ross zones). This supports the geographical proximity of the species distribution to the direction of the Circumpolar Current.
- Each sub-Antarctic zone is separate, and the three zones (Magellan region, New Zealand and sub-Antarctic islands), present low levels of similarity (< 30%, Fig. 2) to Antarctic waters. The suites of organisms in the seas surrounding the sub-Antarctic islands, have long been considered sufficiently dissimilar to

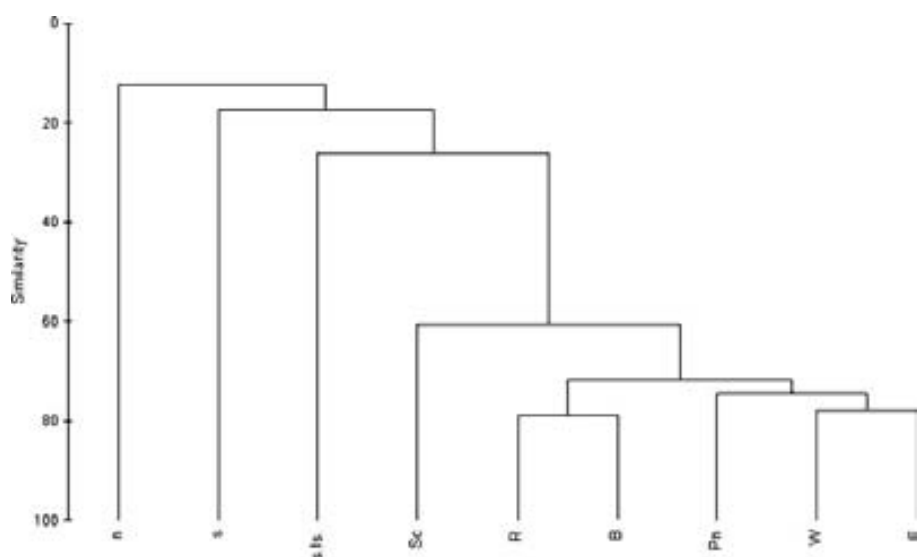


Fig. 2. Similarity of Antarctic and sub-Antarctic zones (Bray-Curtis Index, complete linkage), based in presence-absence data. CircumAntarctic species are included. n = New Zealand Plateau, s = South America, s.Is = sub-Antarctic islands, Sc = Scotia Sea, R = Ross Sea, B = Bellingshausen Sea, Pn = Antarctic Peninsula, W = Weddell Sea, E = East zone.



constitute a different zone (Hedgepeth 1969a), with 63 species at present. Recent multivariate analysis of the bryozoan component of benthos south of 47°S supports the categorization of Patagonia, the sub-Antarctic islands and Antarctica into separate zones (Barnes & De Grave 2000).

Two complementary hypotheses (Clarke & Johnston 2003) may explain the possible origin of today's Antarctic benthic fauna:

1. It comes from an *in situ* stock in Cretaceous waters (141–65 Ma), from the coastal fauna of Gondwana, when the present Antarctic continent was part of the supercontinent. This is supported by the Gasteropoda (Clarke 1990), two Isopoda families (Brandt 1992) and some sessile groups (Alcyonarians and sponges, Gili *et al.* 2006) among others.
2. There was subsequent interchange with the deep fauna of the contiguous oceans, as is the case with Tanaidacea and Amphypoda (Brandt 1999). One possibility is that the Magellan region provided Antarctic benthic fauna across the Drake Passage or the Scotia Arc. This may be the case in some groups such as Serolidae (Held 2000), Polychaeta (Montiel *et al.* 2004) and Bryozoa (Moyano 2005, Barnes 2006). The Scotia Arc and Bouvet Island are clearly undersampled, if they are considered as transitory areas between the Magellan region and the Antarctic Peninsula or the Weddell Sea (Arntz *et al.* 2005). Modern Antarctic communities are thus composed of a mixture of Palaeozoic taxa, which migrated from the deep ocean during interglacial periods, and a component of fauna that evolved from common Gondwana Cretaceous ancestors (Gili *et al.* 2006).

The final connection between South America and the Antarctica was broken just over 25 Ma ago. The result was the formation of the Circumpolar Current, causing the oceanographic and geographical isolation of the Antarctic continent. The continental remains of the ancient isthmus today form many of the islands adjacent to the Antarctic

Table III. Specimens and species of pycnogonids from islands and the open Bellingshausen Sea, in the Bentart-03 Cruise.

Zones Bentart-03	Thurston + Peter I islands	Bellingshausen Sea
Stations (st.)	8	9
Latitude S	68–70°	68–70°
n	187	12
S	13	10
n/S mean	14.4	1.2
S/st. mean	1.6	1.1
n/st. mean	23.4	1.3
Depth (m)	86–726	492–1947

n = number of specimens, S = number of species

Table IV. Number of species recorded in each zone (in bold) and common species between different zones. Circumpolar species are excluded.

	S	Sc	Pn	R	W	B	E	n	s.Is.	Tot
s	46	14	10	3	5	1	1	8	10	52
Sc	14	89	24	18	20	8	16	11	12	123
Pn	10	24	35	7	14	5	8	2	3	73
R	3	18	7	27	8	3	4	4	3	50
W	5	20	14	8	35	4	11	2	7	71
B	1	8	5	3	4	12	2	1	3	27
E	1	16	8	4	11	2	24	0	2	44
n	8	11	2	4	2	1	0	47	11	39
s.Is	10	12	3	3	7	3	2	11	64	49

s = South America, Sc = Scotia Sea, Pn = Antarctic Peninsula, R = Ross Sea, W = Weddell Sea, B = Bellingshausen Sea, E = East zone, n = New Zealand Plateau, s.Is = sub-Antarctic islands. Tot = sum of the common species for each zone and the remaining ones.

Peninsula, but the main topographical obstacle between South America and Antarctica is the Scotia Arc, through which the Circumpolar Current passes.

Two main probable dispersion routes of pycnogonids are proposed, coming from the ancient Cretaceous fauna and principally along the bottom (since they have benthic larvae):

1. From Western Antarctica to the Eastern zone by means of the Circumpolar Current. In support of this, there are 15 common non-circumpolar species between the Scotia Arc–Antarctic Peninsula couplet and the Eastern Antarctic zone. Moreover, a branch of the dendrogram (Pn–W–E, Fig. 2) also supports this suggestion.
2. From South America to western Antarctica going along the route from the Scotia Arc. This is supported by 17 common non-circumpolar species between the Scotia Arc–Antarctic Peninsula couplet and the Magellan zone; moreover, 13 of 48 austral species recorded in other waters have been also found in the Argentine and Brazilian zones (the Brazil current versus circumpolar one).

The benthic insular refuge hypothesis

The submerged zones of the Peter I and Thurston islands in the Bellingshausen Sea are sheltered areas and optimal zones for the settlement and protection of pycnogonid fauna from the surrounding open seas, similar to oases in the desert. They are species rich and the densities of animals are here higher than on open bottoms (Table III), probably because of more feeding possibilities. Animals can be transported from them by deep currents, including by hitchhiking on a moving animal or debris or by simply drifting to other waters. This trend, observed in the Bellingshausen Sea, is extensive in other waters, and occurs in Bouvet Island, which act as stepping stones (Arntz *et al.* 2006) to Antarctic waters.

The benthic insular refuge hypothesis suggests that the islands serve as a home, accumulating a rich benthic fauna, and subsequently acting as migration points. This is similar to the reserve effect of a marine protected zone. This theory needs to be confirmed using more quantitative data about species richness, densities and biomass in pycnogonids and many other zoological groups. Far from any island, deep waters of under 1000 m, have few species and specimens (Munilla 2001a). Moreover, no circumpolar species have been recorded (Table IV) and the number of endemic species (Table II) in each austral zone is much more important at islands (Scotia Sea, New Zealand Plateau and sub-Antarctic ones) than at the benthic bottoms of the open seas. There also seems to be no decreasing latitudinal decline of species richness if the sub-Antarctic islands are included (Table II and IV), because there are more species in Antarctic waters than in sub-Antarctic ones.

Possible stages in the origin and dispersion of the Antarctic pycnogonids

1. *In situ* origin (Munilla 2001a), from the Cretaceous Gondwana fauna (141–65 Ma). This possibility is supported by the two most ancient families of the sea spiders (Colossendeidae and Austrodecidae, (Arango & Wheeler 2007, Bamber 2007), morphological and molecular data, having 48% and 42% respectively of their species in southern waters. This hypothesis has been suggested previously for Austrodecidae genera (Stock 1957, Child 1995b).
2. Many archipelagos in the Scotia Arc are the tips of an almost continuous subsurface mountain chain linking the Andes and the Antarctic Peninsula (Barnes 2005). All the Scotia Sea islands sheltered the existing fauna at the time of its creation and they still retain the ancient Cretaceous fauna that the Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC) subsequently carries, because the Scotia Arc is the only major barrier to the circulation of this current. Many more species remain on its islands than in other waters, as shown by the large number of species that have been captured in this zone (Table IV): 89 non-circumpolar species plus 55 circumpolar ones, that is the 75% of the 192 recorded Antarctic species.
3. From the Scotia Arc waters, the fauna was, and today still is, actually exported towards the East Antarctic zone thanks to the Circumpolar Current, which also distributes some species to the sub-Antarctic islands. A similar trend happens with the benthic larvae of cheilostome bryozoa (Bouvet Island, Barnes 2006). Moreover, the Scotia Arc pycnogonid fauna also arrive at the southern branch of the Circumpolar Current (Bellinghousen–Ross Sea, Fig 2). This link is shown in the cluster in Fig. 2, where the Scotia Sea branch is closely related to other Antarctic zones. The

large number of common species between the Scotia Sea Arc and remaining zones (123, Table IV) support this movement of pycnogonids.

The low water temperature is the main factor that isolates the Antarctic species, leading to high endemism in various groups (108 of 192, 56.3% in pycnogonids). With the warming of global oceans, the colonization of the Antarctic waters will be greater in the future. The number of species will increase and the relative Antarctic endemism will decrease. This trend will be favoured by the increasing passive transport of animals or algae on various ships, swimming animals and floating debris. Eddies and currents are factors that also contribute to passive transport (Barnes *et al.* 2006).

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CAPÍTOL II

Pycnogonids of the Eastern Weddell Sea (Antarctica) with remarks on their bathymetric distribution

Pycnogonids of the Eastern Weddell Sea (Antarctica), with remarks on their bathymetric distribution

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Abstract The current work presents new data on the pycnogonids collected during the ANTXXI/2 cruise on board of “Polarstern” R/V during December 2003 and January 2004 in the Eastern Weddell Sea (Antarctica). Twenty-eight samples were taken, with different trawls, from depths between 120 and 1,866 m. In total, 251 specimens of pycnogonids, belonging to 31 species, were collected. Five species were observed to increase their depth range while six were found for the first time in the Weddell Sea, exhibiting an expansion in their geographical distribution, and confirming the general trend toward the circumpolarity of this group (23 of 31 species were circumpolar). *Pallenopsis kupei* is new for Antarctic waters. The most abundant species were *Colossendeis megalonyx* and *Nymphon australe*. Current data were completed with the samples collected from the same region during *Polarstern* cruise ANTXXIII/3 (EASIZ I) in February–March 1996. Bathymetric patterns of distribution were analyzed for the total of 1,564 specimens (82 species, 14 genera). The results showed a difference in the composition between the continental shelf (from 100 to 900 m depth) and the slope (below 900 m), where the genus *Nymphon* dominated. Depth seems to be an influential factor in the structure of pycnogonid assemblages.

Keywords Eastern Weddell Sea · Pycnogonids · Bathymetric distribution · *Nymphon*

Introduction

The benthos from the Eastern Weddell Sea shelf has become one of the most intensively investigated Antarctic area, mainly by German expeditions (Arntz et al. 1990; Gerdes et al. 1992; Gutt and Starms 2001; Knust et al. 2003; Teixidó et al. 2004). Pycnogonida is an important component of the Antarctic and Subantarctic benthos, especially from the viewpoint of species richness (Chimenz Gusso and Gravina 2001).

Since the past century, Antarctic pycnogonids have been well studied, mainly by Bouvier (1913), Hodgson (1927), Gordon (1932, 1938, 1944), Fry and Hedgpeth (1969), Pushkin (1993), Child (1994, 1995), Turpaeva (1998), Munilla (1991, 2000, 2001b) and Chimenz Gusso and Gravina (2001). However, pycnogonids from the Weddell Sea are poorly investigated; they are basically reported by Fry and Hedgpeth (1969) with only five species, Stiboy-Risch (1992, 1993, 1994) and Turpaeva (1998, 2000). In terms of ecology, only the studies of Arntz et al. (1990) and Galéron et al. (1992) provided qualitative data about the occurrence of pycnogonids at 27 stations of the Weddell Sea.

Although the Antarctic geographical distribution of Pycnogonida is relatively well known, with a tendency toward circumpolarity (Fry and Hedgpeth 1969; Hedgpeth 1971; Munilla 2001a; Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2009), and although the specific bathymetric ranges for antarctic species have already been described (Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2009), basic information regarding bathymetric distribution patterns, diversity of species, and community composition is scarce in this area.

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Depth is the most important factor accounting for differences in some benthic taxa communities, such as Isopoda (Brandt et al. 2007) and Pycnogonida (San Vicente et al. 1997).

In this paper, we provide new data on the occurrence, geographic and bathymetric distribution of pycnogonids of the Eastern Weddell Sea. The other objective of this study is to analyze the bathymetric patterns of sea spider distribution in this region, by combining our data with those sampled during a previous cruise to the same waters.

Materials and methods

The research cruise ANTXXI/2 on board of *Polarstern* (*Polarstern-2003*) was carried out from 17 November 2003 to January 2004. Twenty-eight samples were collected around the Eastern Weddell Sea at depths between 120 and 1,866 m (Fig. 1; Table 1). Samples were taken using different gears (Arntz and Brey 2005). They were preserved aboard in 70% ethanol prior to laboratory examination for species identification.

Relative abundance (N) was calculated to compare the specimens collected by *Polarstern-2003* with recent previous Antarctic cruises, which found Pycnogonida. The relative abundance of the main families and genera, as well

as the first and second most abundant species were compared.

Data compilation used in the present study is based upon the taxonomic literature regarding Pycnogonida in the same waters (Turpaeva 1998, 2000), which provided data from different depths gained during *Polarstern* cruise ANTXXIII/3 (EASIZ I) in February–March 1996 (*Polarstern-1996*) (Fig. 1; Table 1).

Specimens from *Polarstern-1996* and *Polarstern-2003* cruises were analyzed for bathymetric patterns, in order to obtain representative number of individuals and species by pooling data from the same samplings sites visited. While grouping the data, only qualitative analyses could be performed, given that different sampling efforts were carried out.

Genera histograms and species richness (S) were calculated for each depth category. The number of stations sampled at each depth category did not influence S value, as the correlation coefficient of the relationship between S and the number of stations was weak ($R^2_{\text{NoSt-S}} = 0.509$, $P < 0.02$).

Bathymetric ranges for each genus sampled in this area are also presented. In order to categorize the continuous variable depth, it has been divided into 100 to 100 m interval categories, for example 100 m category includes depths from 100 to 200 m.

Fig. 1 General location of the study site in the Eastern Weddell Sea. *Open squares* samples obtained from the *Polarstern-1996* (Turpaeva 1998, 2000); *Crosses* samples obtained during *Polarstern* cruise ANTXXI/2 in 2003/2004 (*Polarstern-2003*; present data)

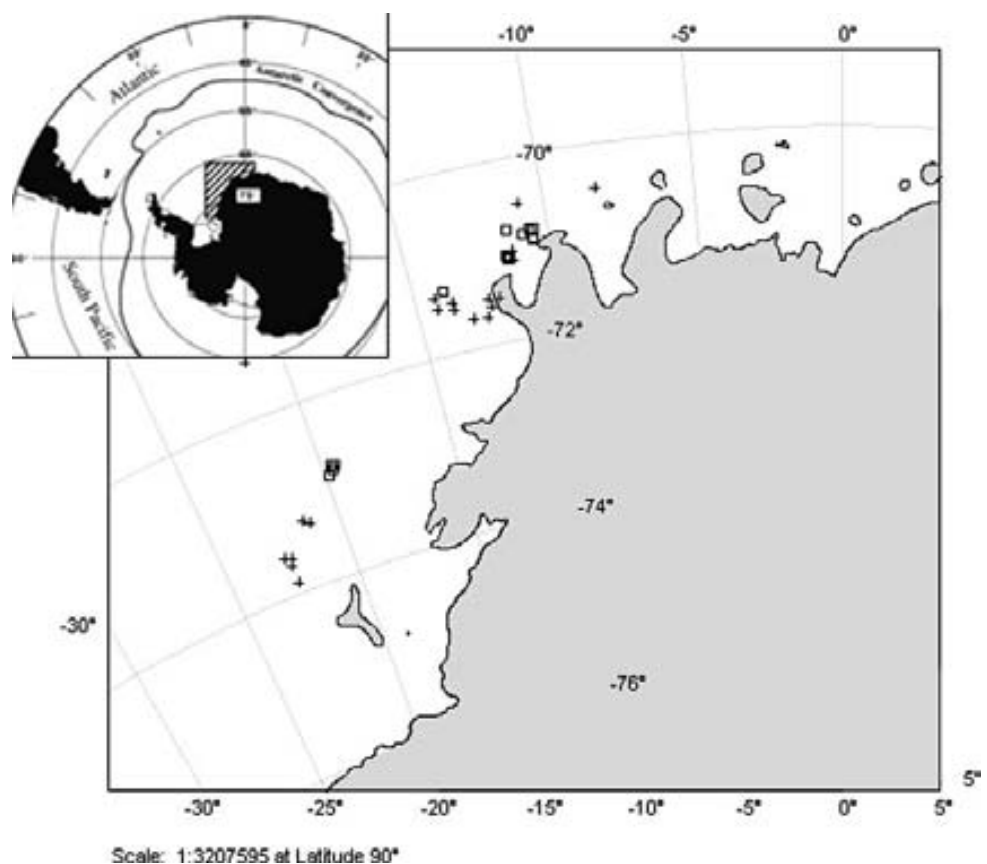


Table 1 Data regarding depths of sampling stations of the *Polarstern-1996* and *Polarstern-2003* cruises

Depth (m)	Lat. S	Long. W	Cruise	Station
119	71°08'30"	11°32'40"	Polarstern-1996	24
120	71°07'29"	11°29'55"	Polarstern-2003	279
123	71°08'15"	11°32'25"	Polarstern-1996	24
175	71°06'28"	11°32'18"	Polarstern-2003	39
209	71°39'30"	12°05'10"	Polarstern-1996	3
215	71°27'20"	13°44'00"	Polarstern-1996	7
217	71°29'30"	14°19'50"	Polarstern-1996	26
227	71°41'10"	12°44'30"	Polarstern-1996	5
228	71°07'12"	11°26'28"	Polarstern-2003	280
246	73°53'40"	22°27'30"	Polarstern-1996	16
254	71°40'49"	12°42'10"	Polarstern-1996	5
255	71°40'15"	12°41'00"	Polarstern-1996	5
264	70°50'30"	10°35'33"	Polarstern-2003	237
274	70°50'43"	10°28'15"	Polarstern-2003	339
274	70°50'05"	10°35'45"	Polarstern-2003	121
277	71°06'26"	11°27'46"	Polarstern-2003	276
281	70°50'42"	10°28'19"	Polarstern-2003	336
284	70°56'25"	10°31'36"	Polarstern-2003	132
286	70°29'30"	08°15'10"	Polarstern-1996	32
287	71°05'30"	11°30'28"	Polarstern-2003	248
288	70°56'08"	10°31'42"	Polarstern-2003	90
295	70°52'44"	10°52'43"	Polarstern-2003	265
296	70°56'50"	10°31'46"	Polarstern-2003	173
302	70°56'40"	10°32'03"	Polarstern-2003	148
309	71°04'53"	11°32'12"	Polarstern-2003	253
333	70°56'34"	10°31'58"	Polarstern-2003	259
337	70°56'31"	10°31'47"	Polarstern-2003	175
337	70°56'44"	10°32'36"	Polarstern-2003	245
338	70°56'54"	10°32'47"	Polarstern-2003	166
338	73°23'00"	21°11'00"	Polarstern-1996	11
352	70°56'34"	10°31'51"	Polarstern-2003	174
362	71°32'10"	13°44'10"	Polarstern-1996	6
436	71°41'50"	12°32'10"	Polarstern-1996	4
440	71°42'00"	12°29'40"	Polarstern-1996	4
446	73°42'00"	22°30'50"	Polarstern-1996	15
459	73°18'10"	21°10'10"	Polarstern-1996	12
462	71°03'10"	11°25'50"	Polarstern-1996	1
468	73°18'00"	21°10'30"	Polarstern-1996	17
504	71°31'50"	12°25'50"	Polarstern-1996	29
560	71°35'10"	12°27'00"	Polarstern-1996	9
560	71°35'10"	12°27'00"	Polarstern-1996	9
598	72°51'26"	19°38'37"	Polarstern-2003	292
604	71°34'00"	12°26'20"	Polarstern-1996	9
616	72°51'26"	19°38'40"	Polarstern-2003	326
620	73°36'30"	22°19'00"	Polarstern-1996	13
622	71°23'30"	14°19'20"	Polarstern-1996	25
624	71°23'10"	14°20'10"	Polarstern-1996	25

Table 1 continued

Depth (m)	Lat. S	Long. W	Cruise	Station
626	71°23'10"	14°20'20"	Polarstern-1996	25
668	72°48'30"	19°31'36"	Polarstern-2003	297
694	72°54'31"	19°47'44"	Polarstern-2003	324
848	71°18'60"	13°56'33"	Polarstern-2003	233
850	73°36'10"	22°36'10"	Polarstern-1996	14
910	71°18'37"	13°56'07"	Polarstern-2003	232
1525	70°47'52"	11°21'33"	Polarstern-2003	109
1586	70°31'30"	10°44'20"	Polarstern-1996	31
1621	73°16'00"	21°26'00"	Polarstern-1996	18
1866	72°47'07"	19°36'17"	Polarstern-2003	307

Given that different sampling efforts were carried out, a qualitative Bray–Curtis similarity (Bray and Curtis 1957) analysis of presence/absence data was performed. Multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) and cluster analysis were applied to resemblance data to depict similarities (PRIMER v5) at both species (MDS plot) and genus level (cluster dendrogram).

Results

Data from the *Polarstern-2003* cruise showed that five species extended their depth range and six were found for the first time in the Weddell Sea. This showed the expansion in their geographical distribution (Table 2), and confirmed the general trend toward circumpolarity exhibited by this group (23 of 31 species were circumpolar).

A total of 251 pycnogonid specimens, belonging to 31 species, 9 genera and 8 families were collected in the 28 stations sampled (Table 3). The most abundant species were *Colossendeis megalonyx*, which represented the 28.3% of the total specimens collected and *Nymphon australe* (27.5%), corresponding to the main families, namely Colossendeidae and Nymphonidae, which together represented more than 85% of the total abundance. They were followed by Pallenopsidae and Ammotheidae (with 19 and 13 specimens, respectively), while the families Callipallenidae, Endeidae, Phoxichilidiidae, and Pycnogonidae were only represented by a single specimen, each.

Bathymetric analysis

To detect bathymetric distribution patterns, data from two cruises (*Polarstern-1996* and *Polarstern-2003*) were analyzed, yielding a total of 1,564 specimens, belonging to 80 different species and 14 genera, which provided data for various depths. The bathymetric distributions from the pycnogonid genera sampled by both *Polarstern-1996*

Table 2 Geographic and bathymetric (upper and lower ranges) distributions

Species	Species abbreviations	Geographic distr.	Bathymetric distr. (m)
<i>Ammothea adunca</i> Child 1994a	Aad	E, W*	185–800
<i>Ammothea allopodes</i> Fry and Hedgpeth 1969	Aal	C	210–2,000
<i>Ammothea calmani</i> Gordon 1932	Aca	Sc, P, B, R, W	99–1,408
<i>Ammothea gigantea</i> Gordon 1932	Agi	C	99–1,116
<i>Ammothea glacialis</i> (Hodgson 1907)	AgI	C	0–640
<i>Ammothea longispina</i> Gordon 1932	Alo	C	57–1,454
<i>Anoplodactylus australis</i> (Hodgson 1914)	Aau	C	15–616* (previously 550)
<i>Austropallene cornigera</i> (Möbius 1902)	Aco	C	3–1,180
<i>Pallenopsis kupei</i> Clark 1971	Pku	W*	146–1,530
<i>Pallenopsis pilosa</i> (Hoek 1881)	Ppi	C	120–2,450
<i>Pallenopsis villosa</i> Hodgson 1907	Pvi	C	160–2,804
<i>Colossendeis australis</i> Hodgson 1907	Cau	C	15–3,935
<i>Colossendeis avidus</i> Pushkin 1970	Cav	P, W, E	270–426
<i>Colossendeis drakei</i> Calman 1915	Cdr	C	3–3,000
<i>Colossendeis hoeki</i> Gordon 1944	Cho	Sc, R, W*	120*–3,112 (previously 594)
<i>Colossendeis megalonyx</i> Hoek 1881	Cme	C	7–4,900
<i>Colossendeis robusta</i> Hoek 1881	Cro	C	0–3,610
<i>Colossendeis scoresbii</i> Gordon 1932	Csc	Sc, R, W*	130–5,227
<i>Colossendeis scotti</i> Calman 1915	Cst	C	35–352* (previously 345)
<i>Colossendeis tortipalpis</i> Gordon 1932	Cto	C	160–4,026
<i>Colossendeis wilsoni</i> Calman 1915	Cwi	Sc, R, W	60–801
<i>Endeis australis</i> (Hodgson 1907)	Eau	C	3–1,570
<i>Nymphon articulare</i> Hodgson 1908	Nar	Sc, P, W*	18–910* (previously 250)
<i>Nymphon australe</i> Hodgson 1902	Nau	C	8–4,136
<i>Nymphon charcoti</i> Bouvier 1911	Nch	C	3–1,200
<i>Nymphon lanare</i> Hodgson 1907	Nla	C*	60–848* (previously 546)
<i>Nymphon longicollum</i> Hoek 1881	Nlo	C	68–4,600
<i>Nymphon mendosum</i> (Hodgson 1907)	Nme	C	15–555
<i>Nymphon proximum</i> Calman 1915	Npr	C	40–1,555
<i>Pentanyphon antarcticum</i> Hodgson 1904	Pan	C	3–3,227
<i>Pycnogonum rhinoceros</i> Loman 1923	Prh	C	30–1,115

C Circumpolar, B Bellinghausen Sea, E East Antarctic Zone, P Antarctic Peninsula, R Ross Sea, Sc Scotia Sea, W Weddell Sea

* Novel information on distribution patterns derived from *Polarstern-2003* data

(Turpaeva 1998, 2000) and *Polarstern-2003* (present work) are shown in Fig. 2. From a total of 14 genera analyzed, 11 were restricted to the continental shelf (including 73 species), and were limited to the range above 900 m.

Nymphon was the most common genus found at deeper waters (slope); five *Nymphon* species were present at both continental shelf and slope (*N. australe*, *N. charcoti*, *N. gracilipes*, *N. proximum* and *N. typhlops*), while two species from this genus, *Nymphon articulare* and *N. longicollum*, were exclusive to the slope. No genus was found exclusive to the slope, at depths greater than 1,000 m. *Colossendeis* genus was deemed present at depths greater than 900 m, only because of one occurrence of *C. tortipalpis* (1,621 m), and also the genus *Pallenopsis*, because

of one occurrence of *P. pilosa* at 910 m depth, though both genera were mainly represented at shelf depths.

Seven genera were present at depths between 100 and 200 m (see Fig. 2), while all genera were found at depths from 200 to 900 m. The number of genera was still maintained up to 900 m depth, while down to 900 m, only *Nymphon* was recorded in each category. Though *Colossendeis* was also present at 1,600 m, only one occurrence was found at those deep waters.

Species richness (*S*) relative to depth is shown in Fig. 3. This value was low at depths around 100 and 200 m. The highest value of species richness was found at depths between 200 and 900 m. From 900 m to deeper waters, this value was significantly low.

Table 3 Original data from the *Polarstern-2003* cruise

Depth (m)	N	S	SP	Station
120	2	2	Cho (1); Cme (1)	279
175	26	8	Aco (1); Cho (2); Cme (10); Cro (5); Cwi (1); Nch (1); Pan (5); Pku (1)	39
228	28	6	Aal (1); Agl (1); Cau (1); Cme (23); Cro (1); Nch (1)	280
264	9	2	Cme (2); Nau (7)	237
274	3	3	Aad (1); Eau (1); Nau (1)	339
274	32	8	Cau (2); Cme (7); Csc (2); Cst (1); Nch (14); Nla (1); Pku (4); Ppi (1)	121
277	13	5	Cdr (1); Cme (8); Nch (2); Pan (1); Prh (1)	276
281	16	3	Cme (2); Nau (13); Nch (1)	336
284	2	2	Cau (1); Cme (1)	132
287	1	1	Pku (1)	248
288	4	3	Agi (1); Cau (1); Pan (2)	90
295	3	3	Cme (1); Nme (1); Pku (1)	265
296	1	1	Pan (1)	173
302	2	2	Cau (1); Cst (1)	148
309	4	4	Agl (1); Cro (1); Cto (1); Pku (1)	253
333	1	1	Agl (1)	259
337	10	5	Aca (1); Cau (2); Cme (5); Pku (1); Ppi (1)	175
337	4	1	Nau (4)	245
338	11	7	Agi (2); Cau (1); Cme (4); Cro (1); Nla (1); Pan (1); Pvi (1)	166
352	9	5	Agi (1); Cav (1); Cme (4); Cst (2); Ppi (1)	174
598	2	2	Alo (1); Ppi (1)	292
616	2	2	Aau (1); Aco (1)	326
668	3	3	Aal (1); Nch (1); Pan (1)	297
694	1	1	Cto (1)	324
848	22	6	Aco (1); Agi (1); Cme (3); Nau (14); Nla (2); Pku (1)	233
910	32	5	Nar (1); Nau (23); Nch (5); Npr (2); Ppi (1)	232
1,525	5	1	Nau (5)	109
1,866	3	2	Nau (2); Nlo (1)	307

N number of specimens recorded, *S* species richness, *SP* species abbreviation (see Table 2) found in each station

Using the results of the similarity analysis among the different depth categories at species level (Fig. 4a), three significant groupings are shown. The groupings are related to shallow waters (100 m category; that means waters from 100 to 200 m depth), continental shelf waters (from 200 down to 900 m) and deep waters (below 900 m). The results of the cluster analyses at genus level (Fig. 4b) showed two major groupings; the first (group I) which corresponded to depths till 900 m, and the second (group II) which corresponded to the deep waters. In this case, the 100-m-depth category was included in the first group, though it was the one that showed less similarity within this group.

Discussion

The geographical distribution remarks on the species in the present study contribute to the better understanding of

Antarctic pycnogonid distributions. *Pallenopsis kupei* is new for Antarctic waters, and six species (*Ammonothea adunca*, *Pallenopsis kupei*, *Colossendeis hoeki*, *C. scoresbii*, *Nymphon articulare* and *N. lanare*) have not been found previously in the Weddell Sea; moreover, the last species is now circumpolar in distribution (Table 2). A trend to the circumpolarity is observed in the *Polarstern-2003* cruise samples, as 23 of the 31 species sampled exhibited a circumpolar distribution, similar to the *Polarstern-1996* cruise, with 45 circumpolar species of 68 studied. The increase of samplings in the deep Antarctic waters, relatively little studied up to date (Munilla 2001b; Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2009) is directly proportional to the increase of their circumpolarity, and as consequence, the decrease in zonal distribution. This biogeographical trend is surely influenced by the circumpolar current (Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2009).

Comparing the relative abundance and presence data reported by the *Polarstern-2003* cruise, with anterior



Fig. 2 Bathymetric distribution of pycnogonid genera sampled in the Eastern Weddell Sea

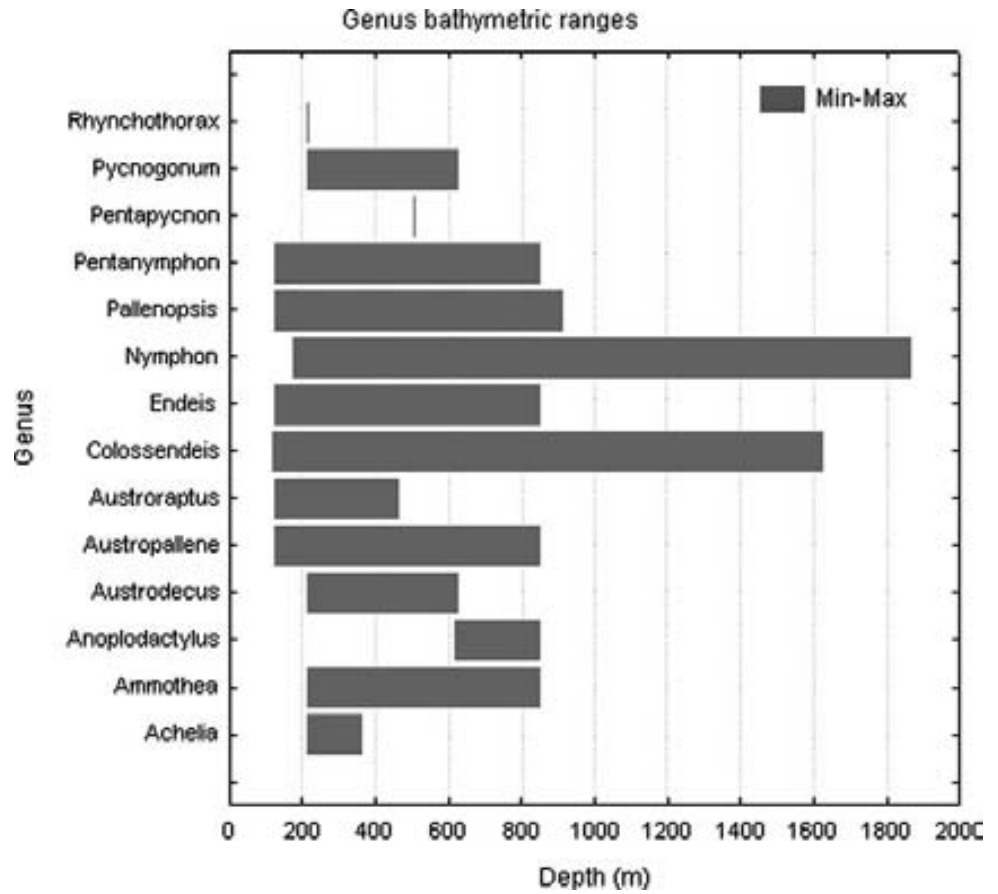
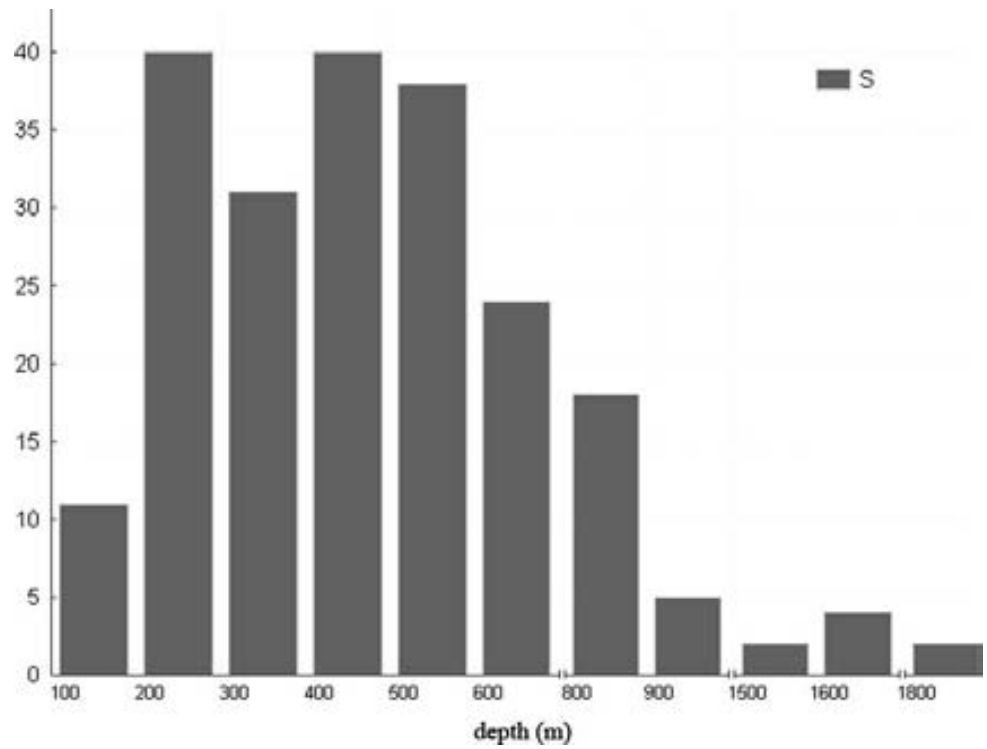


Fig. 3 Pycnogonid species richness related to water depth in the Eastern Weddell Sea



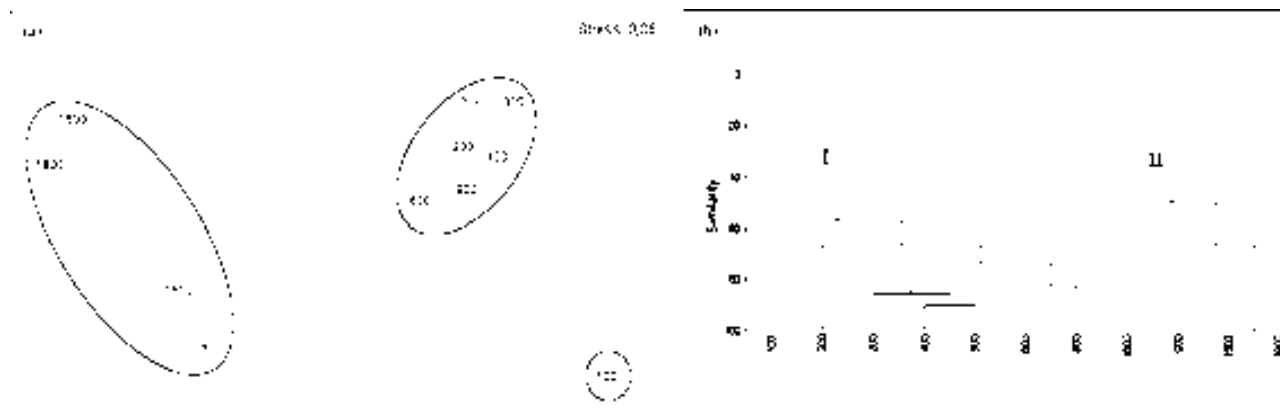


Fig. 4 Multidimensional scaling (MDS) plot and cluster dendrogram of the pycnogonid bathymetric distributions at species level (a) and genus level (b), respectively

Antarctic cruises, either Colossendeidae or Nymphonidae always appears as the most important family, while *Colossendeis* and *Nymphon* as the main genera, with the exception of the Italian Antarctic campaigns (Chimenz Gusso and Gravina 2001), where Austrodecidae and Ammotheidae were the most often reported families; sediment type, topography or other fauna present at the site may be factors that could explain these differences (Table 4). According to this, Munilla and Soler-Membrives (2009) reported from the Antarctic literature up to date that the main austral genera are *Nymphon* with 67 species and *Colossendeis* with 36.

In general terms, benthic organisms show bathymetric pattern distributions, and usually, depth is the most important factor accounting for differences in benthic communities (Brandt et al. 2007; Carney 2005). In fact, Brandt et al. (2005) reported that depth explains isopod species richness better than both longitude and latitude.

Little is known about chemical and physical factors that affect to the distributions of pycnogonids, although depth also seems to be also the main factor that settles the distributions of pycnogonid assemblages (San Vicente et al. 1997), as it integrates other parameters such as temperature, hydrodynamism, salinity, pressure and light penetration gradient.

The continental shelf of the Eastern Weddell Sea is characterized by the great depth at which it is extended, reaching the shelf break at about 900–1,000 m (Brandt et al. 2007; Clarke 2003; Clarke and Johnston 2003; Linse et al. 2006). Weddell Sea pycnogonids show two distinct depth zones in vertical distribution (Fig. 4), a “shallow” community (from the shallows up to 900 m), and a “deep” community (species occurring deeper than 900 m), characterized mainly by the presence of the genus *Nymphon*. Therefore, the change between the shelf/slope and the true deep-sea pycnogonid fauna may be somewhere between 900 and 1,000 m (shelf break communities).

The Weddell Sea pycnogonid shelf fauna differs in species composition from that of the slope because of the change in the species proportion with depth (78 shelf species versus 9 slope species); something similar happens at genus level (14 shelf genera versus 3 slope genera). In Fig. 4, some variations in sea spider community composition were observed among the 100–200 m depth and the other shallow categories (200–900 m depth). This change was due to the absence of genus *Ammothea*, in very shallow waters.

This study suggests that while many sea spider species are confined to shelf depths, only some extend across the shelf break into the slope (deep sea). Unknown brooding and feeding biology of species may present some explanations for this fact. Moreover, the large eurybathy of some species could be explained by the stability of the environmental conditions and the great extension of the continental glacial ice plates, forcing fauna to survive at great depths (Munilla 2001a). Concerning the widely eurybathic *Nymphon* species (mostly *Nymphon australe*), some external differences have been observed between their shelf and deep-sea populations, mainly the absence of pigmented eyes and the whitish color in deep waters; also genetic differences have been found by Mahon et al. (2008) suggesting limited dispersal capacity of *N. australe*, but historical genetic connectivity; a molecular analysis is required to detect other potential cryptic species or subspecies.

The current understanding is that some of the pycnogonid species occurring in the Antarctic deep sea, below 900–1,000 m, are in fact shelf species that were able to extend their distribution depth to the upper slope.

These findings support the hypothesis that these taxa have evolved and radiated on the shelf and later submerged in the deep sea, where they occur only with a small number of species to date. Contrary to the Southern Ocean shelf,

Table 4 Pycnogonids collected in recent Antarctic cruises by geographic region and depth range

	Italian Antarctic Campaigns (Chimenz Gusso and Gravina 2001)	Antártida-8611 (Munilla 1991)	Bentart-94 (Munilla 2000)	Bentart-95 (Munilla 2001b)	Gebrap-96 (Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2007)	Bentart-03 (not published)	Polarstern-1996 (Turpaeva 1998)	Polarstern-2003 (present data)
Zone	Magellan region	Ross Sea	Livingstone I.	Livingstone I., Decepción I., Drake Strait, and Bransfield Strait	Bransfield Strait	Bellinghausen Sea and Antarctic Peninsula	Weddell Sea	Weddell Sea
Depth (m)	–	50–516	14–440	0–1,019	647–1,592	48–2,045	118–1,760	120–1,866
Fam.	Austrodecidae (79.53%)	Ammonotheidae (69.04%)	Nymphonidae (46.6%)	Nymphonidae (66.6%)	Nymphonidae and Colossendeidae (38.9%)	Nymphonidae (56%)	Nymphonidae (81.23%)	Nymphonidae (45.42%)
Gen.	<i>Austrodecus</i> (79.53%)	<i>Ammothaea</i> (69.04%)	<i>Nymphon</i> (44%)	<i>Nymphon</i> (63.9%)	<i>Nymphon</i> and <i>Colossendeis</i> (37%)	<i>Nymphon</i> (54%)	<i>Nymphon</i> (71.53%)	<i>Nymphon</i> (41.04%)
1st Sp.	<i>Austrodecus curtipes</i> (79.53%)	<i>Ammothaea carolinensis</i> (58.33%)	<i>Nymphon australe</i> (24%)	<i>Nymphon charcoati</i> (31.2%)	<i>Nymphon proximum</i> (13%)	<i>Nymphon australe</i> (41%)	<i>Nymphon biarticulatum</i> (27.9%)	<i>Colossendeis megalonyx</i> (28.3%)
2nd Sp.	<i>Nymphon arcuatum</i> (14.96%)	<i>Colossendeis robusta</i> (9.52%)	<i>Achelia hoekei</i> (20%)	<i>Nymphon australe</i> (20.5%)	<i>Nymphon villosum</i> (9.26%)	<i>Nymphon longicoxa</i> (12.4%)	<i>Nymphon australe</i> (26.25%)	<i>Nymphon australe</i> (27.5%)

Most abundant families and genera and the two most important species from each cruise are shown

which is zoogeographically well isolated through the ACC, the SO deep-sea fauna can freely migrate (Brandt et al. 2007; Munilla and Soler-Membrives 2009).

Data from the Weddell deep sea obtained so far show that the deep species of sea spiders do not differ generally from that of the other deep-sea Antarctic regions.

Due to the difficulty in sampling, the Antarctic deep sea is one of the least studied environments. Because of the very limited investigations of this region, and the little advanced knowledge of the Antarctic pycnogonid deep fauna, more investigations are required, since only 88 species have been recorded below 1,000 m, and only 34 of them are exclusive for these depths (Munilla 2001a).

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CAPÍTOL III

The occurrence of pycnogonids associated with the volcanic structures of
Bransfield Strait central basin (Antarctica)

The occurrence of pycnogonids associated with the volcanic structures of Bransfield Strait central basin (Antarctica)

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SUMMARY: Fifty-four specimens of pycnogonids belonging to twenty-two species, eight genera and six families were collected with a rocky dredge during the cruise Gebrap-96 in the central basin of Bransfield Strait, from depths between 647 and 1592 m. The richest station in terms of abundance and biomass was DR6 (south of Livingston Island), which was also the shallowest one; at this relatively shallow depth food is more available than in deeper waters. The families Nymphonidae and Colossendeidae had the same number of specimens (21 specimens; 39% abundance each). The most abundant species were *Nymphon villosum* and *N. proximum*. *Pallenopsis buphthalmus* was collected for only the third time. The collections increased the geographical distribution of three species and the depth range of six species. The volcanic structures sampled were inactive during 1996, since none of the specimens showed signs of hydrothermal phenomena. This collection was typically representative of the west Antarctic benthic zone.

Keywords: Antarctic waters, Bransfield Strait, Gebrap-96 Cruise, Pycnogonida, volcanic structures.

RESUMEN: OCURRENCIA DE LOS PICNOGÓNIDOS ASOCIADOS A ESTRUCTURAS VOLCÁNICAS EN LA CUENCA CENTRAL DEL ESTRECHO DE BRANSFIELD (ANTÁRTIDA). – En la expedición Gebrap-96 se capturaron 54 picnogónidos pertenecientes a 22 especies, 8 géneros y 6 familias. Se prospectaron fondos del Estrecho de Bransfield, entre 647 y 1592 m con una draga de roca. La estación con más riqueza biológica fue la DR6 (sur de Livingston), la menos profunda de entre las prospectadas; a dicha profundidad hay más disponibilidad alimenticia que en aguas inferiores. Las familias más abundantes (Colossendeidae y Nymphonidae) tienen el mismo número de individuos (21; 39% abundancia cada una). Las especies más abundantes fueron *Nymphon proximum* y *N. villosum*, siendo *Pallenopsis buphthalmus* tercera cita mundial. Tres especies aumentan su distribución geográfica y seis su batimetría. El análisis de la picnogonifauna permite afirmar que las formaciones volcánicas permanecían inactivas en el año del muestreo, siendo esta fauna la típica de la Antártida occidental.

Palabras clave: aguas antárticas, Estrecho de Bransfield, campaña Gebrap-96, Pycnogonida, estructuras volcánicas.

INTRODUCTION

The most recent reports on pycnogonids from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic waters are those of Arntz *et al.* (2006), Bamber (1995, Falkland Islands and South Shetland Islands), Child (1994, 1995 diverse zones), Chimenz and Gravina (2001, Ross Sea), Munilla (1991, 2000, 2001a, 2002, Scotia Sea and Antarctic Peninsula), Munilla and Ramos

(2005, Antarctic Peninsula), Pushkin (1993, various zones) and Turpaeva (1998, 2000, Weddell Sea). These authors collate references and the historical background of previous work from this area, particularly Child's papers. Other works (Arntz *et al.* 1990 and Galéron *et al.* 1992) provide only qualitative data about the occurrence of pycnogonids at 27 stations in the Weddell Sea, between 200 and 2000m depth. Gerdes *et al.* (1992) have provided



quantitative data for this and other groups, sampled with a multibox corer, including biomass and abundance at 36 stations (170-2037) from the southeastern Weddell Sea.

Some species from Livingston Island and surrounding waters (South Shetland Islands, Drake Passage, Bransfield Strait) have been documented previously, mainly by Gordon (1932, 1944), Fry and Hedgpeth (1969), Pushkin (1993), and the Child and Bamber papers mentioned before.

The aim of the present study is to present quantitative data on the biomass and abundance of pycnogonids of the Bransfield Strait central basin in order to compare these data with other works of the same zone and with other volcanic zones. We also analysed the fauna from volcanic structures to deduce whether the volcanoes were active or inactive during 1996.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The specimens were collected during the Gebrap-96 cruise (December 1996 to January 1997) aboard the *Hespérides* oceanographic vessel of the Spanish Navy. The benthonic sampling area was located on underwater volcanic structures located in the central basin of Bransfield Strait (CBB)(Fig. 1).

A total of 9 stations were sampled, but pycnogonids were only present in 6 of them. The coordinates and characteristics of stations where pycnogonids were present are shown in Table 1. Samples were obtained between 647 and 1592 meters depth; the duration of dragging was between 41 (DR6) and 85 minutes (DR2), with a mean velocity of 2 knots.

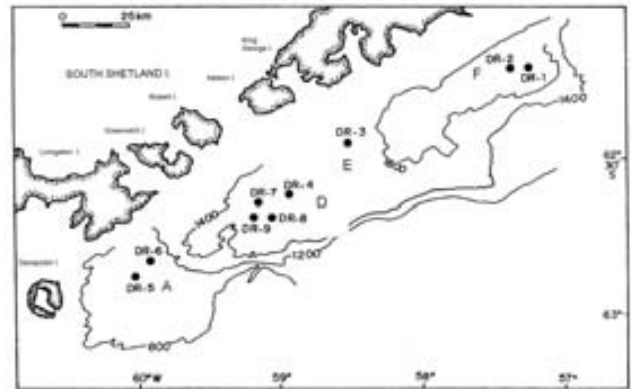


FIG. 1. – Sampling area and location of dredged stations.

A rocky dredge of 0.8 × 0.3m, with 10 mm mesh size and leather protection, was used in the hauls. Samples were sieved on board through sieves of decreasing mesh size, 10, 5 and 1 mm respectively. Specimens were fixed in 4% formalin solution and stored in 70% ethanol in the zoological collections of the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.

On the seafloor of the CBB, four large volcanic edifices (labelled A, D, E and F in Fig. 1, from west to east, following the labelling of Canals and Gracia, 1997) have been identified. They exhibit a range of circular (conical), semicircular, crescent and elongated or ridged forms, the latter arranged in an *en échelon* form. Edifice A showed linear volcanic ridges, and included two stations (DR5 and DR6); a series of spaced, subparallel ridges dominated edifice D, which included both DR4 and DR7; edifice E was dominated by conical seamounts, and included only one trawl, DR3; finally, edifice F, which was also associated with linear volcanic ridges, included DR2.

TABLE 1. – Species, abundance and biomass of the pycnogonids present in the positive stations during the Gebrap-96 cruise. I.depth: Initial depth; F.depth: Final depth; T. time: Trawl time (minutes); Ab: Abundance; B(g): Biomass in grams; N.lo: *Nymphon longicoxa*; P.va: *Pallenopsis vanhoffeni*; C.te: *Colossendeis tenuipedis*; N.pr: *Nymphon proximum*; A.br: *Austropallene brachyura*; P.an: *Pentanympion antarcticum*; N.vi: *Nymphon villosum*; N.au: *Nymphon australe*; N.ch: *Nymphon charcoti*; P.ga: *Pycnogonum gaini*; A.ca: *Ammothea carolinensis*; A.spi: *Ammothea spinosa*; A.gi: *Ammothea gibbosa*; C.ar: *Colossendeis arundorostri*; C.ro: *Colossendeis robusta*; C. au: *Colossendeis australis*; P.pa: *Pallenopsis patagonica*; C.me: *Colossendeis megalonyx*; C.ps: *Colossendeis pseudocheolata*; C.to: *Colossendeis tortipalpis*; P.bu: *Pallenopsis bupthalmus*; D.au: *Decolopoda australis*.

Station	Date	Latitude S	Longitude W	I.depth (m)	F.depth (m)	T. time	Species	Ab	B(g)
DR2	30-12-96	62°13'54"	57°19'44"	1592	1269	85'	N.lo	1	0.036
DR3	30-12-96	62°28'05"	58°27'25"	1370	1286	59'	P.va	1	0.13
DR4	30-12-96	62°36'15"	58°48'11"	1527	1257	65'	C.te	2	1.54
DR5	01-01-97	62°52'40"	59°59'07"	922	699	51'	N.pr	1	0.024
DR6	02-01-97	62°48'48"	59°52'19"	672	647	41'	A.br; P.an; N.vi; N.pr; N.au; N.lo; N.ch; P.ga; A.ca; A.spi; A.gi; C.ar; C.ro; C.au; P.pa; C.me; C.ps; C.to; P.bu	48	25.98
DR7	03-01-97	62°37'53"	59°05'58"	1416	1275	66'	D.au	1	7.02

TABLE 2. – Life stages, fresh weight (g), percentage of abundance and biomass of the pycnogonid species recorded in the Gebrap-96 cruise.

Specie	Males	Females	Juv	Total	%Abundance	Fresh weight	% Biomass
<i>Ammothea caroliniensis</i> Leach, 1814		1		1	1.85	0.555	1.60
<i>Ammothea gibbosa</i> (Bouvier, 1913)		1	1	2	3.70	1.96	5.64
<i>Ammothea spinosa</i> (Hodgson, 1907)	1	1		2	3.70	0.8	2.30
AMMOTHEIDAE	1	3	1	5	9.26	3.32	9.54
<i>Austropallene brachyura</i> (Bouvier, 1913)	1			1	1.85	0.158	0.45
PALLENIDAE	1			1	1.85	0.158	0.45
<i>Colossendeis arundorostri</i> Fry & Hedgpeth, 1969	1	2	2	5	9.26	3.29	9.47
<i>Colossendeis australis</i> Hodgson, 1907			1	1	1.85	0.05	0.14
<i>Colossendeis megalonix</i> Hoek, 1881	1	1		2	3.70	0.45	1.30
<i>Colossendeis pseudochelata</i> , Pushkin, 1993	1			1	1.85	0.2	0.58
<i>Colossendeis robusta</i> Hoek, 1881	2	3		5	9.26	4.32	12.44
<i>Colossendeis tenuipedis</i> Pushkin, 1993		2		2	3.70	1.54	4.43
<i>Colossendeis tortipalpis</i> Gordon, 1932	3	1		4	7.41	8.39	24.16
<i>Decalopoda australis</i> Eights, 1835		1		1	1.85	7.02	20.21
COLOSSENDEIDAE	8	10	3	21	38.89	25	72.73
<i>Nymphon australe</i> Hodgson, 1902	3		1	4	7.41	0.292	0.84
<i>Nymphon charcoti</i> Bouvier, 1911		1		1	1.85	1.13	3.25
<i>Nymphon longicoxa</i> Hoek, 1881		2		2	3.70	0.114	0.33
<i>Nymphon proximum</i> Calman, 1915	3	3	1	7	12.96	1.1926	3.43
<i>Nymphon villosum</i> (Hodgson, 1915)	6			6	11.11	0.314	0.90
<i>Pentanympion antarcticum</i> Hodgson, 1904	1			1	1.85	0.017	0.05
NYMPHONIDAE	13	6	2	21	38.89	3.0596	8.81
<i>Pallenopsis buphtalmus</i> Pushkin, 1993	1			1	1.85	0.44	1.27
<i>Pallenopsis patagonica</i> (Hoek, 1881)	1	1		2	5.56	1.708	4.92
<i>Pallenopsis vanhoeffeni</i> Hodgson, 1915			1	1	1.85	0.13	0.37
PELLENOPSIDAE	2	1	2	5	9.26	2.278	6.56
<i>Pycnogonum gaini</i> Bouvier, 1910		1		1	1.85	0.66	1.90
PYCNOGONIDAE		1		1	1.85	0.66	1.90
TOTAL	25	21	8	54	100.00	34.7306	100.00

RESULTS

Only six of the nine stations sampled provided pycnogonids.

A total of 54 pycnogonids were collected, belonging to 22 species, 8 genera and six families. This represents 0.8% of the total abundance (a total of 6797 specimens were collected belonging to 35 different faunal groups). The most abundant pycnogonid families were Colossendeidae and Nymphonidae. Each family included 21 specimens. The two families together constituted 78% of the total pycnogonid abundance. *Nymphon proximum* (Calman, 1915) was the richest species, with 7 specimens, followed by *Nymphon villosum* (Hodgson, 1915), with 5 specimens.

Table 1 shows the species, abundance and biomass of the pycnogonids present in each station.

Table 2 shows the species collected with their respective life stages and their percentages of abundance and biomass in relation to the total number of pycnogonid specimens collected.

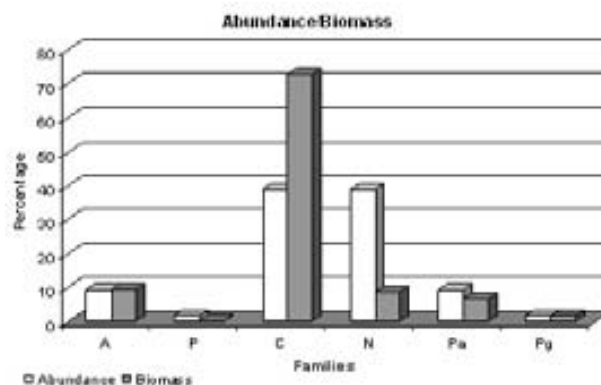


FIG. 2. – Percentages of abundance and biomass of the different families. A: Ammotheidae; P: Callipallenidae; C: Colossendeidae; N: Nymphonidae; Pa: Pallenopsidae; Pg: Pycnogonidae.

Although abundance was the same for both major families (Nymphonidae and Colossendeidae, 39%), biomass was about seven times greater in Colossendeidae (72.73%) than in Nymphonidae (8.81%) (Fig. 2).

Total fresh weight for all pycnogonids was 34.73 g, which represented 0.23% of all faunal groups collected (15018 g).



Note that three individuals presented teratological structures: i) right propodi with different spinulation and form to left ones in *Austropallene brachyura*; ii) functional chelae in adult of *Ammothea carolinensis*; iii) presence of a ventral bulge in the proboscis of *Pycnogonum gaini*. These features are normally the opposite to the normal ones.

DISCUSSION

Biological richness vs. abiotic factors

Although Antarctic and Subantarctic pycnogonids are well studied, it is not unusual for a cruise to find new species or new geographical or bathymetric data, and few collections have been made in the basin of Bransfield Strait (Munilla, 2000, 2001a).

The bottom bathymetry map of the central Bransfield Basin, west Antarctica, is dominated by a series of isolated volcanoes and associated ridges (formation of new oceanic crust) with distinct morphologies which illustrate three tectono-volcanic evolutionary stages: (I) conical seamounts, indicative of continuous, focused, point-source volcanism, represented by the small scattered conical volcanoes and edifice E; (II) the flat top volcanic cones are split by extensional faults in two crescent halves by a longitudinal and central volcanic ridge (this situation is well illustrated by edifices A and F); and (III) series of spaced, subparallel ridges (edifice D), resulting from the progressive disfigurement of the volcanic builds, which means that they have become volcanically inactive (Canals and Gracia, 1997).

The zone with the highest biological richness in pycnogonids and other zoological groups (Ramil and Ramos, 1997) in the Bransfield Strait, both in abundance and biomass, was DR6 station, located on edifice A, which has a bottom of mud with some gravel. The reasons for this biological richness are difficult to explain, taking into account that the dragging of DR6 station was the shortest (Table 1), but two hypotheses are presented.

The abundance of pycnogonids and other benthic groups of the preliminary study (Ramil and Ramos, 1997) decrease with depth. Depth is an approximate measure of distance from the planktonic source (Smith, 1955); that is to say, food is more abundant at the upper stations because distance to the planktonic source is shorter. Food can be acquired more easily in

TABLE 3. – Pycnogonida recorded on hydrothermal vents.

Specie	Author	Depth (m)
<i>Ammothea verenae</i>	Child, 1987	1570-2225
	Turpaeva, 1988	1800
<i>Sericosura mitrata</i>	Child, 1982	2100
<i>Sericosura venticola</i>	Child, 1987	1570-2225
<i>Sericosura cochleifovea</i>	Child, 1989	3660
<i>Sericosura cyrtoma</i>	Child, 1996	2563
<i>Sericosura heteroscela</i>	Child, 1996	1727

shallow stations (DR6), and so pycnogonids taxocoenosis may increase in abundance.

The slightly inclined orography of DR6 (Canals and Gracia, 1997) may favour the arrival of resuspended organic material in slight currents, which would be filtered by bryozoa, hydrozoa and porifera, or other suspension-feeders; these organisms increase their biomass (Ramil and Ramos, 1997) and may serve as food for pycnogonids.

San Vicente *et al.* (1997) mention that depth is the only important abiotic factor of six factors tested in waters around Livingston Island. Munilla (2001b) found that two-thirds of the Antarctic and Subantarctic pycnogonid species have only been found on the continental shelf and upper slope (also the most sampled zones) and that the number of species decreases dramatically down to 1000 m.

Are there adaptations to volcanic structures?

There are only six reports (Child, 1982, 1987, 1989, 1996; Turpaeva, 1988; Brescia and Tunnicliffe, 1998) on Pycnogonida taken from five different deep sea hydrothermal vents. All recorded species (Table 3) had a normal aspect without special morphological adaptations for the vents, except that deep-sea species did not have eyes (Turpaeva, 2002). It is interesting to note that five of the six known species of *Sericosura* have been recorded exclusively on hydrothermal vent exposures, sometimes in elevated densities (Brescia and Tunnicliffe, 1998), and no *Sericosura* species were found by the Gebrap-96 cruise despite sampling similar volcanic areas.

None of the pycnogonids or other taxa (Ramil and Ramos, 1997) sampled by this cruise found specimens with specific volcanic adaptations (e.g. external mucus-filamentous bacteria, dark sulphide crust-vent Pycnogonida), leading us to believe that these sampled volcanic zones were inactive during 1996. The same occurred on the hydroids sampled in this cruise (Peña Cantero and Ramil, 2006).

TABLE 4. – Geographical distribution and depth range in meters. E, east Antarctic zone; C, circumpolar; P, Antarctic Peninsula; R, Ross Sea; S, Scotia Sea; W, Weddell Sea; * indicates a new zone or depth of distribution.

Species	Distribution	Depth range (m)
<i>Ammothea carolinensis</i>	C	3-670
<i>Ammothea gibbosa</i>	C	0-672*
<i>Ammothea spinosa</i>	P,R,S	76-1679
<i>Austropallene brachyura</i>	C	85-920
<i>Colossendeis arundorostris</i>	R,S*,W	610-672*
<i>Colossendeis australis</i>	C	15-3935
<i>Colossendeis megalonyx</i>	C	7-4900
<i>Colossendeis pseudocheolata</i>	E,S	125-672*
<i>Colossendeis robusta</i>	C	0-3610
<i>Colossendeis tenuipedis</i>	C	250-1527*
<i>Colossendeis tortipalpis</i>	C	160-4026
<i>Decolopoda australis</i>	P,R,S	0-1890
<i>Nymphon australe</i>	C	8-3000
<i>Nymphon charcoti</i>	C	3-1200
<i>Nymphon longicoxa</i>	R,S	318-2998
<i>Nymphon proximum</i>	E,P,R,S*	40-1138
<i>Nymphon villosum</i>	E,R,S*	13-672*
<i>Pallenopsis buphthalmus</i>	E,S	106-830
<i>Pallenopsis patagonica</i>	C	3-4540
<i>Pallenopsis vanhoeffeni</i>	C	3-1370*
<i>Pentanympion antarcticum</i>	C	3-3227
<i>Pycnogonum gaini</i>	C	24-2495

Faunistic and taxonomic traits

In this study, the genus *Colossendeis* was found to be as abundant as *Nymphon*. This differs somewhat from other Antarctic collections (Munilla, 2000, 2001a), in which the most abundant genus was *Nymphon* (the most speciose genus), and the second most abundant was *Ammothea*.

Colossendeis and *Nymphon* are two genera with very large legs, adapted to moving on muddy bottoms (DR6 station), and in deep currents (Turpaeva, 2002).

Although the Colossendeidae and Nymphonidae are equal in abundance, biomass is much greater for the Colossendeidae (Fig. 2) due to their generally larger size compared to the smaller Nymphonidae. Munilla (1991) found a similar situation, and ranked the Colossendeids (heavier to lighter) like this: *Decolopoda australis*, *Colossendeis australis* and *C. robusta*. Since the Colossendeids are much larger than an average pycnogonid, this may help to account for their greater longevity (Munilla, 1991), and indicates that they are probably employing the K-strategy (environmental stability, slow growth, big size and low metabolism) instead of the r-strategy, which is typical of smaller pycnogonids such as nymphonids.

In this expedition *Pallenopsis buphthalmus* was collected for only the third time. Three species (*C. arundorostris*, *N. proximum*, *N. villosum*) have

increased their geographical distribution, and six (*C. arundorostris*, *C. pseudocheolata*, *C. tenuipedis*, *N. villosum*, *A. gibbosa*, *P. vanhoeffeni*) their depth range (Table 4). However, 14 of the 21 species have a circumpolar geographical distribution, characteristic of Antarctic pycnogonids (Fry and Hedgpeth, 1969; Hedgpeth, 1971; Munilla, 2000, 2001a, b).

We consider *Ammothea gibbosa* of Bouvier (1913, Fig. 81), (not *Colossendeis gibbosa* of Möbius, 1902, pl. XXX, Fig. 1-5, which is a juvenile of *Ammothea* confused with a juvenile of *Colossendeis*), to be a valid species and not a synonym of *A. carolinensis* (Leach, 1814), as suggested by Fry and Hedgpeth (1969, p. 75). *Ammothea gibbosa* has a rounded ocular tubercle, a basal tubercle on the inclined abdomen, a curved fourth article of the palp and present dorsal tubercles on the trunk segments. In comparison, *A. carolinensis* has a conical ocular tubercle, does not have a basal tubercle on the inclined abdomen, the fourth palpal article is not curved and the dorsal tubercles of the trunk are pointed and oriented backwards.

Finally, it is necessary to carry out more volcanic deep water expeditions in order to expand the knowledge of the specific biodiversity, bathymetrical and zoogeographical distribution of pycnogonids, and other benthic groups.

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CAPÍTOL IV

Genetic differentiation on the Circum-Antarctic sea spider *Nymphon australe* (Pycnogonida; Nymphonidae)



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Genetic differentiation in the circum—Antarctic sea spider *Nymphon australe* (Pycnogonida; Nymphonidae)

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ABSTRACT

Nymphon australe Hodgson 1902 is the most abundant species of sea spiders in the Southern Ocean. The species is recognised as highly morphologically variable, circumpolar and eurybathic—which is surprising given that sea spiders lack a planktonic stage; the fertilised eggs and larvae remain attached to the ovigers of the father, and consequently have limited dispersal capacity. In this study, we investigate the genetic structure of *N. australe* populations around Antarctica, confronting the apparent limited dispersal ability with its recognised circumpolarity. Here we analyse mitochondrial DNA of specimens from Antarctic Peninsula, Weddell Sea and East Antarctica to determine if they represent populations of the widespread *N. australe* — or instead we can recognise cryptic species – and how genetically different they are. Both CO1 and 16S sequence data produced single haplotype networks for *N. australe* from all three Antarctic locations without indication of cryptic speciation. However, we found strong phylogeographic structure among the three Antarctic locations based on CO1 data. There was only a single shared haplotype between the Antarctic Peninsula and the East Antarctica locations, and all three regions were significantly subdivided from each other ($F_{ST}=0.28$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, within the Antarctic Peninsula and East Antarctica locations, we found evidence of genetic subdivision between populations of *N. australe* separated by 10–100 s of km ($F_{ST}=0.07–0.22$, $p < 0.05$), consistent with sea spiders life history traits indicating a limited dispersal capability. We conclude *N. australe* represents a single circum—Antarctic species that, despite its limited dispersal abilities, has successfully colonised large parts of the Antarctic marine ecosystem through geological history. However, clear genetic differences among and within locations indicate contemporary gene flow is limited, and that populations of *N. australe* around Antarctica are effectively isolated.

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1. Introduction

Dispersal and diversification of marine organisms in the Southern Ocean and the effects of oceanographic, geological and life history traits are a relatively recent topic of study. In recent years, studies on the evolution of Antarctic fauna using molecular tools have emerged opening a new path in understanding the history of the Antarctic continent, and the processes governing the diversity and distribution of polar species. Several taxonomic groups have already been examined using molecular approaches, including fish (Bargelloni et al., 2000; Stankovic et al., 2002), molluscs (Allcock et al., 1997; Wilson et al., 2009), echinoderms (Wilson et al., 2007; Hunter and Halanych, 2008), crustaceans

(Held and Wagele, 2005; Raupach and Wagele, 2006) and, more recently pycnogonids (Mahon et al., 2008; Krabbe et al., 2010).

Pycnogonids in general and Antarctic species in particular have awakened research interest in recent years due to their relevance in investigating the evolutionary affinities of arthropods (Budd and Telford, 2005; Dunlop and Arango, 2005), although there is presently very little known regarding the evolutionary history and diversification of the group (Arango & Wheeler, 2007; Nakamura et al., 2007). Pycnogonids are one of the most noticeable groups of marine benthic invertebrates in Antarctica not only because of their bizarre morphology but also because of the diversity of species, and extremely high abundance of some of them in comparison to other latitudes (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987; Munilla and Soler Membrives, 2009). The relatively high species richness and high endemism of sea spiders (> 50%) in the Southern Ocean (Munilla, 2001; Clarke and Johnston, 2003; Mahon et al., 2008; Munilla and Soler Membrives, 2009) combined with a lack a planktonic stage (King, 1973; Arnaud and Bamber, 1987) and wide geographic distributions – i.e. circumpolarity – reported for

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more than 50 Antarctic species (Munilla, 2001; Munilla and Soler Membrives, 2009) are all factors attracting attention to the group. Modern molecular tools now poised to assess the genetic diversity and connectivity, dispersal capacity and speciation rates.

The genus *Nymphon* is the most diverse in Antarctica and worldwide (Child, 1995; Bamber and El Nagar, 2010) with a total of almost 250 species, of which 25% occur in the Southern Ocean. The most prominent species, *Nymphon australe* Hodgson 1902, is the most abundant and frequently collected species. It is circumpolar, eurybathic (8–4136 m depth) and is considered the precursor of the *australe*-group, a complex of about 20 morphologically similar species recognised for having a robust body and inflated male ovigers (Gordon, 1944; Child, 1995; Munilla and Soler Membrives, 2009). Sea spiders are assumed to have limited dispersal capacity given their life history and reproductive strategies [no planktonic stage, the fertilised eggs and sometimes larvae are carried by the father (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987)], consequently the existence of widespread and common species is surprising. Indeed for many marine invertebrate taxa, genetic studies show that many cosmopolitan or widespread species are actually complexes of cryptic or undescribed species representing over-conservative taxonomy (e.g. Knowlton and Jackson, 1993; Klautau et al., 1999; Miller et al., 2001). We question therefore, whether *N. australe* represents a single widespread but morphologically variable species, or whether, in fact, there exist multiple genetic groups within *N. australe* that reflect cryptic speciation and/or genetic isolation that matches their limited dispersal capacity.

An earlier study found no genetic differences in *N. australe* along 800 km of the Antarctic Peninsula and individuals located over 500 km apart shared identical mitochondrial DNA haplotypes (Mahon et al., 2008)—consistent with the currently held belief that *N. australe* is a single, widespread species. However, their study was limited to a single region within the Antarctic. Here, we extend the study of Mahon et al. to include two distant Antarctic locations to test if *N. australe* is a truly circumpolar species, or if regional differentiation can be observed reflecting speciation. Additionally, we test for evidence of genetic subdivision at small spatial scales (across 10–100 s of km within regions) to determine if population structure can be predicted from life history traits in sea spiders.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Collection, sorting and identification

Pycnogonids for this study were collected from three distant locations in Antarctica during independent expeditions (Fig. 1, Supplementary Table 1). East-Antarctic samples were collected using a beam trawl aboard the R.S.V. *Aurora Australis* during the Collaborative East Antarctic Marine Census (CEAMARC) expedition in December 2007 and January 2008. Samples from the Weddell Sea were collected during the ANT XXIV/2 cruise aboard the R.V. *Polarstern* in December 2007 and January 2008 using an Agassiz trawl and a Rauschert dredge. Samples from the Antarctic Peninsula were collected aboard the A.S.R.V. *Laurence M. Gould* in 2004 and 2006 and have been previously described in Mahon et al. (2008). Trawl samples from each of the cruises were sieved on the trawl deck, sorted to taxonomic groups and pycnogonids were immediately preserved in >96% ethanol to ensure high quality DNA for genetic analysis. All pycnogonid materials were morphologically examined and identified mostly to species level prior to DNA analyses following common procedures in pycnogonid taxonomy (e.g. Calman, 1915; Gordon, 1944; Fry and Hedgpeth, 1969; Child, 1995).

2.2. Molecular data

DNA extraction of individuals of *N. australe* from the East-Antarctic and the Weddell Sea was performed using either the Nucleo-Spin[®] Tissue Kit (Macherey–Nagel) following the manufacturer's protocol at Queensland Museum (QM) or sampling tissue of muscle using an automated glass fiber protocol (Ivanova et al., 2006) at the University of Guelph, Canada (Barcode of Life Initiative), as part of the Census of Antarctic Marine Life (CAML) project. The mitochondrial gene fragments, 16S rDNA (16S) and cytochrome oxidase subunit I (CO1), widely used in studies of genetic differentiation at the species level were amplified using standard polymerase chain reaction (PCR) protocols. The 554 bp region of CO1 was amplified at the University of Guelph under these conditions: 1 min at 94 °C; 5 cycles of 94 °C for 40 s; 45 °C for 40 s and 72 °C for 1 min, followed by 35 cycles at 94 °C for 40 s; 40 s at 51 °C; and 1 min at 72 °C; and a final step of 72 °C for 1 min. The 12.5 µl PCR reaction mixes included 6.25 µl of 10% trehalose, 2.00 µl of ultrapure water, 1.25 µl 10 × PCR buffer [200 mM Tris–HCl (pH 8.4), 500 mM KCl], 0.625 µl MgCl₂ (50 mM), 0.125 µl of each primer [0.01 mM, using LCO1490/HCO2198 (Folmer et al., 1994) with M13 tails], 0.062 µl of each dNTP (10 mM), 0.060 µl of Platinum[®] Taq Polymerase (Invitrogen) and 2.0 µl of DNA template. PCR products were visualized on a 1.2% agarose gel E-Gel[®] (Invitrogen) and bi-directionally sequenced using sequencing primers M13F or M13R and the BigDye[®] Terminator v.3.1 Cycle Sequencing Kit (Applied Biosystems, Inc.) on an ABI 3730 capillary sequencer following manufacturer's instructions. The 16S fragment was amplified at QM using primers 16SarL and 16SbrH (Simon et al., 1994) using Illustra[™] PuReTaq Ready-To-Go[™] PCR Beads (GE Healthcare Life Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden), with a PCR cycling program including an initial incubation at 94 °C for 3 min and 40 cycles of 94 °C for 1 min, 50 °C for 1:15 min and 72 °C for 1 min. This was followed by a final extension at 72 °C for 5 min. PCR reactions (or gel bands) were cleaned using the Illustra[™] GFX[™] PCR DNA and Gel Band Purification Kit (GE Healthcare Life Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden). Purified DNA was submitted to the Australian Genome Research Facility (AGRF) (<http://www.agrf.org.au>) for sequencing with an ABI sequencing kit (Big Dye Terminator Cycle Sequencing v 2.0-ABI PRIMS, Applied Biosystems, Foster City, USA) and analysis on an ABI 3730xl automated sequencer. Resulting CO1 and 16S sequences were assembled and screened in Sequencher 4.6 (Gene Codes Corporation, Ann Arbor, MI) and aligned in BioEdit 7.0.1 (Hall, 1999). CO1 nucleotide sequences were translated to protein sequences checking for stop codons. Sequences produced in this study are deposited in Genbank (GU566081–GU566178, GU573492–GU573495), with details shown in Supplementary Table 1.

Uncorrected pairwise distances and a neighbour-joining (NJ) tree under a J–K model with bootstrap values (1000 replicates) were calculated in MEGA v.4 (Tamura et al., 2007) based on concatenated CO1+16S sequences to estimate the levels of relative intra-specific variation of *N. australe*. From these results, only individuals with less than 1.4% variation of CO1+16S were included in further species-level analyses (see Section 3.3). Parsimony networks were constructed using TCS 1.21 (Clement and Posada, 2000), with 95% connection limit between haplotypes. We used analysis of molecular variance (AMOVA) to determine the level of genetic differentiation among *N. australe* from the three geographically separated sampling locations (i.e. across distances of 1000 s of km). AMOVA was performed independently for each of the two gene regions (CO1 and 16S) in ARLEQUIN v3.01 (Excoffier et al., 2005) and based on all individuals from which we had data in each location. Tests for significant departures from panmixis ($F_{ST}=0$) were based on 10,000 permutations. In addition, we tested for genetic differentiation at smaller scales (10–500 km) within the Peninsula and East Antarctic regions based on CO1 data and

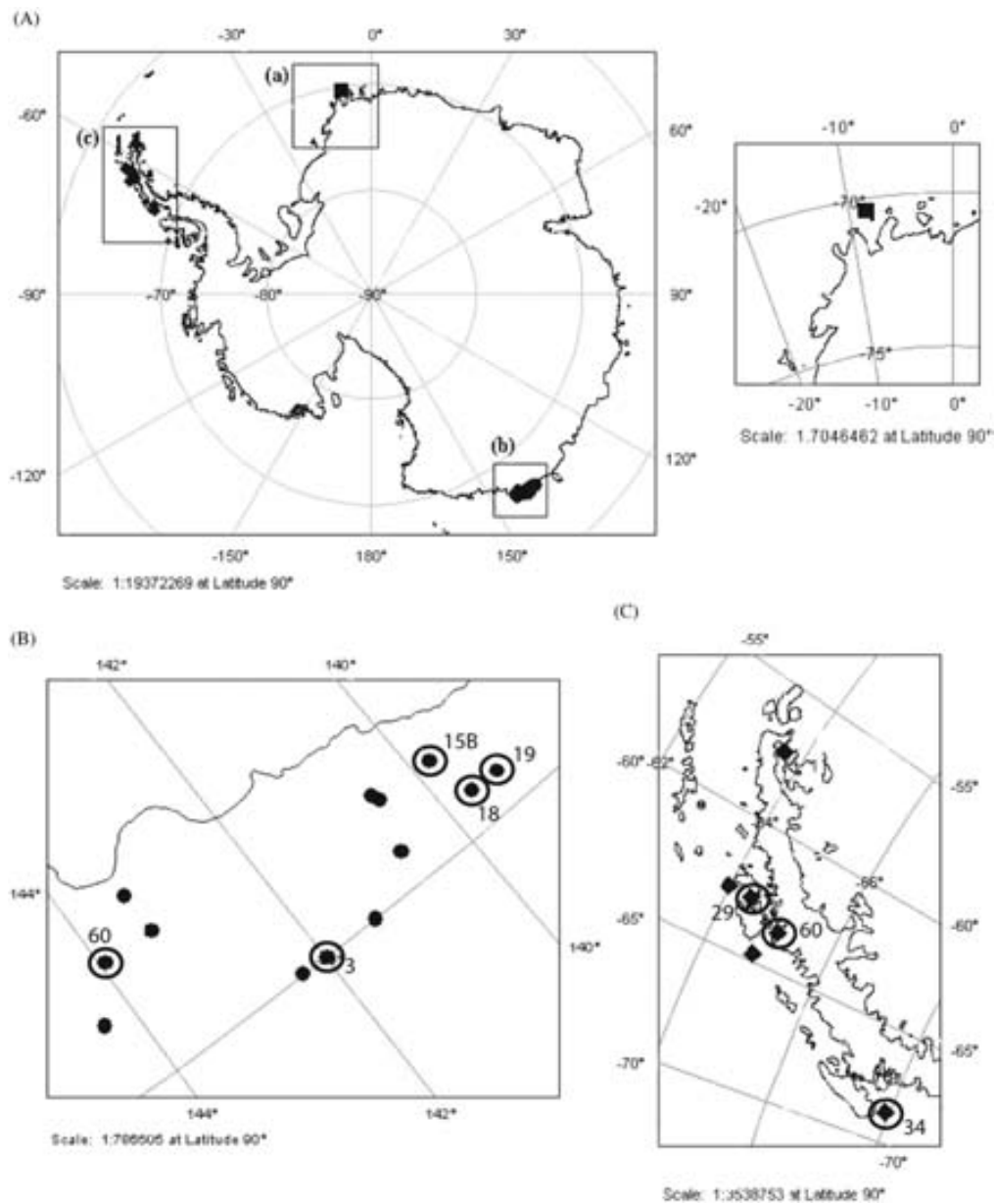


Fig. 1. The area of study and the location of samples of *Nymphon australe* collected in different cruises: Eastern Weddell Sea by R/V *Polarstern* (ANDEEP-SYSTCO) (■), East Antarctica by R/V *Aurora Australis* (CEAMARC) (●) and Antarctic Peninsula (see Mahon et al., 2008) (◆). Sites used for within-region genetic comparisons are encircled and site number is shown.

sampling stations where we had sufficient replicate individuals (≥ 5) for statistical comparisons. We also tested for evidence of isolation by distance within regions by regressing M-Hat (calculated as $F_{ST}/(1 - F_{ST})$) against geographic distance (Slatkin, 1993).

3. Results

3.1. Data analysed

A total of 131 individuals of *N. australe* are included in this study, 74 from samples recently collected in East Antarctica and

Weddell Sea, and 57 individuals from the Antarctic Peninsula already reported in Mahon et al. (2008) (see Supplementary Table 1). The 16S fragment (462 bp) was successfully sequenced for only 24 individuals of the new *N. australe* samples, while the CO1 (554 bp) is available for all 74 *N. australe* specimens from East Antarctica and the Weddell Sea (Supplementary Table 1).

3.2. Within-species distances and validation of *N. australe*

A NJ tree based on similarity shows a strongly supported grouping of individuals of *N. australe* from the three Antarctic locations based on concatenated CO1 and 16S sequences (Fig. 2). The

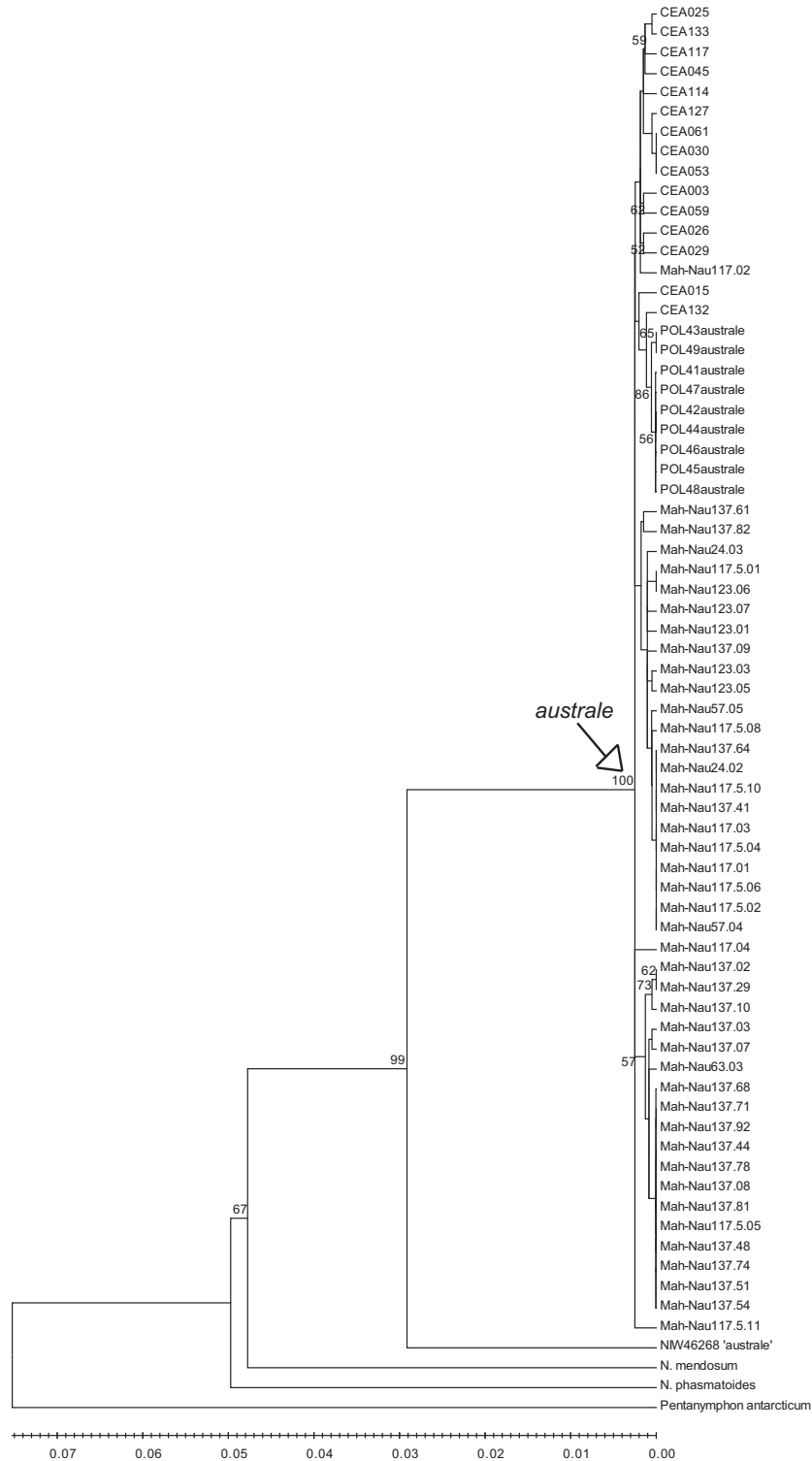


Fig. 2. Neighbour-joining consensus tree for 67 individuals of *N. australe* for which CO1 and 16S are available. Branches corresponding to partitions reproduced in less than 50% bootstrap replicates are collapsed. The percentage of replicate trees in which the associated taxa clustered together in the bootstrap test (1000 replicates) is shown next to the branches. Branch lengths in the same units as those of the evolutionary distances used to infer the tree. Samples with prefix CEA are from East Antarctica, POL from the Weddell Sea and Mah-Nau from the Antarctic Peninsula.

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sequence divergence we find in *N. australe* is between zero and 1.4%. *Pentanympyon antarcticum* Hodgson, 1904, *Nymphon phasmatoides* Böhm, 1879 and *Nymphon mendosum* (Hodgson, 1907) included as outgroups show levels of divergence from *N. australe* of 15%, 10% and 9.6%, respectively. A sample from Ross Sea from material recently reported in Nielsen et al. (2009) as *N. australe* was included here, but it shows a much higher level of divergence (5.8%) compared to our intra-specific grouping (<1.4%), suggesting that the specimen belongs to a different species.

3.3. Phylogeographic structure

3.3.1. CO1 data

We analysed a 554 bp fragment of the CO1 gene region for *N. australe*. The CO1 dataset includes 40 haplotypes, representing 57 individuals from the Peninsula, 60 from East Antarctica and 14 from the Weddell Sea from a total of 19 sampling sites. Overall, the CO1 data were highly variable, with 7% sequence variation across all samples and an average of around 4 pairwise differences between individuals (Supplementary Table 3). There were similar levels of variation within the East Antarctic and Antarctic Peninsula samples, although the Weddell Sea *N. australe* were much less genetically diverse (Supplementary Table 3). All haplotypes form a single network, with almost no overlap of haplotypes between the three locations (Table 1, Fig. 3). There was only a single haplotype shared between East Antarctica and the Antarctic Peninsula represented by only one individual in each location (Fig. 3).

There was significant genetic differentiation among the three geographic locations based on CO1 sequence data ($F_{ST}=0.28$, $p < 0.01$) indicating the three locations are effectively isolated. Pairwise comparisons showed that all three geographic locations were highly divergent from each other; East Antarctic vs. Weddell Sea $F_{ST}=0.43$, $p < 0.01$; East Antarctic vs. Antarctic Peninsula $F_{ST}=0.19$, $p < 0.01$ and Weddell Sea vs. Antarctic Peninsula $F_{ST}=0.41$, $p < 0.01$. Within the East Antarctic and Peninsula, we also found evidence of restricted gene flow among sites separated by as little as 11 km. All three sites from which we had sufficient replicate samples on the Antarctic Peninsula (Fig. 1) were significantly subdivided from each other (pairwise $F_{ST}=0.18–0.22$, $p < 0.05$). Within East Antarctica, while genetic differentiation across all sites indicated gene flow is limited ($F_{ST}=0.07$, $p < 0.05$), the pattern is not consistent among sites. Of the 10 pairwise comparisons, there were only two significant results; site 18 was significantly different from site 15B ($F_{ST}=0.18$, $p < 0.01$) and site 18 was also different from site 19 ($F_{ST}=0.11$, $p < 0.05$). There was no evidence of isolation by distance with no clear relationship between geographic and genetic distances ($r^2=0.1$).

3.3.2. 16S data

The 16S data (a total of 462 bp analysed across all samples) were much less variable than the CO1 data (Supplementary Table 3). Our sample included 22 haplotypes, representing 57 individuals from the Peninsula, 15 from East Antarctica and 9 from the Weddell Sea from a total of 16 sampling sites. Overall the 16S data showed 5% sequence variation across all samples but with an average of only 1 pairwise difference between individuals (Supplementary Table 3). Levels of nucleotide diversity were much lower for 16S (average 0.002) than for CO1 (average 0.007; Supplementary Table 3). As for the CO1 data, samples from the Weddell Sea had lower genetic diversity than those from the other two locations (Supplementary Table 3). All haplotypes conform to a single network with one dominant haplotype common to the three locations ($N=57$; Peninsula=42, East

Antarctica=9 and Weddell Sea=6; see Supplementary Table 3) as shown in the parsimony network (Supplementary Fig. 1). Not surprisingly, there was no evidence of genetic differentiation among the three locations based on the 16S sequence data ($F_{ST}=0.0007$, $p=0.34$).

4. Discussion

4.1. Validation of *N. australe*

Our dataset shows *N. australe* can be considered a single identifiable species based on mitochondrial DNA similarity and statistical parsimony networks. All individuals, from all sampled locations, were initially classified using morphological characters and identified as *N. australe*. These all come together in a strongly supported grouping in the CO1+16S NJ tree with uncorrected pairwise distances ranging from 0% to 1.4% (see Section 3.2). Our *N. australe* samples are clearly separated from morphologically similar material and other *Nymphon* species with up to 10% sequence variation among taxa (see Section 3.2; Fig. 1). *N. australe* is known for its high morphological variability and it is usually problematic to delimit the diagnostic characters of the species based on external morphology alone. Our results show that it is possible to consistently identify *N. australe*, despite the high morphological variation, and that morphological identification can be reliably confirmed with mitochondrial DNA data. The phylogenetic affinities presumed to be closely related species in the *australe*-group (Gordon, 1944; Child, 1995) are yet to be investigated and are the aim of a separate study (Arango et al. unpublished data).

Our results show single CO1 and 16S haplotype networks connecting *N. australe* individuals from Antarctic Peninsula, Weddell Sea and East Antarctic, indicating that we are dealing with one single species. There is no evidence of cryptic speciation within *N. australe* according to criteria proposed to delineate species based on networks (Hart et al., 2006), which suggests that a resulting single parsimony network of mitochondrial data, particularly CO1, represents a single species, while multiple subnetworks are usually consistent with hybridisation or cryptic species diversity (Hart and Sunday, 2007). The pattern of a single parsimony network for *N. australe* is different from that observed for other circumpolar invertebrates with similar life history traits in which cryptic speciation is demonstrated from pairwise distance comparisons and separate haplotype networks. For example, *Astrotoma agasizi*, one of the 13 ophiuroid species shared between Antarctica and South America shows three separate networks with up to 6.8% sequence divergence based on 16S+CO1 sequences (Hunter and Halanych, 2008). Similarly, the nudibranch *Doris kerguelensis* shows more than 5.7% sequence divergence in 16S+CO1 and 29 unconnected networks (Wilson et al., 2009). The sea spider *Colossendeis megalonyx* shows CO1 sequence variation up to 10.5% and at least five separate networks (Krabbe et al., 2010). Interestingly, all of these studies include material sampled from localities in West Antarctica and South America; so it remains to be seen whether material of *N. australe* from South America or West Sub-Antarctic locations would also reveal similar evidence of cryptic speciation as seen in other taxa. If so, this would yield additional support for the role of the Drake Passage as an isolating mechanism promoting speciation processes.

4.2. Phylogeographic structure

While there is no doubt that *N. australe* is a circumpolar species, our CO1 results show clear genetic differentiation among

Table 1
Genetic diversity statistics for *Nymphon australe* for overall and within-region comparisons.

Location	16S (462 bp)						CO1 (554 bp)					
	No. of indiv.	Trans.: transv. ratio	% Variation	Mean no. pairwise diffs.	Nucleotide diversity	Gene diversity	No. of indiv.	Trans.: Transv. Variation	% Variation	Mean no. pairwise diffs.	Nucleotide diversity	Gene diversity
Overall	81	0.92	5	1.03 ± 0.69	0.002 ± 0.001	0.53 ± 0.08	131	2	7	3.8 ± 1.9	0.007 ± 0.004	0.92 ± 0.01
Antarctic Peninsula	57	0.75	3	0.86 ± 0.62	0.002 ± 0.001	0.48 ± 0.09	57	1.1	3.7	3.04 ± 1.6	0.005 ± 0.003	0.83 ± 0.04
East Antarctica	15	1.25	1.9	1.69 ± 1.04	0.004 ± 0.003	0.66 ± 0.14	60	6	3.7	2.46 ± 1.35	0.004 ± 0.003	0.8 ± 0.05
Weddell Sea	9	1	0.4	0.61 ± 0.53	0.001 ± 0.001	0.56 ± 0.17	14	na	0.2	0.14 ± 0.21	0.0003 ± 0.0004	0.14 ± 0.19

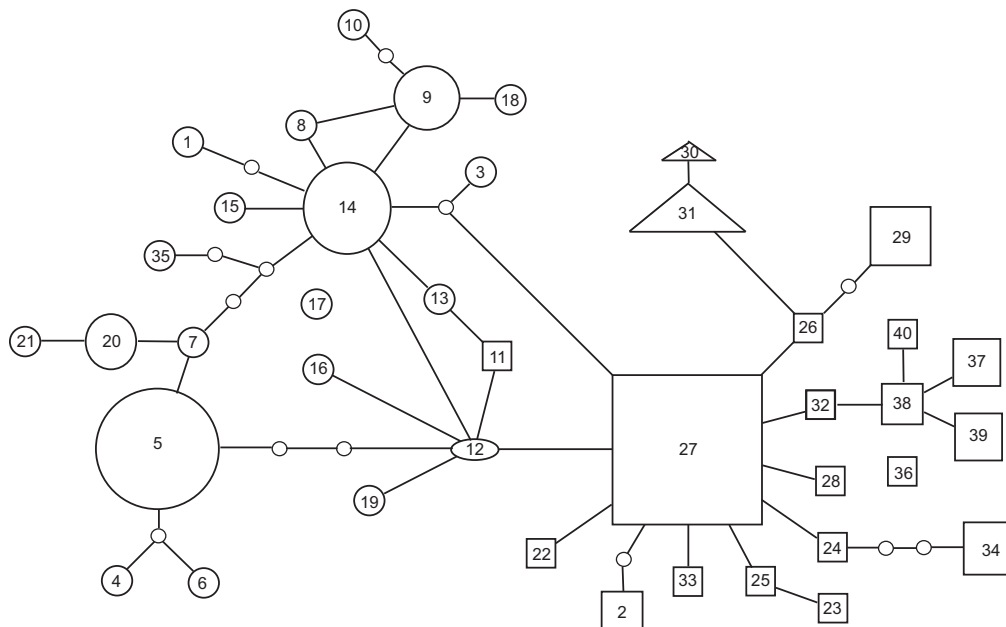


Fig. 3. Haplotype network based on *Nymphon australe* mitochondrial CO1 data. Small open circles represent unsampled or extinct haplotypes. Large circles represent haplotypes from the Antarctic Peninsula, squares represent haplotypes from East Antarctica and triangles represent haplotypes from the Weddell Sea. The oval shape represents a shared haplotype. Size of the shapes is proportional to the frequency of the haplotype (n from 1–19). Numbers in the shapes correspond to haplotype number (Table 1).

the three geographically distant populations in the Antarctic Peninsula, the Weddell Sea and East Antarctica. This result is consistent with limited ongoing gene flow indicating that the present-day populations are effectively isolated. Also, these results support the hypothesis that genetic differentiation observed in many Antarctic marine species is associated with the transition between the East and the West Antarctic Province, in the area where the Scotia–Weddell confluence is present (Bargelloni et al., 2000).

We did find a CO1 haplotype shared between a single individual from Antarctic Peninsula and a single individual from East Antarctica (Haplotype 12, Fig. 3), which might reflect ongoing connections. However, if there was continuing dispersal among our locations, we might expect more shared haplotypes represented by more individuals. Furthermore, Haplotype 12 represents a single synonymous transitional change in a third-codon position from a common (but unique) haplotype in each location

(Fig. 3); so it is likely that the mutations resulting in Haplotype 12 may have occurred independently in the Antarctic Peninsula and East Antarctic populations.

There was no geographic signal in our 16S data, with one dominant, shared haplotype across each of the three regions (Supplementary Fig. 1), and no statistically significant differentiation evident. This may be linked to lower sample sizes as we were only able to obtain data from 81 individuals for 16S, compared with 131 for CO1. However, we detected considerably lower levels of genetic diversity overall in the 16S region compared to CO1 (Supplementary Table 3), which is consistent with the different substitution rates and much slower evolutionary rate expected from 16S. Certainly the different results based on the two DNA regions lend further support to our assertion that *N. australe* is a circumpolar species that has gradually spread around the Antarctic coast (based on shared conserved 16S sequences), but with limited or no ongoing gene flow among

geographically distant populations (supported by the more variable CO1 sequences).

Interestingly, *N. australe* from the Weddell Sea had much lower levels of genetic diversity than *N. australe* from either the Antarctic Peninsula or the East Antarctic (Supplementary Table 3). Unfortunately we only collected 14 individuals from a single location in the Weddell Sea, so the smaller, more restricted sample size may explain this pattern. However, for the East Antarctic we also only had data from 15 individuals for 16S but these were clearly more diverse than the 57 individuals sampled on the Antarctic Peninsula ($\pi=0.004$ vs 0.002 respectively, Supplementary Table 3). Possibly other historical or ecological processes may have influenced the genetic diversity of the Weddell Sea *N. australe* populations. Hilbig et al. (2006), for example, recorded lower species richness, biomass and abundance in polychaetes from the Weddell Sea compared with those from the Peninsula, although Clarke and Johnston (2003) suggest that the Weddell Sea is more diverse than the Ross Sea in terms of the diversity of benthic marine invertebrates. Clearly this is a field that warrants further study in the future.

4.3. Genetic structure at small scale and influences on gene flow

Within the Antarctic Peninsula and East Antarctic locations, we found evidence of limited gene flow among samples collected 10–100 s of km apart ($F_{ST}=0.28$, $p<0.01$ and 0.07, $p<0.05$, respectively). These results are consistent with the assumed limited dispersal ability of pycnogonids based on their brooding life-history (see Arnaud and Bamber, 1987), and indicate that pycnogonid populations around Antarctica most likely represent a metapopulation comprised of a series of sub-divided populations. As noted by Mahon et al. (2008), there were shared haplotypes among the three sites on the Antarctic Peninsula (3 of 16 haplotypes occurred at more than 1 site) as well as among the East Antarctic sites (3 of 18 haplotypes occurred at more than 1 site), but due to the nature of the genetic marker we have used (CO1 sequences) this most likely reflects longer-term processes rather than recent dispersal. Comparisons using more variable markers such as microsatellite DNA would be more appropriate for elucidating present-day dispersal patterns (e.g., Miller et al., 2008); however the nature of deep-sea sampling, especially in the Antarctic, makes obtaining adequate replication for such studies very difficult.

We found no evidence of isolation-by-distance among sites as might be expected in a species with limited dispersal, suggesting that factors other than simple geographic distance are influencing the genetic composition of populations. For example, sites 15B, 18 and 19 from the East Antarctic are genetically distinct ($F_{ST}=0.1$, $p<0.05$) but are all within 40 km of each other, yet each is separated by > 200 m depth (each sample came from ~900, 400 and 650 m, respectively), suggesting depth could be an important factor in the dispersal of pycnogonids. On the Antarctic Peninsula, depth is a less obvious contributor to the genetic differences among the sites, even though the three stations range from 156 (site 06–29), 360 (site 06–60) to 490 m (site 06–34). Site 06–60 is the most genetically divergent of the three stations; and interestingly this has a much cooler potential seabed temperature than the other two sites (Clarke et al., 2009), suggesting ecological factors such as temperature may also be linked to genetic structure of populations.

5. Conclusion

Our molecular study has shown that *N. australe* is a circumpolar species, which displays metapopulation structure

consistent with the limited dispersal capacity of a brooding marine invertebrate. While the phylogenetic position of *N. australe* remains to be resolved, it is possible that the lack of ongoing gene-flow among geographic locations across Antarctica will result in differentiation over time leading to speciation. In addition, our results suggest that physical processes such as temperature and depth may also be contributing to genetic divergence within the species.

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Appendix A. Supplementary material

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found in the online version at doi:10.1016/j.dsr.2010.05.019.

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Supplementary Table 1.

Collection details and Genbank accession numbers for each individual included in this study. Details of sites and study area for the Peninsula material are in Mahon et al. (2008).

RECORD	Station	Latitude	Longitude	Avg Bottom Depth (m)	CO1	16S
	East Antarctica	CEAMARC				
<i>Nymphon australe</i>						
CEA2	13A	66°09'33''S	140°39'26''E	676.4	GU566081	
CEA3	13A	66°09'33''S	140°39'26''E	676.4	GU566082	GU566155
CEA13	37	66°33'19''S	143°19'01''E	396.2	GU566083	
CEA14	37	66°33'19''S	143°19'01''E	204.6	GU566084	
CEA15	37	66°33'19''S	143°19'01''E	204.6	GU566085	GU566156
CEA16	37	66°33'19''S	143°19'01''E	204.6	GU566086	
CEA25	3	65°59'59''S	141°59'07''E	1121.4	GU566087	GU566157
CEA26	3	65°59'59''S	141°59'07''E	1121.4	GU566088	GU566158
CEA27	3	65°59'59''S	141°59'07''E	1121.4	GU566089	
CEA28	3	65°59'59''S	141°59'07''E	1121.4	GU566090	
CEA29	3	65°59'59''S	141°59'07''E	1121.4	GU566091	GU566159
CEA30	43	66°44'55''S	143°20'03''E	731.2	GU566092	GU566160
CEA34	34	66°20'15''S	144°20'36''E	455.8	GU566093	
CEA45	71	66°23'40''S	140°29'02''E	929.8	GU566094	GU566161
CEA46	71	66°23'40''S	140°29'02''E	929.8	GU566095	
CEA53	70	66°25'48''S	140°31'26''E	1075.1	GU566096	GU566162
CEA55	70	66°25'48''S	140°31'26''E	1075.1	GU566097	
CEA56	70	66°25'48''S	140°31'26''E	1075.1	GU566098	
CEA57	70	66°25'48''S	140°31'26''E	1075.1	GU566099	
CEA59	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566100	GU566163
CEA61	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566101	GU566164
CEA62	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566102	



CEA63	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566103	
CEA64	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566104	
CEA65	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566105	
CEA66	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566106	
CEA67	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566107	
CEA68	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566109	
CEA69	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566108	
CEA70	18	66°10'01''S	139°39'20''E	636.6	GU566110	
CEA 72	1	66°09'33''S	140°39'26''E	777.9	GU566111	
CEA 80	2	65°59'58''S	141°19'34''E	1188.8	GU566112	
CEA 101	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566113	
CEA 102	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566114	
CEA 103	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566115	
CEA 104	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566116	
CEA 105	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566117	
CEA 106	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566118	
CEA 107	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566119	
CEA 108	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566120	
CEA 109	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566121	
CEA 110	15B	66°23'01''S	139°48'08''E	407.6	GU566122	
CEA 114	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566123	GU566165
CEA 115	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566124	
CEA 116	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566125	
CEA 117	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566126	GU566166
CEA 118	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566127	
CEA 119	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566128	
CEA 120	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566129	
CEA 122	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566130	
CEA 123	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566131	
CEA 124	19	66°09'36''S	139°18'49''E	219.4	GU566132	
CEA 126	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566133	
CEA 127	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566134	GU566167
CEA 128	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566135	

	CEA 129	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566136	
	CEA 130	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566137	
	CEA 131	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566138	
	CEA 132	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566139	GU566168
	CEA 133	60	66°33'39''S	143°55'55''E	865.6	GU566140	GU566169
<i>N. phasmatoides</i>	CEA36	33A	65°52'24''S	144°03'33''E	576.0	GU573492	GU573494

	Weddell Sea	ANDEEP-SYSTCO ANT XXIV/2					
	POL41	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566141	GU566170
	POL42	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566142	GU566171
	POL43	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566143	GU566172
	POL44	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566144	GU566173
	POL45	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566145	GU566174
	POL46	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566146	GU566175
	POL47	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566147	GU566176
	POL48	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566148	GU566177
	POL49	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566149	GU566178
	POL50	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566150	
	POL51	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566151	
	POL52	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566152	
	POL53	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566153	
	POL55	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU566154	
<i>N. mendosum</i>	POL32	AGT5	70°24'34''S	08°19'18''W	599.4	GU573493	GU573495

	Antarctic Peninsula (Mahon et al. 2008)	ASRV L.M. Gould					
	24.02	04-40	63°24'00''S	57°11'51''W	335	EU140432	EU140358
	24.03	04-40	63°24'00''S	57°11'51''W	335	EU140433	EU140359
	57.04	04-72	63°30'19''S	62°20'39''W	256	EU140489	EU140415
	57.05	04-72	63°30'19''S	62°20'39''W	256	EU140490	EU140416
	63.03	04-76	64°24'55''S	64°24'07''W	353	EU140491	EU140417
	117.01	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140463	EU140389



117.02	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140464	EU140390
117.03	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140465	EU140391
117.04	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140466	EU140392
117.5.01	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140467	EU140393
117.5.10	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140442	EU140368
117.5.11	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140468	EU140394
117.5.02	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140469	EU140395
117.5.04	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140470	EU140396
117.5.05	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140471	EU140397
117.5.06	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140472	EU140398
117.5.07	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140445	EU140371
117.5.08	06-29	64°05'22''S	62°27'02''W	156	EU140473	EU140399
123.01	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140476	EU140402
123.10	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140455	EU140381
123.02	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140477	EU140403
123.03	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140441	EU140367
123.04	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140478	EU140404
123.05	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140456	EU140382
123.06	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140457	EU140383
123.07	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140479	EU140405
123.09	06-34	67°28'31''S	68°19'24''W	490	EU140458	EU140384
137.10	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140458	EU140384
137.18	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140437	EU140363
137.02	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140480	EU140406
137.20	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140440	EU140366
137.21	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140481	EU140407
137.24	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140482	EU140408
137.29	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140483	EU140409
137.03	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140438	EU140364
137.04	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140443	EU140369
137.45	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140484	EU140410
137.47	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140485	EU140411
137.05	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140486	EU140412

137.06	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140436	EU140362	
137.07	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140428	EU140354	
137.08	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140429	EU140355	
137.09	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140430	EU140356	
137.41	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU140431	EU140357	
137.44	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753823	EU753837	
137.48	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753824	EU753838	
137.51	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753825	EU753839	
137.54	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753826	EU753840	
137.61	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753827	EU753841	
137.64	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753828	EU753842	
137.68	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753829	EU753843	
137.71	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753830	EU753844	
137.74	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753831	EU753845	
137.78	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753832	EU753846	
137.81	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753833	EU753847	
137.82	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753834	EU753848	
137.92	06-60	64°33'18''S	63°19'13''W	360	EU753835	EU753849	
<hr/>							
<i>Pentanympion</i>							
<i>antarcticum</i>	114.01	06-24	62°34.20''S	60°02.78''W	200	EU140444	EU140370
<hr/>							
<i>N. 'australe'</i>	NIWA46267	-	71°31'12''S	171°25'51''E	389.5	FJ969361	FJ969331
Ross Sea							

Supplementary Table 2.

CO1 Haplotype distribution. Number of individuals, site and samples for each haplotype numbered in the CO1 haplotype network (Fig. 3). EA represents samples from East Antarctica/CEAMARC, PEN, from Antarctic Peninsula and POL from Weddell Sea (Polarstern).

Haplotype	Count	Location	Stations	Samples
1	1	Pen	06-60	137.47
2	2	EA	18	CEA64 CEA65



3	1	Pen	06-29	117.02					
4	1	Pen	04-76	63.03					
5	19	Pen	06-60	137.06	137.07	137.08	117.5.06	123.04	
			06-29	137.18	137.24	137.04	137.45	137.44	
			06-34	137.48	137.51	137.54	137.68	137.71	
				137.74	137.78	137.81	137.92		
6	1	Pen	06-34	123.09					
7	1	Pen	06-60	137.03					
8	1	Pen	06-34	123.10					
9	6	Pen	06-34	123.03	117.5.07	123.05	123.06	117.5.01	
			06-29	123.01					
10	1	Pen	06-34	123.07					
11	1	EA	15B	CEA110					
12	2	EA	60	CEA129	137.21				
		Pen	06-60						
13	1	Pen	04-40	24.03					
14	13	Pen	06-60	04-72	137.09	24.02	117.5.10	117.01	117.03
			04-40		117.5.02	117.5.04	117.5.05	117.5.08	137.20
			06-29		57.04	137.41	137.64		
15	1	Pen	04-72	57.05					
16	1	Pen	06-60	137.61					
17	1	Pen	06-60	137.82					
18	1	Pen	06-34	123.02					
19	1	Pen	06-29	117.5.11					
20	4	Pen	06-60	137.05	137.10	137.29	137.02		
21	1	Pen	06-60	137.01					
22	1	EA	18	CEA59					
23	1	EA	18	CEA66					
24	1	EA	3	CEA26					
25	1	EA	19	CEA124					
26	1	EA	60	CEA132					
27	27	EA	37	18	CEA13	CEA3	CEA30	CEA16	CEA28
			13A	15B	CEA46	CEA53	CEA55	CEA56	CEA57

			43	19	CEA61	CEA101	CEA103	CEA104	CEA105
			3	60	CEA107	CEA108	CEA109	CEA114	CEA115
			71		CEA118	CEA120	CEA122	CEA123	CEA127
			70		CEA128	CEA131			
28	1	EA	18		CEA63				
29	7	EA	37	15B	CEA15	CEA62	CEA69	CEA102	CEA106
			18	19	CEA116	CEA119			
30	1	Wed	AGT5		POL53				
31	13	Wed	AGT5		POL41	POL42	POL43	POL44	POL45
					POL46	POL47	POL48	POL49	POL50
					POL51	POL52	POL55		
32	1	EA	71		CEA45				
33	1	EA	18		CEA68				
34	4	EA	34	3	CEA34	CEA72	CEA29	CEA2	
			1	13A					
35	1	Pen	06-29		117.04				
36	1	EA	19		CEA117				
37	3	EA	3	60	CEA27	CEA126	CEA133		
38	2	EA	37	3	CEA14	CEA25			
39	3	EA	18	60	CEA70	CEA80	CEA130		
			2						
40	1	EA	18		CEA67				

Supplementary Table 3.

16S Haplotype distribution. Number of individuals, site and samples for each haplotype numbered in the 16S haplotype network (Sup. Fig. 1). EA represents samples from East Antarctica (CEAMARC), PEN, from Antarctic Peninsula and POL from Weddell Sea (Polarstern).

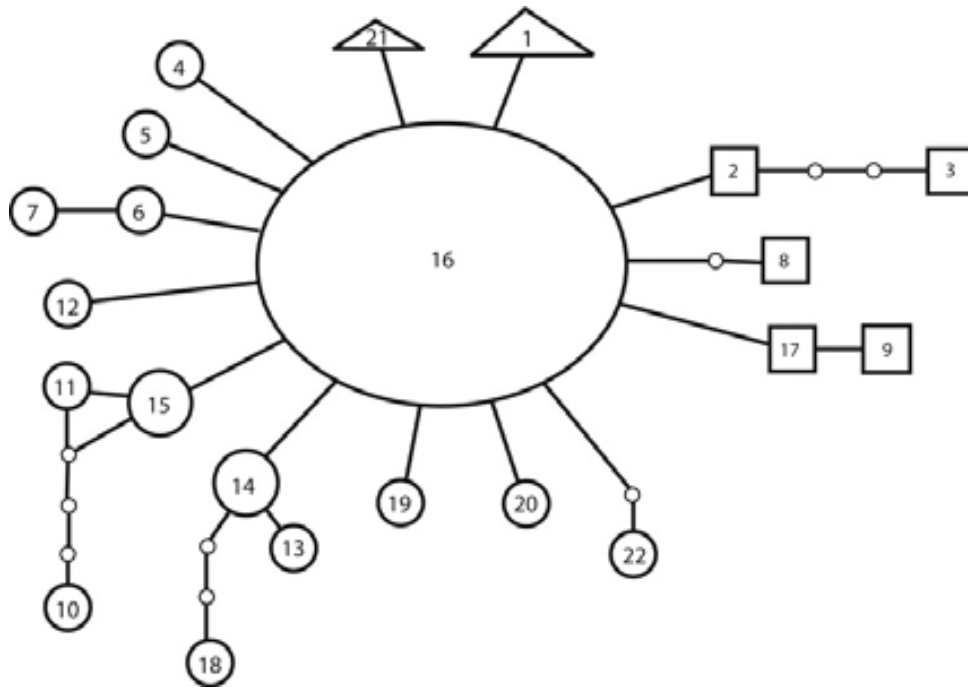
Haplotype	Count	Location	Stations	Samples
1	2	Wed	AGT5	POL49 POL43
2	1	EA	18	CEA59
3	1	EA	13A	CEA3



4	1	Pen	06-29	117.5.11					
5	1	Pen	06-60	137.51					
6	1	Pen	06-34	137.10					
7	1	Pen	06-60	137.82					
8	1	EA	19	CEA117					
9	1	EA	19	CEA114					
10	1	Pen		137.09					
11	1	Pen	06-60 06-34	123.05					
12	1	Pen	06-34	123.03					
13	1	Pen	06-60	137.06					
14	2	Pen	06-60	137.45	137.47				
15	2	Pen	06-60	137.07	137.03				
16	57	Wed	AGT5	POL47	POL46	POL45	POL44	POL42	
		EA	3	POL41	CEA133	CEA132	CEA61	CEA53	
		Pen	71	CEA45	CEA30	CEA29	CEA26	CEA25	
			70	137.92	137.81	137.78	137.74	137.71	
			18	137.68	137.64	137.61	137.54	137.48	
			60	137.44	137.41	57.05	137.24	123.02	
			06-60	57.04	123.10	63.03	24.03	24.02	
			04-72	137.29	137.21	137.20	137.18	137.08	
			06-34	137.04	137.02	137.01	123.07	123.06	
			06-29	123.04	117.5.07	117.5.10	117.5.06	117.5.05	
			04-40	117.5.04	117.5.02	117.5.01	117.04	117.03	
			04-72	117.02	117.01				
17	1	EA	37	CEA15					
18	1	Pen	06-60	137.05					
19	1	EA	60	CEA127					
20	1	Pen	06-29	117.5.08					
21	1	Wed	AGT5	POL48					
22	1	Pen	06-34	123.01					

Supplementary Figure 1.

Haplotype network based on *Nymphon australe* 16S data. Small open circles represent unsampled or extinct haplotypes. Large circles represent haplotypes from the Antarctic Peninsula, squares represent haplotypes from East Antarctica and triangles represent haplotypes from the Weddell Sea. The oval shape represents a shared haplotype. Size of the shapes is proportional to the frequency of the haplotype. Numbers in the shapes correspond to haplotype number.



Anatomy and ultrastructure of the digestive system from two Mediterranean sea spiders (Arthropoda; Pycnogonida) with remarks on digestion and feeding behavior

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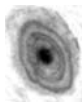
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Abstract

The digestive system of sea spiders (Pycnogonida), as with other morphological and anatomical features, presents peculiarities that have not been discussed in the context of their ecology or feeding behavior. We investigated the digestive system of two Mediterranean species, *Ammothella longipes* and *Endeis spinosa*, with special focus on its adaptations to behavioral feeding habits and the ongoing digestive process observed. The midgut and hindgut sections did not present significant differences between the two species, but major differences were observed in the proboscis, according not only to the morphological groundplan of each lineage, but also reflecting adaptation to their diet. Salivary products helping in oral digestion, the structure of the pharyngeal filter and musculature of the proboscis and esophagus are the main differential elements when comparing feeding habits of *A. longipes* and *E. spinosa*. These elements are responsible for the reduction of the food pulp down to cellular size. The digestion process observed in the two species studied agree with that observed in other pycnogonid lineages, this process differs from most marine arthropods mainly because of the absence of midgut gland cells and the presence of a unique multifunctional type of midgut epithelial cell. Epithelial digestive cells are present in a small 'resting' form during starvation periods. During digestion, secretory granules possibly containing zymogen move to their apical border to be secreted to the midgut lumen, secondary lysosomes are formed and intracellular digestion occurs within them. Residual bodies are formed within the epithelial cell and released to the midgut lumen to be transported towards the hindgut. The characteristics of the digestive process of the pycnogonids studied seem to reflect a plesiomorphic state in arthropods; similar processes including transformation of epithelial multifunctional cells have been described in Acari.

Key words

Pycnogonida, Mediterranean Sea, foregut, midgut, digestive cells, digestion process, feeding behavior.

Running title

Digestive system of Mediterranean pycnogonids

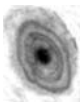
1. Introduction

Pycnogonids (sea spiders) are one of the most intriguing groups of arthropods. These exclusively marine animals found from shorelines to abyssal depths (>1320 spp) show unique morphological features (e.g. prominent external proboscis, extremely reduced abdomen, reproductive and digestive systems extending into walking legs) that make them difficult to relate to any other arthropod group. Their sister relationship to Chelicerata, the most accepted phylogenetic hypothesis, is yet to be fully understood (Dunlop & Arango 2005; Brenneis et al. 2008; Regier et al. 2010), and has propelled several recent works on pycnogonid evolution and novel morphological data (Vilpoux & Waloszek, 2003; Brenneis et al. 2008; Ungerer & Scholtz 2009). However, many aspects of pycnogonid biology remain understudied. Since Arnaud & Bamber (1987) comprehensive review, few papers on reproduction (Tomaschko et al. 1997; Barreto & Avise 2008; Bilinski et al. 2008) and feeding biology (Bain 1991; Imandeh & King, 2001) have been published. A common highlight of these and previous studies though, is the uniqueness of different aspects of the biology of Pycnogonida when compared to other arthropods and their digestive system is no exception.

The digestive system seems to be similar within the group (Richards & Fry 1978), but, unique among the arthropods. The proboscis is perhaps the most prominent feature and has been studied in detail by Dohrn (1881), Hoek (1881), Wirén (1918) and Fry (1965), and more recently at the ultrastructural level in Fahrenbach & Arango (2007). The midgut, which is the gut section where intracellular digestion occurs, comprises the medial trunk and reaches the leg processes at different lengths (Richards & Fry 1978). In pycnogonids, contrary to what occurs in most arthropods (crustaceans, insects and some Chelicerata), the midgut cannot be divided into functional portions, that is anterior and posterior, but the whole length of the midgut shows the same type of multifunctional epithelial cells (Richards & Fry 1978). The hindgut is reduced within the small abdomen, and is the gut section where faecal pellets congregate to be evacuated through the anal opening.

Previous studies, based on the analysis of feeding behavior (Bain 1991; Stock 1978; Wyer & King 1974), showed pycnogonids feeding on phytodetritus and seaweeds, as well as being predators of usually sessile items such as hydroids (Fry 1965; Prell 1909; Russel & Hedgpeth 1990; Bain 1991), Anthozoa (Bamber 1985; Arango 2001, Braby et al. 2009), and Bryozoa (Fry 1965); in some cases they are also being observed feeding on mobile prey such as polychaetes (Arnaud and Bamber 1987; Soler-Membrives et al. submitted), copepods (Lotz 1968) and mollusks bivalves and nudibranchs (Lotz 1968; Rogers et al. 2000; Arango & Brodie 2003), among others, generally by sucking their prey (Arnaud and Bamber 1987).

However, it is not clear how the digestive system and the processes involved may vary between taxa and according to the different feeding behaviors. Here, we investigate the digestive system of two Mediterranean species *Ammothella longipes* (Hodge 1864) and *Endeis spinosa* (Montagu 1808) with different diets and feeding behavior. The former is a seasonal opportunist, carnivorous during spring and detritivorous during autumn and winter and both



carnivory and detritivory seem to occur in summer (Soler-Membrives et al. submitted). According to its morphology and general behavior (Wyer & King 1974; Arnaud & Bamber 1987; Fahrenbach & Arango 2007), *Endeis spinosa* is considered a surface grazer or detritus feeder. In spite of the studies conducted in this species, there is no information about the seasonal changes in its feeding behavior.

The major goal of this study then, is to provide a detailed examination of the digestive system of *Ammothella longipes* and *Endeis spinosa* using light, scanning and transmission electron microscopes, as well as to discuss behavioral and morphological data relating them to food preferences. Moreover, the relevance of this study falls on to the discussion of the digestive process in Pycnogonida and its possible evolutionary and ecological implications.

2. Materials and methods

Collecting took place between summer and autumn of 2007 and 2008 in a north-western Mediterranean beach (41°40'37''N 2°48'29''E) in Blanes, Catalonia (Spain). Each batch consisted of a sample of *Halopteris* spp. community (*H. scoparia*, *H. filicina*, or a mix of them) which was carefully bagged *in situ* and extracted using SCUBA in 7 -10 m depth where the species are commonly distributed (Ballesteros 1991). Batches were transported in a cooler filled with ice (10-12°C) and then left in separate trays maintaining constant cold water temperature, to avoid digestive tract degradation. Pycnogonids were sorted and identified to species level. Individuals of *A. longipes* and *E. spinosa* were chosen and fixed either for histology or for electronic microscopy.

Live animals destined for histology were fixed in 4% formalin in sea water, and completely dehydrated through a graded ethanol series. Some individuals were embedded in paraffin and serial sections (from 4 to 10 µm thick) were obtained and then stained with hematoxylin and eosin. Other individuals were embedded in Technovit 7100 resin (Kulzer, Heraeus, Germany), and semi-thin serial sections (2µm) were stained with toluidine blue. Samples were examined under a Leica DM5000B light microscope, and digital images were captured by a Prog-Res C3 camera (resolution 3.3 mpixels).

Live animals destined for electron microscopy were fixed for 24 h in 1% glutaraldehyde with 3% NaCl in a 0.1 M sodium cacodylate buffer adjusted to pH 7.2. Samples were washed several times with the same buffer, postfixed in 1% cacodylic osmium tetroxide and dehydrated through a graded ethanol series. Some fixed specimens were critical-point dried, mounted on stubs, coated with gold-palladium, and observed using a Hitachi S-570 scanning electron microscope. Specimens to be observed by transmission electron microscope were embedded in Spurr's resin and the material was examined in a Philips 300 and a Hitachi H7000 transmission electron microscopes operating at 75kV.

Food circulation along the trunk and legs was observed in the selected live specimens that showed food in their digestive systems, under an optical microscope (Olympus BX50). Behavioral feeding observations were carried out with live animals maintained with at room

temperature in small aquaria; the pycnogonids were observed by means of a stereoscopic microscope (Leica S8APO) and the light covered with a transparent dark paper filter, to reduce the light intensity.

3. Results

The digestive system of the pycnogonids under study is divisible into three regions i.e. foregut, midgut, and hindgut, exhibiting particular characteristics for each of the species studied.

3.1. Foregut

The mouth of *A. longipes* is positioned at the tip of the fusiform proboscis (Fig. 1A). The mouth is formed by the typical triradiate symmetry of most pycnogonids and show three external folded lips fringed by setae and sharp trident jaws (see Fig. 1B and 2A). In contrast, *Endeis spinosa* has a long and straight proboscis, the apical mouth has three densely setose lips and jaws are not conspicuous (see Figs. 1F and I, 2B and C).

The foregut in both species starts continuously from the mouth and extends through the proboscis. The anterior foregut –also called ‘pharynx’ by some authors (Helfer & Schlottke 1935; Sanchez 1959; King 1973) has a trifoliate lumen in cross-section followed by a large sac, both layered by a thin cuticle. In *A. longipes*, this inner cuticle seems to be smooth up to the posterior section of the proboscis where the pharyngeal filter starts (also called ‘oyster basket sieve’ (Schlottke 1933)) (Fig. 1D, E and G). In *E. spinosa*, the filter is much dense and occupies most of the proboscis length (see Fig. 1H and K, 2C).

Both species have approximately 100 dilator muscle fibers in the interradiial zones and about 50 retractor muscles in the radial zones (see Figs. 2E and G). Proboscis musculature is more developed in the fusiform proboscis of *A. longipes* than in the straight proboscis of *E. spinosa* (Fig. 1D and K). No recognizable salivary glands were found in either *A. longipes* or *E. spinosa*, but both species showed secretory tissue on both sides of each lip vertex in the apical region of the proboscis (see Fig. 2D and F). Three nervous structures were observed at dorsal and ventrolateral positions. These structures consisted in an amorphous mass surrounded by some cell bodies which in turn were wrapped in a layer of connective tissue (see Fig. 2E and G).

The short esophagus, located after the pharyngeal filter, is a thin muscular tube covered by a thin cuticle and presents a single layered epithelium of 10-15 μm (see Fig. 2H). No functional digestive cells are observed in the esophagus. The cuticle ceases at the end of the esophagus, where a tripartite valve separates it from the midgut (Fahrenbach & Arango 2007).

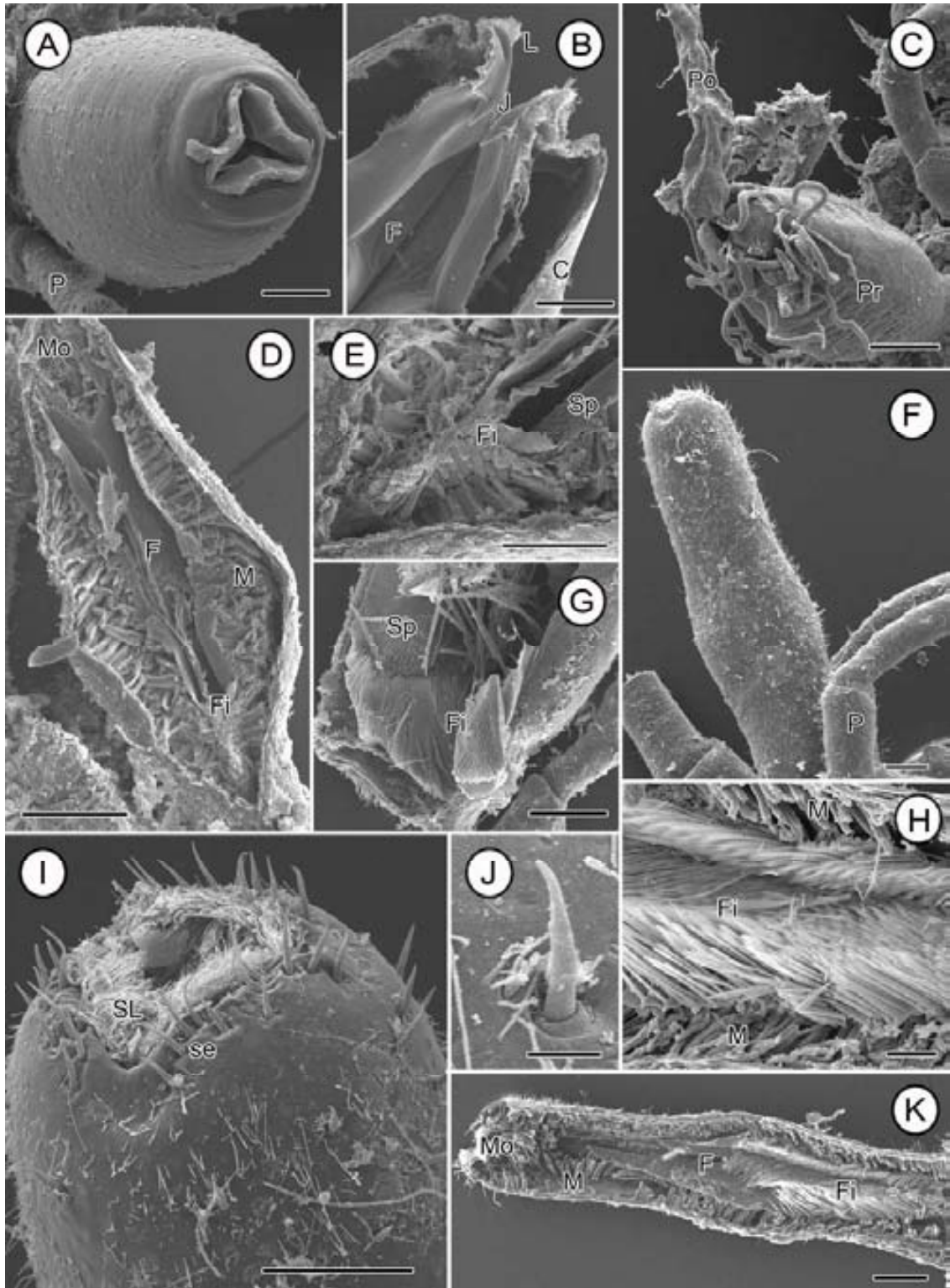
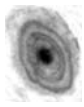


Fig 1. Scanning images of proboscis. A- *Ammothella longipes*. The lips are continuous and their flutings are seen around the periphery of the mouth. Note the fusiform proboscis of this species. Palps (P). Scale bar-100 μ m. B- *A. longipes*. Half distal portion of the proboscis illustrating the extraordinarily sharp tips of the jaws (J) and the peripheral lips (L), associated with predatory lifestyle. Cuticle (C), pharynx (F). Scale bar-50 μ m. C- *A. longipes*. A specimen of this species with a polychaete (Po) into its mouth, revealing its capacity to predate mobile prey. Proboscis (Pr). Scale bar-100 μ m. D- *A. longipes*. Longitudinal half portion of the proboscis. Pharyngeal filter (Fi) is restricted to the posterior section, and musculature (M) is well developed. Mouth (Mo), pharynx (F). Scale bar-

100 μ m. E- *A. longipes*. Detail of the anterior, showing the section where the pharyngeal filter (Fi) starts, with some spines (Sp). Scale bar-50 μ m. F- *Endeis spinosa*. Lateral view of the long and straight proboscis. Scale bar-100 μ m. G- *A. longipes*. Pharyngeal filter (Fi) showing its few setae and some spines (Sp). Scale bar-100 μ m. H- *E. spinosa*. Pharyngeal filter (Fi) crammed of dense setae. Pharynx muscle fibers (M). Scale bar-50 μ m. I- *E. spinosa*. Antero-lateral view of the mouth. Large setae (se), presumably all sensory, are seen surrounding the mouth, and densely setose lips (SL) inside. Scale bar-75 μ m. J- *E. spinosa*. Insertion detail of a long seta surrounding the mouth. Scale bar-10 μ m. K- *E. spinosa*. Longitudinal half portion of the proboscis. The pharyngeal filter (Fi) is fully visible in this plane of section, which occupies half of the proboscis length. Pharynx (F), pharynx muscle fibers (M), mouth (Mo). Scale bar-100 μ m.

3.2. Midgut

The midgut extends along the trunk and ends in a tripartite valve that opens into the hindgut. The midgut has diverticula (caeca) into the walking legs and may extend into other appendages (Figs. 3A and B). These caeca extend beyond the leg bases down to the propodus depending on the species. In *A. longipes* the caeca extend to the end of the tibiae, and towards the propodus in *E. spinosa*. Moreover, in contrast with other pycnogonids, the midgut of *E. spinosa* extends forward into the proboscis with a pair of caeca (Figs. 2C and 3B). Otherwise, there seem to be few differences in the microscopic structure and ultrastructure of the midgut tracts between *A. longipes* and *E. spinosa*.

Leg epidermis shows a border of microvilli of 1 μ m, which corresponds to the granular epithelium described by Fahrenbach & Arango (2007), between the endocuticle and the epidermis. Epidermal cells show an irregular flattened shape. Their cytoplasm contains a large nucleus and some elongated mitochondria (up to 0.5 μ m). Mitochondria have a dense matrix and lamellar cristae and groups of electron-dense granules. A thin basal lamina of 0.2 μ m borders the hemocoel (see Figs. 4A and B).

From the hemocoel inwards the following tissues were found: a thin endothelium, some thin muscle fibers, and finally the midgut epithelium (Figs. 4A, D and E). A thin basal lamina of 0.2 μ m was observed between each tissue layer. The midgut epithelial cells show marked differences in their appearance depending on the moment of the digestion. During resting periods, epithelial cells (resting cells) have a diameter of about 10-20 μ m and contain a basal nucleus, dense basophilic cytoplasm, small rounded mitochondria, well-developed rough endoplasmic reticulum (rER) and secretion granules of about 2 μ m (Fig. 4A). During the digestion, midgut cells can reach up to 35 μ m and their cytoplasm becomes acidophilic. Large secondary lysosomes which harbor large electron-dense inclusions, glycogen granules, and other cellular organelles such as rER, and electro-dense granules can be observed within epithelial cells (Figs. 4C, D and E). Additionally, some concentric rings of about 1-2 μ m, hereafter called residual bodies, appear in the epithelial cells during digestion (Figs. 4F, G and H). At the end of the digestion process, residual bodies, autophagic vacuoles and some isolated lipid vacuoles are the only organelles observed in the epithelial cells. Digestion ends with the migration and release of these organelles to the midgut lumen (Fig. 6E).

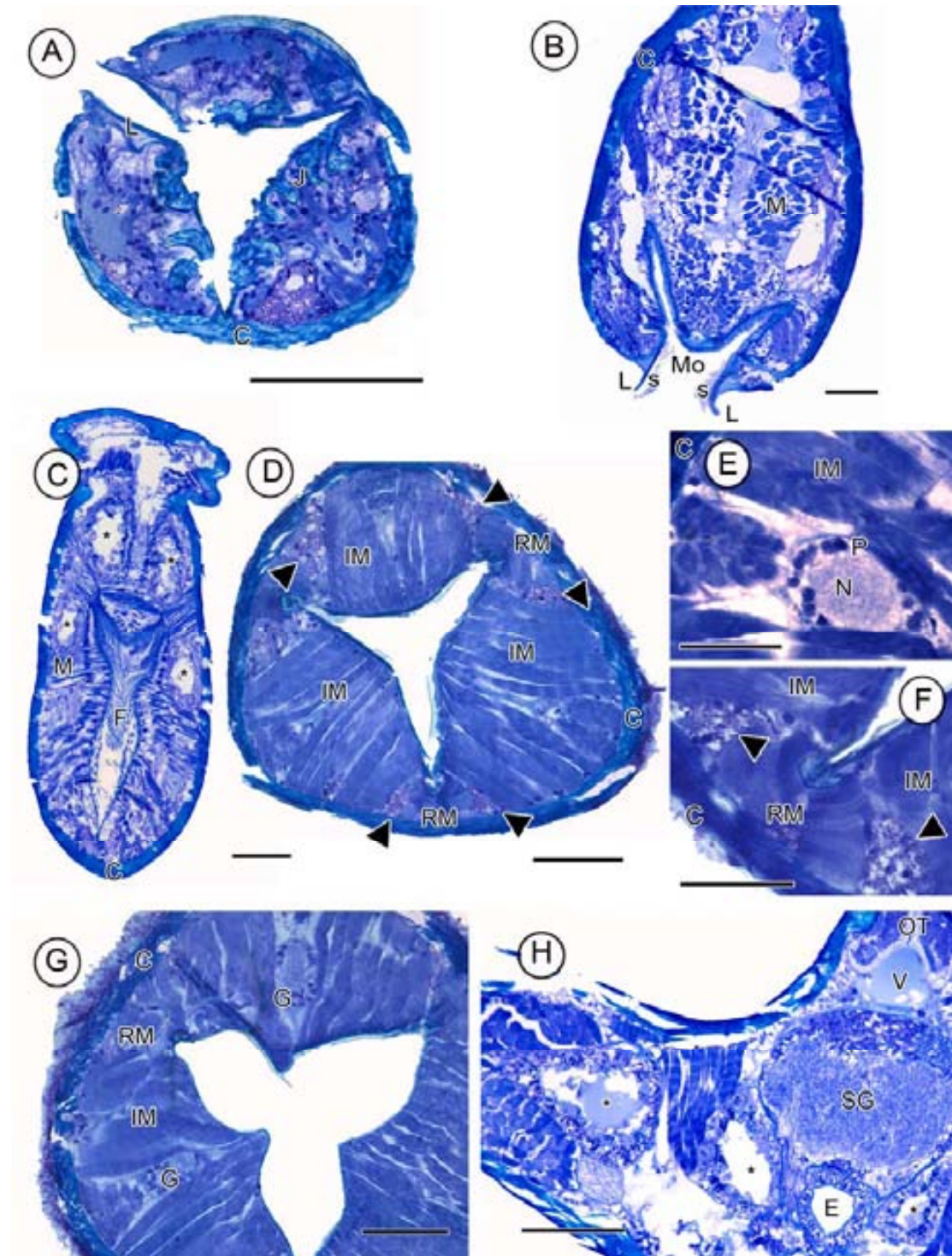
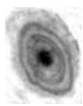


Fig 2. Histological sections of the proboscis. A- *Ammothella longipes*. Apical proboscis transverse section showing the sharply pointed trident jaws (J), associated with predatory lifestyle. Cuticle (C), lips (L). Scale bar-50 μ m. B- *Endeis spinosa*. Proboscis tip in parasagittal section at mouth level (Mo), with lips (L) densely setose (s), associated with detritivory behavior. Cuticle (C), muscle fibers (M). Scale bar-50 μ m. C- *E. spinosa*. Proboscis parasagittal section. Pharyngeal filter (F) is fully visible in this plane of section, which is extended throughout the pharynx sac. Note the midgut tract (*) extending towards the proboscis in this species. Cuticle (C), muscle fibers (M). Scale bar-0.2mm. D- *A. longipes*. Proboscis transverse section showing the triradiate symmetric salivary secretory tissues (arrowheads) situated on both sides of each lip vertex. Cuticle (C), interradial muscle fibers (IM), radial muscle fibers (RM). Scale bar-50 μ m. E- *A. longipes*. Detail of a proboscis nervous ganglion in parasagittal section. Note that ganglia are formed

by perikarya (P) surrounding a neuropil (N), layered peripherally by the connective lamina. Cuticle (C), interradial muscle fibers (IM). Scale bar-30 μ m. F- *A. longipes*. Detail of a lip vertex showing the salivary tissue (arrowheads) at both sides of the lip ridge. Cuticle (C), interradial muscle fibers (IM), radial muscle fibers (RM). Scale bar-30 μ m. G- *A. longipes*. Proboscis transverse section. Two of three triradiate symmetric nervous ganglia (G) are visible. Cuticle (C), interradial muscle fibers (IM), radial muscle fibers (RM). Scale bar-50 μ m. H-*E. spinosa*. Cross-section at level of esophagus and the first pair of legs. Ocular tubercle (OT) is shown at the top of the image as well as the dorsal median vessel (V), and the supraesophageal ganglion (SG) underneath. The esophagus (E), with different sections of the midgut tract (*) laterally. Scale bar-0.1mm.

Digestive cells are found one beside the other at different stages of development, so that there are no midgut zones with epithelial cells at the same digestive stage. The membrane of these cells interdigitates in the region of contact between two consecutive cells (Figs. 4A,C).

When males or females are sexually active, the reproductive products (spermatozoa or ova) are situated in their legs pressing and forcing the midgut to the ventral portion of the leg (Figs. 3C). Thus, the midgut lumen appears narrow and cramped.

3.3. Hindgut

The hindgut is separated from the midgut by a tripartite valve (Figs. 3D and E) and is located inside the peg-shaped abdomen ending on a triangular terminal anus. The hindgut is lined by a thin cuticle and a thin basal lamina that surrounds the epidermal cells (Figs. 3D and E). The hindgut does not seem to have absorptive, secretory or excretory functions and only serves for the convection of indigestible residues. When the hindgut lumen is full, a dense matrix, which is completely filled with residual bodies, is seen (faecal pellet) and the non-return valve between the midgut and the hindgut is opened (Figs. 3D and E). The terminal anal opening is about 10-15 μ m when it is opened to excrete.

3.4. Food circulation along the trunk and legs

Small food particles are retained just before the valve between the foregut and midgut where about each ten of them are grouped into a morula-like food bolus. Then, when the valve opens, some food boluses go further to the midgut. The food boluses move forward and backwards through trunk and legs midgut aided by the intestinal fluid pressured by the peristaltic movements of the midgut wall (see supplementary material; video). During these movements the food boluses may attach the midgut epithelium, and some of the food vacuoles composing the food marble may break and remain attached to the epithelium to be digested. Meanwhile, the rest of the food boluses continue moving until they re-attach. There is no evidence of a peritrophic membrane wrapping the food bolus. The waste products discharged by the epithelial cells may form a new bolus or may attach to other boluses to move forward and backwards until reaching the hindgut. There, the boluses conformed by waste products (what is called the faecal pellets) move until they reach the valve between the midgut and hindgut. The valve opens and they pile up until expelled through the anus. The composition of the food vacuoles forming the morula-like food boluses is still unknown, though different appearances can be noticed.

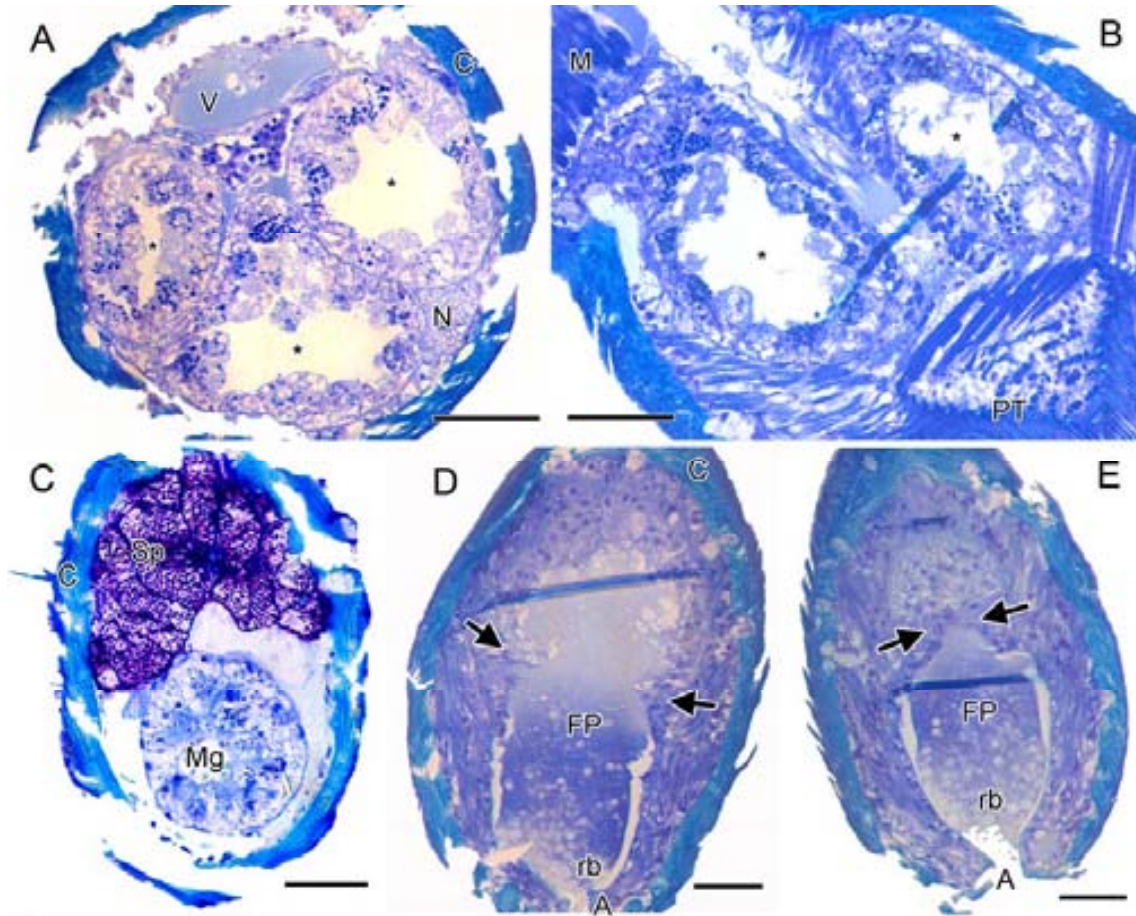
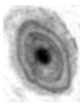


Fig. 3. Histological sections of the proboscis, and midgut and hindgut tracts. A- *Endeis spinosa*. Cross-section of the trunk at level of legs partitions. The dorsal vessel (V) is visible as well as the ventral nerve (N). The central midgut section (*) corresponds to that of the trunk and those on the sides correspond to the leg ones. Cuticle (C). Scale bar- 50 μ m. B- *E. spinosa*. Parasagittal section of the proboscis at the basis of its insertion. Note the sharp pharyngeal filter teeth (PT) and the proximal muscle fibers (M). The midgut tract (*) extends towards the proboscis in this species. Scale bar-50 μ m. C- *Ammothella longipes*. Transverse section of leg. Sperm packages (Sp) of a male pushing the midgut tract (Mg) underneath. Cuticle (C). Scale bar- 30 μ m. D- *E. spinosa*. Hindgut parasagittal section, showing the hindgut totally filled with faecal pellet (FP). The valve that separates the midgut from the hindgut is arrowed (here opened). Note the residual bodies (rb) that form the faecal pellet gathered near the anal opening (A). Cuticle (C). Scale bar- 30 μ m. E- *E. spinosa*. Hindgut structure when the valve is closed (arrows). Anal opening (A), faecal pellet (FP), residual bodies (rb). Scale bar- 30 μ m.

3.5. Feeding behavior

Ammothella longipes is a small-sized pycnogonid of about 2-5mm length that belongs to the family Ammotheidae. This family is characterized by having functional palps but atrophied or absent chelae (except for a few species) in adult forms. *A. longipes* has a crowded, oval-shaped body, with relatively short but tough curved bizarre legs that help the chelifores and palps in catching and retaining prey, even if it is alive and shaking vigorously (e.g. nereid polychaetes; see Fig. 1C). *A. longipes* catches the prey with its legs and moves it closer to the mouth. Then, *A. longipes* breaks the cuticle of the prey with its jaws and sucks

its liquids (Fig. 1C). It seems that only liquids are absorbed, as no recognizable parts of the prey can be seen at light or electronic microscopes. The ornamented setose body and legs facilitate the detritus deposition on the body surface, which could be a substantial food source during periods in which prey are not easily available (Soler-Membrives et al. submitted); thus, *A. longipes* could survive without prey for long periods (up to three months, personal observations). During these periods this species can be seen landing their proboscis on their legs or on algae branches, possibility sucking the detritus deposited on them, as no specimens were found feeding directly on algae.

Endeis spinosa, a larger-size pycnogonid (body length about 100 mm) compared to other Mediterranean species, belongs to the family Endeidae, which is characterized by complete absence of chelifores and palps in adults. *E. spinosa* has very long thin legs with some scattered setae. These well-separated long legs, which sometimes are three times longer than the body, are not capable of retaining prey in movement. The proboscis of this species is long straight obtuse setose at the distal part (Fig. 1H, I and J). In regard to their feeding behavior, *E. spinosa* places the proboscis against the algae branches or the mass of detritus screening and moving it laterally until small pieces can be taken (Wyer & King 1974; Soler-Membrives unpubl. data). They are capable of inserting their proboscis into the narrow cracks or between crowded algae branches and suck the small pieces of detritus trapped there. No evidence of predation has been found for this species.

4. Discussion

The general organization of the digestive system in *Ammothella longipes* and *Endeis spinosa* is similar; however, main differences appear in proboscis structure. These differences not only are in accordance with the taxonomic classification of the species within the group but also reflect an adaptation to their alimentary regimen (Soler-Membrives et al. submitted). Despite the differences noticed in the feeding behavior and the diet of the two species, the midgut structure presents almost no differences, also when compared to that of other ammotheid species (Fahrenbach & Arango 2007). Therefore, the adaptations observed in the proboscis –the sharp trident-shaped jaws and the well-developed musculature in *A. longipes*, and the densely setose lips and the large pharyngeal filter in *E. spinosa*– and salivary secretions seem critical to achieve the crumbled state of the ingested food. The food pulp reaches the midgut at cellular size where it is then ready to be digested by the epithelial cells. Our observations highlight the importance of the proboscis anatomical structure and clarify the structures and processes involved during feeding and digestion in pycnogonids.

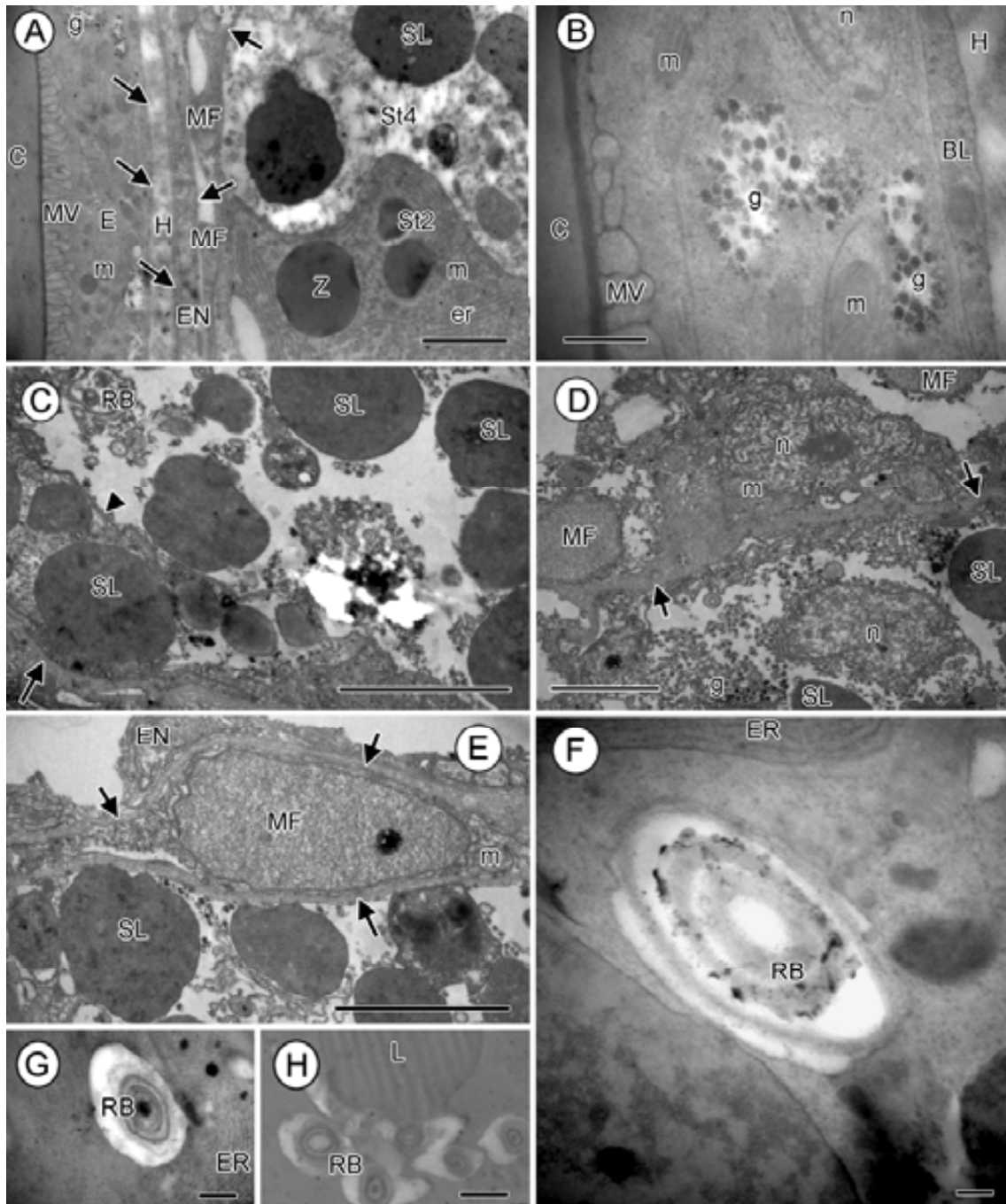
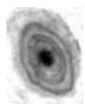


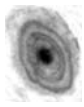
Fig. 4. Ultrastructure of the midgut epithelium. A- *Ammothella longipes*. Basal parts of midgut epithelium close to integument, showing two midgut epithelial cells at different stages of digestion. The cuticle (C) lies against a border of microvilli (MV) provided by the epithelium, which in turns faces the epidermis (E). The hemocoel (H) lies between the epidermis and the thin endothelium (EN) of the midgut tract, both lined by a basal lamina (arrows). Some thin muscle fibers (MF) externally surround the midgut epithelium. View two digestive cells that interdigitate, underneath a digestive cell at stage II of digestion (St2) with some large zymogen droplets (Z), organised endoplasmatic reticulum (er) and mitochondria (m), and above a digestive cell at stage IV (St4) with large secondary lysosomes (SL) and an acidophilic cytoplasm. Glycogen granules (g). Scale bar-2 μ m. B- *A. longipes*. Detail of the irregular flattened epithelium adjacent to the cuticle (C), showing groups of glycogen granules (g), large nucleus (n) and some elongated mitochondria (m). Basal lamina (BL), border of microvilli (MV), hemocoel (H). Scale bar-500nm. C- *A. longipes*. Interdigitating lateral walls of the epithelial cells. Portion of a digestive cell at stage III underneath, with secondary lysosomes (SL) of different sizes and dense basophilic cytoplasm, and above a digestive cell at stage IV, with large

secondary lysosomes, some residual bodies (RB); note the acidophilic cytoplasm. Basal lamina (arrow), intercellular lamina (arrowhead). Scale bar- 2 μ m. D- *Endeis spinosa*. Basal portion of a digestive cell at stage IV, with large secondary lysosomes (SL), glycogen granules (g) and the basal nucleus (n); some thin muscle fibers (MF) externally surround the midgut epithelium. Basal lamina (arrows), mitochondria (m). Scale bar- 2 μ m. E- *A. longipes*. The midgut cell is surrounded by a basal lamina (arrows), and some fine muscle fibers (MF), responsible for the peristaltic movement of the midgut tract, layered in turn by basal lamina (arrows). Endothelium (EN), mitochondria (m), secondary lysosomes (SL). Scale bar- 2 μ m. F- *E. spinosa*. Residual electron-dense inclusions of the concentric residual body (RB). Endoplasmatic reticulum (ER). Scale bar- 500nm. G- *E. spinosa*. Identical area from a different cell to illustrate different stages of residual body (RB) development. Endoplasmatic reticulum (ER). Scale bar- 1 μ m. H- *E. spinosa*. Several residual bodies (RB) surrounding a lipid vacuole (L). Scale bar- 2 μ m.

4.1. Foregut

The sharp pointed jaws and the setae on the lips of *A. longipes* (Fig. 1A and 2A) correspond with the feeding behavior proposed for this species. *A. longipes* is considered an omnivorous species which during spring periods seem to be carnivorous, as they were often observed preying on polychaetes (see Fig. 1C; Soler-Membrives et al. submitted). For this reason, they seem to need aggressive jaws to retain their prey. Dilator and retractor muscle fibers of the proboscis (2D and G) are responsible for the opening and closing of the lips and pharynx, and the pumping of the food through the mouth directly into the filter (Dencker 1974), thus, the developed musculature found in *A. longipes* proboscis (Fig. 1D) is in accordance to their carnivory diet, needed to suck their prey liquids. In contrast, *E. spinosa* has weaker jaws with densely setose lips and several setae scattered on the tip surface of proboscis that probably have a sensorial function (Fig. I and J), and the musculature within the straight proboscis is less developed (Fig. 1K). This is a particular adaptation usually found in detritus-feeders, such as *Endeis* species (King 1973; Fahrenbach & Arango 2007). Another adaptation in detritivorous pycnogonids is the extended filter throughout the pharynx sac (Fig. 1K), similar to what is found in the terrestrial spiders that also suck liquids (Felgenhauer 1999). Generally, the pharyngeal filter is composed of hundreds of barbs and thousands of barbules (Fahrenbach & Arango 2007) that screen the food before passing it further down. As *E. spinosa* ingest debris, a large filter with multiple long setae removes any substantial object that could damage its digestive tract (Fig. 1H).

Fahrenbach & Arango (2007) first described the salivary glands in pycnogonids. They studied *Ammothea hilgendorfi* and found between 180 and 220 salivary glands per jaw. Each salivary gland was composed of 6-12 secretory cells grouped in an acinus which projects into an apical lumen. In this study, we found six masses of secretory tissue in both species. According to the location, these tissues may correspond to salivary secretory tissues. As they could only be detected by light microscopy (Fig. 2D and F), we cannot confirm whether *A. longipes* or *E. spinosa* show structured salivary glands similar to those observed in *Ammothea hilgendorfi*. As for the location and appearance, these secretory tissues found in our study in *E. spinosa* may be comparable to the “tissues of unknown function” mentioned by King (1973). The proboscis is typically innervated by three main nerves - one dorsal and two ventrolateral - that run along the proboscis and end in three large ganglia. According to the



position and structure observed, the three nervous structures we have found (Fig. 2E and G) could be attributed to ganglia formed by perikarya which were surrounding a neuropil, wrapped by its connective layer.

The definition of esophagus that has been used in the present study differs from that of Richards & Fry (1978). They described the esophagus as the portion from the base of the setae until the end of the filter, and in the present study, the esophagus corresponds to the short section from the pharyngeal filter up to the valve between foregut and midgut, when the cuticle ceases (Fahrenbach & Arango 2007). No pieces of discernible prey have been found at midgut level, either in our study or in previous works (e.g. Richards & Fry 1978), thus, we suggest food is well pre-digested due to the salivary products and pharyngeal musculature, and reaches the midgut at a cellular level.

4.2. Midgut

The general structure of the midgut of *A. longipes* and *E. spinosa* corresponds to that described in other pycnogonids, but differs from the structure described in other marine arthropods (e.g. crustaceans) which have a midgut divided into anterior and posterior functional parts.

The interpretation of the digestion in pycnogonids is controversial, and the outline for digestion has been misinterpreted and re-interpreted again. According to Schlottke (1933), Sanchez (1959) and King (1973), there was meant to be three types of midgut cells: absorption cells, gland cells and embryo or developing cells; the latter could develop either as absorption or gland cells. Instead of this, Richards & Fry (1978) stated that only one type of cell exists, which has both secretory and absorption functions and that presents a variable morphology depending on the stage of the digestive process. The present work supports the Richards & Fry (1978) hypothesis, although with some specifications, which is used as the basis for the construction of the digestion scheme (see Fig. 5).

Some cells (called herein resting cells) have the same appearance as the embryo cells described by some authors (Schlottke 1933; Sanchez 1959; King 1973), which probably corresponds to their resting stage during starvation periods. These cells are relatively small and harbor a nucleus, dense endoplasmatic reticulum and highly electron-dense vacuoles, which probably act as secretion granules precursors (stage I, Figs. 5 and 6A). During digestion, some basophilic stained vacuoles, which are possible secretion granules containing zymogen, appear near the apical border of these cells (stage II, Figs. 5 and 6B). Then, secondary lysosomes are formed (stage III, Figs. 4 and 5C) and digestion occurs within them. While these move to the basal membrane, the residual bodies are formed (stage IV, Figs. 5 and 6D). Residual bodies, also called enigmosomes, spherical bodies, spherites or tertiary lysosomes (Richards & Fry 1978; Todt & Salvini-Plawen 2005, among others), are concentric rings of electron opaque and electron transparent material usually membrane-bounded. They may be inclusions of both waste material that gradually accumulates at the apical border of the cell (Richards & Fry 1978) and mineral deposits, which may play an important role in salt balance

(stage V, Figs. 5 and 6E). These residual bodies, autophagic vesicles and some cell fragments are discharged to the midgut lumen towards the hindgut, as shown in Figure 6E.

According to our results, the existence of two different (gland and digestive) cell types as proposed earlier (Schlottke 1933; Sanchez 1959; King 1973) can be refuted. First, semi-thin sections show gradual transitional states in the cell appearance between stages III and IV. Second, gland cells (Schlottke 1933; King 1973) seem to be the regions within the digestive cells where autophagic vesicles and residual bodies are formed. Finally, all midgut cells observed had nutritional vacuoles or secondary lysosomes, indicating activity in intracellular digestion, we conclude that there are no exclusive cells with secretory function. Thus, we suggest that digestive cells are multifunctional, and subsequently are involved in zymogen secretion, absorption, intracellular digestion, and excretion of waste products, each process prevailing at different stages of the cell cycle. The height of the epithelium varies according to the region of the midgut and nutritional state. Neither replacement cells nor mitotic figures were observed in the midgut epithelium of both species. This situation is typical for other sea spiders species studied (Richards & Fry 1978; Fahrenbach & Arango 2007). Nevertheless, the process of cell replacement is still unclear in pycnogonids.

Many invertebrates have midgut glandular cells producing various protein-rich secretions like glycoproteins and enzymes or their precursors (e.g., Voltzow 1994 for molluscs, Harrison & Foelix 1999 for chelicerates or Storch et al. 2002 for crustaceans), these cells are not observed in the digestive tract of sea spiders. The electron dense vacuoles observed inside digestive cells at ultrastructural level, and which show high affinity to eosin and toluidine blue at light microscope are interpreted as vacuoles containing hydrolytic enzymes and, consequently, the large vacuoles observed in the stages I and II of the digestive cells are interpreted as secretion granules probably containing zymogen. This is in accordance with the multi-functionality of the digestive cells proposed for sea spiders.

Concerning the epidermal cells directly bordering the digestive tract at the level of the legs, the accumulation of glycogen granules and the presence of mitochondria with a dense matrix and abundant lamellar cristae, indicates that these cells have high energetic requirements probably related to cuticle secretion.

Finally, podocytes that were first described in *Nymphopsis spinosissima* by Fahrenbach & Arango (2007) as possible reserves of fat body cells have not been observed in the present study. Further histological studies should be carried out to find out whether the presence of podocytes is a common feature in pycnogonids or if it can be considered an adaptation to starvation periods.

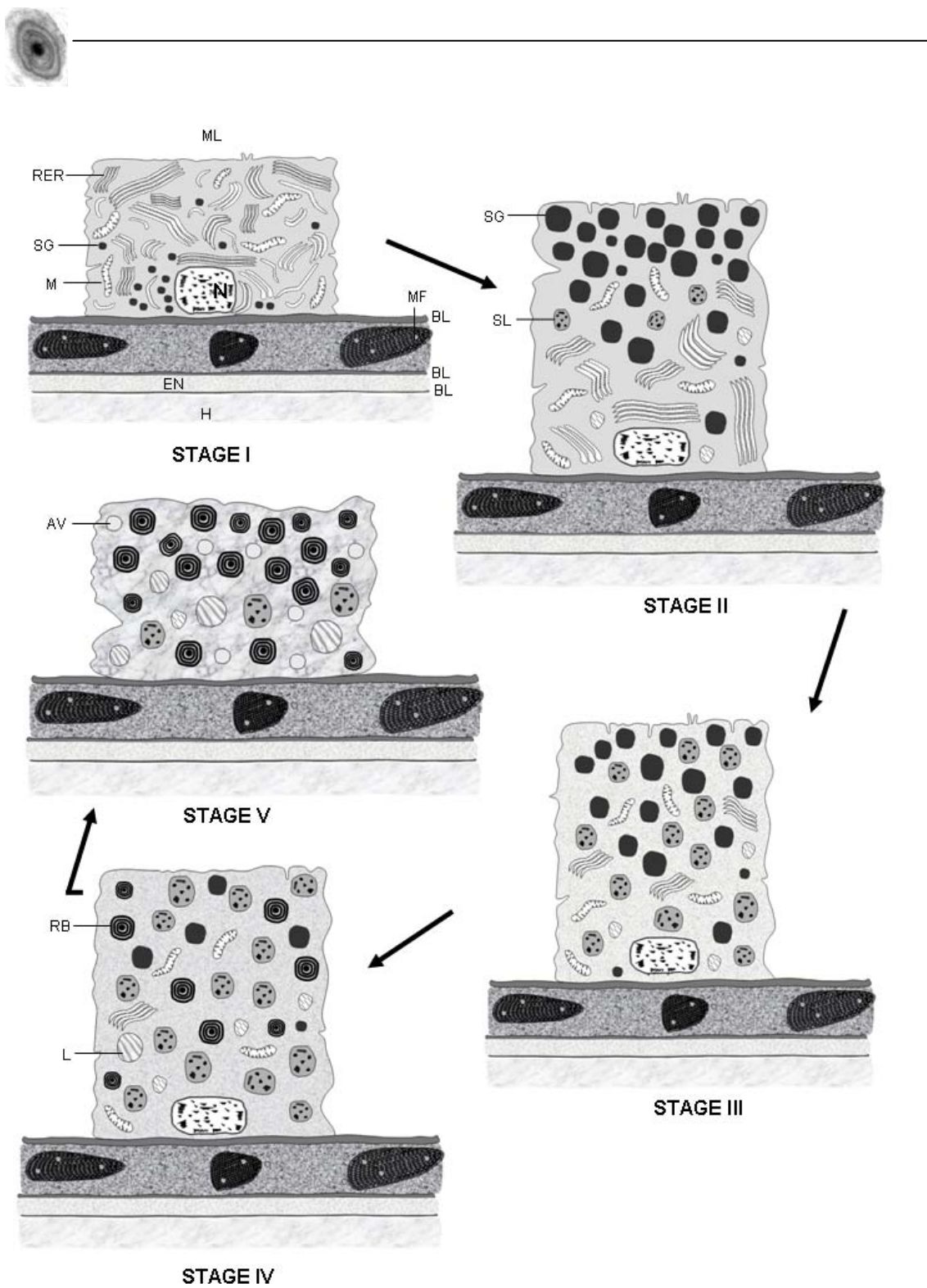


Fig. 5. Hypothetical scheme of the digestion process in Pycnogonida showing the main stages of midgut epithelial cells. The midgut epithelium is surrounded by thin muscle fibers (MF) responsible for peristaltic movement. Basal lamina (BL), endothelium (EN), hemocoel (H), midgut lumen (ML). Stage I- Resting midgut cell with a basal nucleus (N) and the cytoplasm filled with some mitochondria (M), dense rough endoplasmatic reticulum (RER), and some small basophilic droplets, precursors of secretion granules (SG). Stage II- The secretion granules probably containing zymogen move to the apical end facing the midgut lumen. Stage III- The secondary lysosomes are formed (SL), where digestion occurs. Stage IV- After digestion, residual bodies (RB) appear as concentric rings of electron-opaque and electron-transparent inclusions of waste material or mineral deposits. Stage V- Residual bodies and autophagic vacuoles (AV) move apically to be released to the midgut lumen. No other organelles appear in the cytoplasm except from these and some lipid vacuoles (L).

4.3. Hindgut

The pycnogonid abdomen is noticeably small and reduced and opens through a slit or terminal anus. Contractions of the midgut musculature move the faecal pellets (residual bodies and autophagic vacuoles) towards the hindgut through a valve (see supplementary material; video). The hindgut has a small group of muscles that contract and throw the faecal pellet out and a proctodeal dilator muscle that is responsible for the opening of the anal aperture. The number of waste products (faecal pellets) in the lumen of the hindgut varies greatly in different specimens suggesting periodicity of their evacuation.

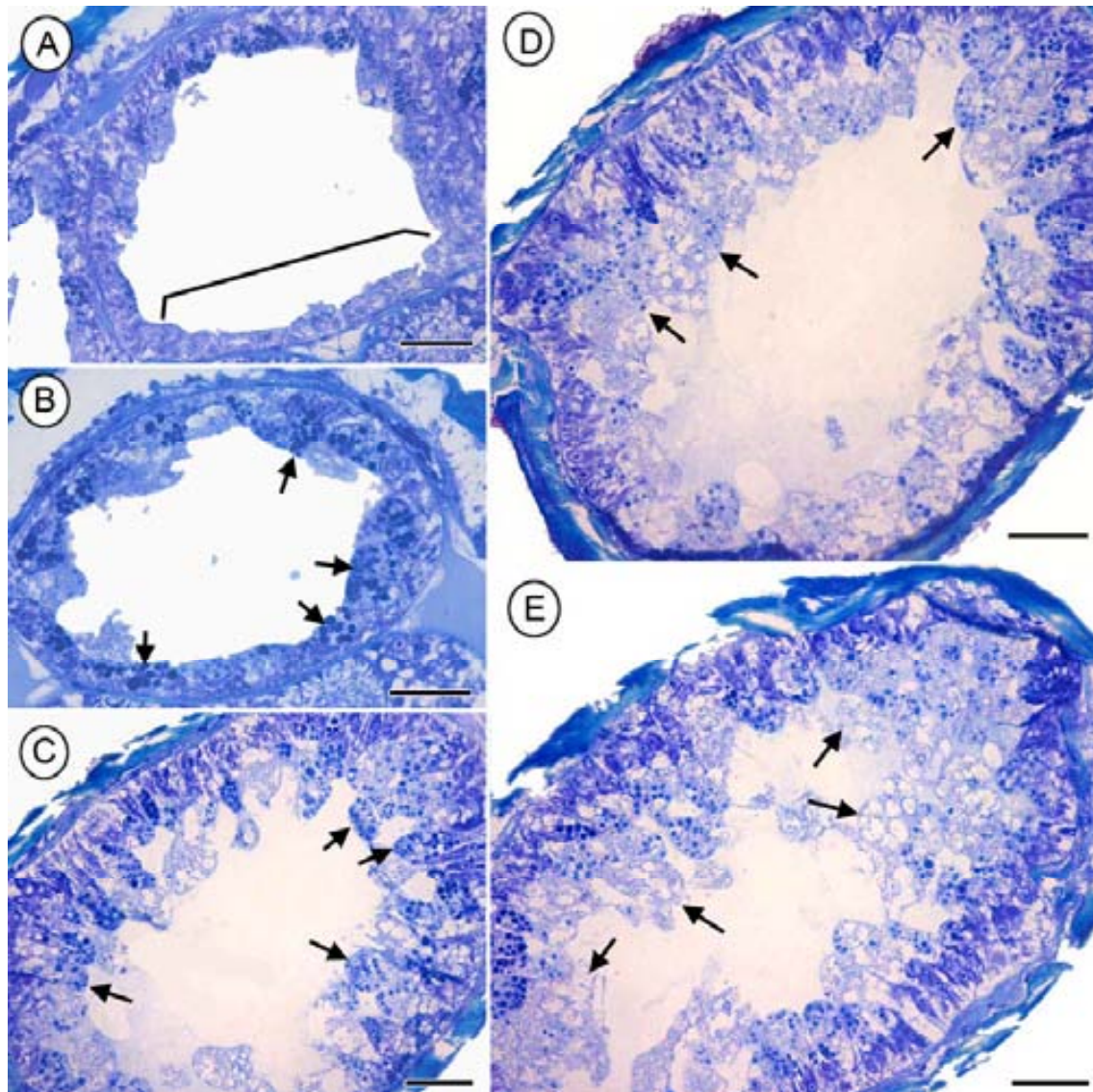
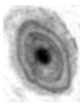


Fig. 6- *Endeis spinosa*. Midgut histological sections at different digestive stages. A- Bracket points a section of resting epithelial cells at stage I. Scale bar- 30µm. B- Arrows show digestive cells at stage II. Note the large secretion granules mostly at apical border facing the midgut lumen. Scale bar- 30µm. C- Epithelial cells which present both secretion granules and secondary lysosomes. Latest are marked with arrows. Stage III. Scale bar- 30µm. D- Arrows point cells at stage IV, where secondary lysosomes are still present and residual bodies are formed. Scale bar- 30µm. E- Residual bodies are either at apical border of the epithelial cell or released to the midgut lumen (arrows). Stage V. Scale bar- 30µm.



4.4. Relation of feeding mechanisms with behavioral observations

Ammothella longipes has a proboscis adapted to their predatory behavior. The sharp jaws cut the thin cuticle and the epidermis of the prey; thus, its internal fluids are exposed and can be sucked. Thanks to the strong intrinsic musculature of the proboscis, they can strongly suck to retain the prey while ingesting their liquids.

Endeis spinosa does not need such strong musculature in the proboscis, as they have no predatory habits. Instead of that, their long and movable proboscis is adapted to find and select detritus of an adequate size. They do not have palps, so the distal setae may detect available food and help to select it. The long proboscis allows them to have an extended filter in the pharynx that prevents large debris passing towards the midgut. The morphologically similar species *Endeis mollis* Carpenter 1904, a tropical species, is known to be carnivorous, feeding on sessile invertebrates like hydrozoan corals and zoanthid polyps (Arango 2003). Although *E. mollis* present carnivorous feeding habits, both endeids have similar proboscis morphology. That may be due to the fact that *E. mollis* is a predator of soft and sessile prey and they only need to pierce the tissue of prey, insert their proboscis and suck fluids out. They do not need strong proboscis to maintain their prey fastened such as some predators of restless prey (as in *Ammothella longipes*).

The secretory product of the salivary glands in the proboscis of pycnogonids serves for the oral digestion of food, as do salivary glands in the majority of Chelicerata (Harrison & Foelix 1999; Filimonova 2009). These secretions may be more important in those species which ingest not only liquids but small pieces of food, which have to be completely crumbled prior to its intracellular digestion in the midgut as in *A. longipes*. Further chemical studies are needed to understand the composition of the food boluses observed in their midgut tract (i.e. lipids, proteins or carbohydrates), and whether there is differential attachment to the midgut epithelium depending on their nutrient content or waste product content.

4.5 The digestive system: phylogenetic and evolutionary aspects

Characteristics of the digestive system may shed further light on the phylogenetic position of Pycnogonida and particularly in regards to their affinities to chelicerates (Giribet et al. 2005; Fahrenbach & Arango 2007). The most evident plesiomorphic condition of sea spiders is probably the triradiate sucking pharynx and esophagus leading to the Y-shaped lumen in transverse section. This condition has been found among ecdysozoans including nematodes, tardigrades, onychophorans and some euarthropods as Acari, Amblypygi (Schmidt-Rhaesa 2007). At present, it is not clear whether the scattered distribution of the characteristic has evolved convergently by means of some functional requirements, or the shape of the sea spider foregut lumen is a symplesiomorphy (Miyazaki 2002). In most chelicerates the midgut consists of anterior and posterior sections, and shows two different types of cells in the intestinal epithelium (secretory cells and absorptive cells) (Harrison & Foelix 1999). By contrast, in pycnogonids no differentiation of anterior and posterior regions of the midgut are observed as the whole tract has the same appearance with only one type of

multifunctional epithelial cell responsible for absorption, secretion and excretion. As there is only one type of multifunctional epithelial cell and their body is extremely reduced, the need for increasing the digestive surface has developed to extend the midgut tract into the legs, an autapomorphic feature of this group. We add here evidence for no specialization of the digestive tract in different regions as well as the absence of secretory glands and excretory organs associated with the midgut (e.g. Malpighian tubules), possibly to be considered as a plesiomorphic condition.

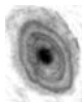
The two Mediterranean pycnogonids studied here show very similar digestive systems between them and to species previously studied, even though their diet and feeding habits differ. The shape and musculature of proboscis and the foregut structure seem to be the main structures in adapting to type of prey while the midgut and hindgut structurally show similar manner in the different lineages. Our study provides new evidence on the digestive processes in pycnogonids not only histological, but also functional and behavioral, adding relevant data for comparative studies in understudied fields of anatomy and feeding ecology of Pycnogonida.

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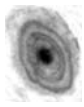
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ANNEX II

Feeding ecology of Mediterranean sea spider *Ammothella longipes* (Pycnogonida): Characterizing temporal diet and trophic links through the fatty acid composition

Feeding ecology of NW Mediterranean sea spider *Ammothella longipes*
(Pycnogonida): Characterizing temporal dietary variability and trophic links through
the fatty acid composition

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Abstract

Fatty acid analysis has been largely proven to be helpful in determining seasonal trophic links and the feeding behavior in organisms in which these diet and trophic links cannot be inferred from stomach content analyses. We looked at seasonal variations in total fatty acid content (TFA) and fatty acid composition of seston (<250µm), the brown macroalga *Halopteris* spp., polychaetes (Nereidae) and the pycnogonid *Ammothella longipes* to establish their trophic links, with particular focus on seasonality and feeding ecology of *A. longipes*. Samples were collected in a coastal environment (NW Mediterranean Sea) at 7-10 m depth, on five different seasons (August and October 2008, February, June and September 2009). Seston and *Halopteris* spp. samples did not show significant seasonal variations in TFA content, while nereids showed a significant variation. *A. longipes* seemed to follow a seasonal but no significant trend. Multidimensional scaling analysis showed similar fatty acid composition for seston and *Halopteris* spp. Nereids were placed near to seston, and *A. longipes* not close but beside nereids and far from *Halopteris* spp. and seston fatty acids. The results of this study reveal that *A. longipes* may change its feeding behavior depending on the season and available food. This pycnogonid species appears as a carnivore during spring and early summer, but they seem to feed on detritus when availability of prey diminishes during winter. Notable high amounts of odd-chain fatty acids are found in summer-autumn for this species, which may come from bacteria acquired from the detrital diet or from *de novo* biosynthesis from propionate. The obtained results provide new and highly relevant data to the feeding biology of Mediterranean sea spiders, and contribute to the understanding of their temporal diet variability and trophic links.

Keywords

Pycnogonids, *Ammothella longipes*, NW Mediterranean, fatty acids, feeding behavior, trophic links, seasonal variation.

1. Introduction

Warm temperate oligotrophic environments such as the Mediterranean Sea, are characterized by strong seasonal physical and biological patterns. Near-bottom water layers are directly affected by these seasonal trends (Rossi and Gili, 2009), and the organisms depending on the dynamics of the benthic food available resources are constrained by this annual fluctuation (Ros et al., 1985; Sardà et al., 1999; Coma et al., 2000). There is a period of higher food availability (i.e. late winter-spring) contrasted with a period in which food is less available (summer and especially late autumn-early winter), mainly because of the coastal hydrodynamic processes (Grémare et al., 1997). After the seasonal phytoplankton blooms, the pulses of high quality phytodetritus are essential in determining distribution, growth or reproduction in different benthic species (Rossi and Gili, 2005; Jeffreys et al., 2009). Most of the benthic animals in the Mediterranean Sea may show a clear seasonal trend in its feeding behavior, diet or capture rates, and biochemical composition (Fernández, 1998; Gili et al., 1998; Mayzaud et al., 1999; Sardà et al., 1999; Coma et al., 2000; Calbet et al., 2001, Rossi et al., 2006a). It is essential to have a clear picture of the seasonal trends in the trophodynamics of the different components of the benthic community to assess the role of each organism in this complex benthic food web.

In comparison to shallow Mediterranean crustaceans, there is practically no information about the trophic ecology of sea spiders (Pycnogonida). The diet and trophic links of most pycnogonid species are largely unknown. Previous studies, based on the analysis of feeding behavior (Bain, 1991; Stock, 1978; Wyer and King, 1974), showed pycnogonids obtaining energy from food sources other than phytodetritus and seaweeds such as hydroids (Fry, 1965; Prell, 1909; Russel and Hedgpeth, 1990; Bain, 1991), Anthozoa (Bamber, 1985; Arango, 2001, Braby et al., 2009), Bryozoa (Fry, 1965), polychaetes (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987; Soler-Membrives personal observations), crustaceans such as copepods (Lotz, 1968) and mollusks bivalves and nudibranchs (Lotz, 1968; Rogers et al., 2000; Arango and Brodie, 2003), among others, generally by sucking their prey (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987). In summary, to date 56 species of pycnogonids have been recorded feeding on 78 species of marine invertebrates; eight species are scavengers and six feed on detritus. Carnivory may be a possible feeding mechanism of sea spiders, but given that gut contents in Mediterranean pycnogonids are not identifiable, a novel focus is needed to understand what might be their main food source. Other problems with gut content analysis in this particular case of Mediterranean pycnogonids relate to the small body size of the species (*Ammothella longipes* (Hodge 1864) body ~2mm), loss of their digestive content during capture, sorting and identifying, due to their relatively high metabolism, compared to those from polar waters (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987) and the contamination from large amount of detritus stored on the external surface of their legs and body. These difficulties suggest the need for alternative and/or complementary methods to examining diet and nutrition (Howell et al., 2003). The anatomy and ultrastructure of their digestive system has been recently studied (Soler-Membrives et al., in review) to further improve in the knowledge of their feeding ecology. The sum of all those techniques is needed to better understand the unknown feeding aspects of those singular marine arthropods.

Fatty acids have been used as qualitative markers to trace food web relationships in the marine environment (FATM, Fatty acid trophic markers; e.g. Ederington et al., 1995; Meziane and Tsuchiya, 2000;

Hudson et al., 2004; Rossi et al., 2006b, among others; see Dalsgaard et al., 2003 for a review). There is a large body of literature showing that fatty acid compositional changes can be used to determine whether a species presents herbivorous, omnivorous or carnivorous feeding behavior, in some of them related to seasonal trends (Mayzaud et al., 1999; Fukuda and Naganuma, 2001; Hudson et al., 2004). FATM analysis has proven particularly helpful in identifying the contribution of major sources of organic matter coming from different food sources, hence, clarifying the potential prey items from herbivory, omnivory or carnivory in organisms in which diet and trophic links cannot be inferred from stomach content analyses (Graeve et al., 1994; Suhr et al., 2003; Howell et al., 2003; Hudson et al., 2004; Rossi et al., 2006b; Rossi et al., 2008).

NW Mediterranean coastal pycnogonids live mainly on macroalgae and phanerogams (De Haro, 1966b; Munilla, 1978). The macroalgae, which are largely confined to shallow coastal waters, support local benthic food webs (Ros et al., 1985; Crisp and Mwaieseje, 1989; Christie and Kraufvelin, 2004). They constitute an important refuge for small fish or invertebrates, such as pycnogonids, and are often grazed by small crustaceans, fish or other herbivore organisms (Jennings et al., 1997; Hofrichter, 2001). Bamber and Davis (1982) observed pycnogonids of temperate waters actively feed on thin walled seaweeds, and Wyer and King (1974) described *Ammothella longipes* feeding on the red alga *Gigartina stellata*. As pycnogonids from the NW Mediterranean are abundant on *Halopteris* communities (thin walled algae) (De Haro, 1966a, 1966b, 1978; Munilla, 1978, 1980; Munilla and De Haro, 1984) and these are main substrates for Mediterranean pycnogonid assemblages (Munilla and Nieto, 1999), we suspect that the main prey items may come from these algal communities, without ignoring potential herbivory on *Halopteris* spp. by some species of Pycnogonida. So far, no studies have been published describing dietary preferences in sea spiders using Fatty Acids as trophic markers.

In this study, we used *Halopteris* spp. algal community, a main substrate supporting pycnogonid assemblages in NW Mediterranean, to test different potential sources of food (herbivory, carnivory, detritivory) and assess whether pycnogonids show dietary seasonal changes by modifying dietary FA composition, during a period of 14 months (seasonal cycle). This is a novel investigation to answer whether pycnogonids present an herbivorous, carnivorous, or detritivorous feeding behavior, and whether they go through starving periods or different dietary patterns depending on the season and the available food.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Sample collection

Sampling took place between August 2008 and September 2009 in a north-western Mediterranean beach (41°40'37''N 2°48'29''E) in Blanes, Catalonia (Spain) (Fig. 1). Samples were taken on five different seasons (2nd August 2008; 19th October 2008; 21th February 2009; 23th June 2009; and 15th September 2009). Each batch consisted of a sample of *Halopteris* spp. community (*H. scoparia*, *H. filicina*, or a mix of them). Specimens were bagged *in situ* and extracted using SCUBA between 7 to 10 m depth where the species is commonly distributed (Ballesteros, 1991). The algae (n=6) were gently surrounded by the plastic

bag, avoiding the loss of the detritus deposited or seston suspended around the macroalga. Samples were transported in a cooler filled with ice (10-12°C) and then left in separate trays maintaining constant cold water temperature. Pycnogonids and polychaetes specimens were sorted and identified (pycnogonids at species level and *A. longipes* was chosen to represent the pycnogonid group; polychaetes were identified at family level and Nereidae family was selected for fatty acid analysis) at temperature below 12°C to ensure low degradation, and immediately stored frozen at -20°C pending fatty acid analysis. Near bottom seston present around the *Halopteris* community was sieved through a 250 μ mesh (Rossi and Gili, 2005, 2007), left at 4°C to allow settlement for 24h, then sucked with a sterile syringe and placed in eppendorfs, and frozen at -20°C. *Halopteris* spp. branches were detritus-cleaned, wet weighted and stored in a freezer at -20°C pending analysis. Samples were analysed right away.

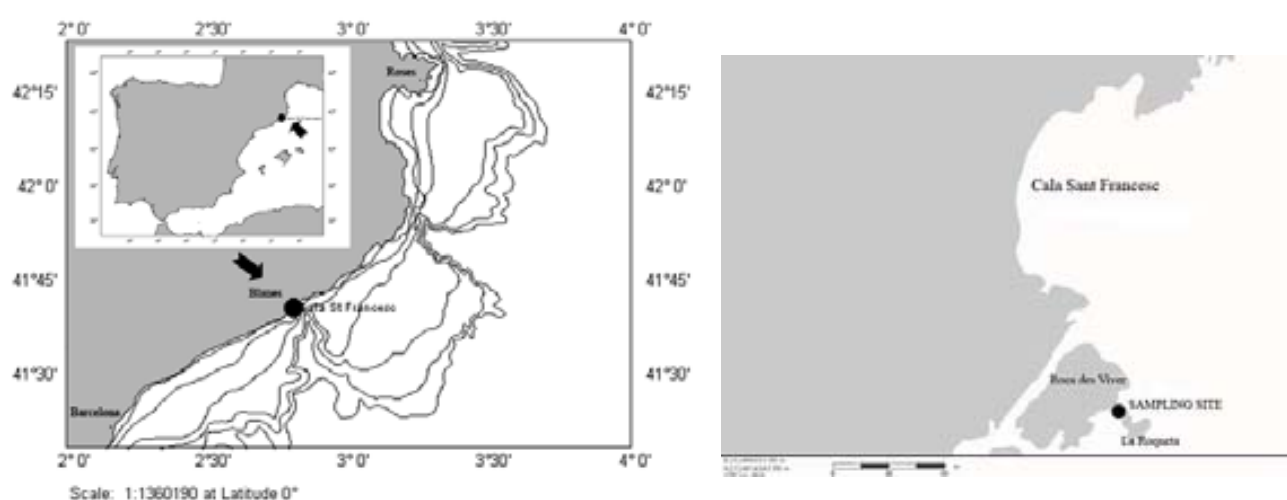


Fig. 1: Map showing the location of the study site (Cala Sant Francesc, Blanes).

2.2. Lipid extraction and fatty acid analyses

FA composition of the most abundant pycnogonid species recorded, *Ammothella longipes* was analysed. Pycnogonids were previously sonicated on a Selecta Ultrasons bath during 5 minutes at 50 Hz, to avoid detritus adhered on the external side of the sea spider cuticle. Seston, *Halopteris* spp., nereids, and *Ammothella longipes* were freeze-dried for 12 h, and then stored at -20°C before analysis. Before the lipid extraction, all samples were weighted in an electronic micro-weighter (AND ER-200-EC) with a precision of ± 0.05 mg. Three replica were run for all four components (or six replica, depending on the sample) for each seasonal point. An average of ~500 mg of dried seston and *Halopteris* spp. were weighted per replica. About 15-20 mg was needed for polychaetes and 7-8 mg for pycnogonids (this represented an average of 150 pycnogonid specimens per replica).

Weighted freeze-dried samples were extracted by microwave assisted extraction (5 min. at 70°C) with 10ml of 3:1 dichloromethane-methanol, and using 2-octyldodecanoic acid and 5 β -cholanic acid as internal standards. The extract was taken to near dryness in a centrifugal vacuum concentrator at a constant

temperature, and fractionated by solid phase extraction according to Ruiz et al., (2004). Briefly, the sample was redissolved in 0.5 mL of chloroform and eluted through a 500 mg aminopropyl mini-column (Waters Sep-Pak® Cartridges) previously conditioned with 4 mL of *n*-hexane. The first fraction was eluted in 3 mL of chloroform:2-propanol (2:1), and the fatty acids recovered in 8.5 mL of diethyl ether:acetic acid (98:2). Despite reported concerns on the background levels of fatty acids in aminopropyl columns (Russell and Werne, 2007), the utilized SPE cartridges had concentrations of target fatty acids below the detection limit. The fatty acid fraction was methylated using a solution of 20% methanol/BF₃ heated at 90°C for 1 hr. The reaction was quenched with 4 mL of water saturated with NaCl. The methyl esters of FFA were recovered by extracting twice in 3 mL of *n*-hexane. The combined extracts were taken to near dryness, re-dissolved in 1.5 mL of chloroform, eluted through a glass column filled with Na₂SO₄ to remove residual water, taken to dryness under a gentle nitrogen flux, and stored at -20°C until analysis. The organic extracts were redissolved in 30 µL of isooctane and analyzed by gas chromatography (GC). GC analysis was performed in splitless injection mode using a Thermo Trace GC instrument fitted with a flame ionization detector and a DB-5 Agilent column (30m length, 0.25 mm internal diameter and 0.25 µm phase thickness). Helium was used as a carrier gas at a constant flux of 33 cm s⁻¹. The oven temperature was programmed to increase from 50 °C to 320 °C at 10 °C min⁻¹, and held at 320°C during 17 minutes. Injector and detector temperatures were kept constant through the analysis at 300°C and 320°C, respectively. Methyl esters of fatty acids (FAME) were identified by comparing their retention times to those of standards (37 FAME compounds, Supelco® Mix C4-C24). FAME were quantified by integrating peak areas, and taking into account the recovery calculated from the internal standards. The reproducibility of the procedure was evaluated by injecting blanks and internal standards at different concentrations. A blank sample was analyzed in every batch of 14 samples to monitor background levels of FAME during the analysis.

2.3. Statistical analyses

One-way ANOVA was used for each species to detect variations of total fatty acid content (TFA) between the different seasons sampled. One-way ANOVA was also used to determine if sex influenced in the fatty acid composition of *Ammothella longipes*. Where there was significant variation, a Tukey's *post hoc* comparison was used to test variability (pairwise) between seasons. All ANOVAs were run using SPSS v15 statistical software. Bray-Curtis similarity indices were calculated and analyzed by multidimensional scaling (MDS) using the software Primer (Version 5.1) (Clarke and Warwick, 1994).

3. Results

3.1. Seston fatty acids

Total fatty acid (TFA) contents in the seston through the seasonal cycle are shown in Figure 2. Compared to the other trophic links, low contents of TFA were found in the near bottom seston (ranged

from 3.57 to 6.94 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ dry weight, DW). There was no clear seasonal trends for the TFA in the seasonal average of dry weight-specific in the seston (one-way ANOVA, $F_{4,11}=1.206$; $p=0.362$).

The concentration of fatty acids as percentage of the total fatty acid in the seston samples is shown in Table 1. Seston was basically dominated by 16:0, 16:1 (n-7) and 18:1 (n-9), each of them representing over 10% of total fatty acids recovered. Stearic acid (18:0) was also relevant (~5-13%). Seston samples showed differences between seasons in August'08, October'08 and February'09 with values from 5.8 to 12.8% for EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid; 20:5 (n-3)), and 20:4 (n-6). In June'09 and September'09 these fatty acids showed lower values (2.2-2.6%). Values lower than 0.5% were found for 20:1 (n-9) in the August, October and February seasons, while values from 4.0 to 5.5% were found in the latest seasons. Stearic acid (C18:0) was also lower in the three first seasons (~5-6%) than in the latest ones (~11-13%). Both seasons in 2008 showed 18:2 (n-6) around 9%, while 2009 seasons presented values ranging from 2.8% to 5.5%.

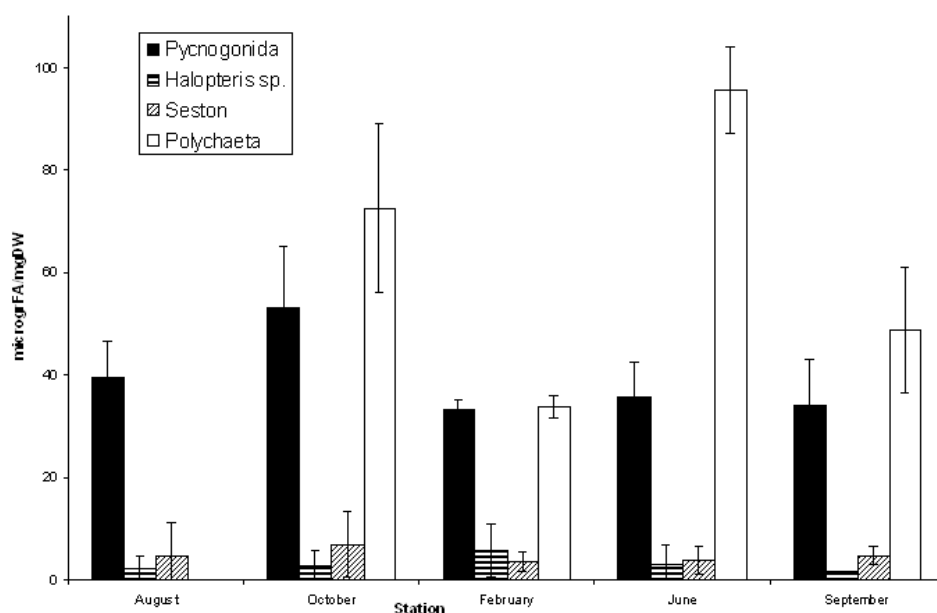


Fig. 2: Total fatty acids content, as measured by gas chromatography, in terms of oil concentration (μg fatty acid/mg dry weight) during the different sampling times. Error bars denote standard deviations between replicates.

3.2. *Halopteris spp.* fatty acids

The dry weight-specific TFA contents through the seasonal cycle are showed in Figure 2. Low contents of TFA were found for the macroalgae, which ranged from 1.82 to 5.61 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW. No seasonal differences were found for the TFA in the *Halopteris spp.* samples (one-way ANOVA, $F_{4,8}=2.398$; $p=0.136$).

The proportion of 16:0, 16:1 (n-7), 18:1 (n-9), and 18:2 (n-6) were especially relevant in the *Halopteris spp.* samples, mostly representing over 10% of total fatty acids recovered (Table 1). Stearic acid was detected in all seasons with concentration varying from 2.0 to 7.6%. No temporal variation was detected in macroalgae samples, except from 20:5 (n-3) that increased gradually from 2.2 to 8.5% from August'08 to September'09, and 18:2 (n-6) which increased only in September'09 (from ~12 to 22%).

Table 1: Fatty acid concentrations as percentages of the total fatty acid in *Halopterus* spp. and seston in each season sampled. X= mean; SD= standard deviation.

Fatty acid	Halopterus sp.					Seston										
	Aug08	Oct08	Feb09	June09	Sept09	Aug08	Oct08	Feb09	June09	Sept09						
	x	SD	n=3	x	SD	n=2	x	SD	n=4	x	SD	n=2	x	SD	n=3	
C14:0	4.58	0.50		4.66	0.94		3.02	0.15	3.03	0.46	3.10	0.82	1.57	1.59	1.53	0.59
C15:0	0.48	0.07		0.62	0.19		0.46	0.02	0.60	0.15	0.33	0.08	1.73	0.17	0.42	0.36
C16:0	31.20	0.75		26.85	1.95		21.12	0.40	20.81	2.02	23.83	1.21	9.96	0.73	22.33	3.57
C17:0	0.25	0.02		0.28	0.40		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C18:0	2.71	0.26		7.60	3.24		6.00	0.30	5.07	2.78	6.32	2.80	11.44	3.47	12.97	6.26
C20:0	0.63	0.03		1.02	0.18		-	-	0.08	0.00	-	-	2.30	0.39	1.66	0.24
C22:0	-	-		-	-		0.34	0.01	0.24	0.03	0.29	0.00	0.18	0.03	0.87	0.22
C23:0	-	-		-	-		0.68	0.02	-	0.48	0.78	0.01	1.05	0.21	0.29	0.50
C24:0	0.48	0.42		0.20	0.01		0.68	0.02	0.48	0.03	0.48	0.01	1.45	0.40	1.32	0.36
Total saturates	40.34			41.24			31.62		30.31		34.63		29.00		41.40	
C14:1	2.80	0.16		2.85	0.58		1.88	0.19	1.67	0.59	2.16	0.40	1.45	0.40	0.39	0.68
C15:1	-	-		-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	0.37	0.29	0.15	0.27
C16:1n7	16.78	0.17		13.88	0.62		10.60	0.10	12.69	1.31	13.10	1.37	15.43	0.93	10.79	1.33
C16:1n9	3.30	0.35		2.97	0.84		3.70	0.36	11.86	1.68	3.38	0.50	12.59	6.23	5.40	0.88
C17:1	-	-		-	-		0.56	0.03	0.36	0.14	0.53	0.07	1.13	0.17	0.55	0.48
C18:1n7	3.04	0.20		1.59	0.25		3.49	0.11	2.87	0.19	2.88	0.15	6.99	1.50	8.18	1.60
C18:1n9	10.64	0.32		11.79	1.13		9.66	0.19	4.88	0.44	9.38	0.63	9.11	1.76	11.39	1.69
C20:1n7	-	-		-	-		0.59	0.02	0.66	0.32	0.48	0.02	0.58	0.03	0.19	0.33
C20:1n9	0.51	0.05		0.38	0.07		0.39	0.01	0.46	0.10	0.29	0.02	3.97	2.32	5.53	0.43
Total monosaturates	37.06			33.47			30.86		35.45		32.19		51.61		42.59	
C16:2n6	1.91	0.40		1.61	0.56		2.53	0.07	6.07	1.22	2.23	0.14	6.03	3.56	1.94	1.69
C18:2n6	12.70	0.76		11.85	1.23		9.08	0.04	2.80	0.57	9.20	1.35	4.68	0.87	5.55	0.19
C18:3n6	2.58	0.10		2.62	0.03		3.16	0.23	1.71	0.34	2.39	0.95	1.38	0.68	0.81	0.71
C18:4n3	0.35	0.05		0.58	0.05		1.47	0.23	0.83	0.29	0.89	0.27	-	-	-	-
C20:2	0.38	0.01		0.28	0.03		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C20:3	0.18	0.03		0.30	0.07		0.19	0.01	0.32	0.09	0.18	0.01	1.07	0.98	1.04	0.93
C20:4n3	0.22	0.04		0.55	0.07		0.41	0.01	0.43	0.11	0.40	0.05	-	-	0.49	0.46
C20:4n6	1.56	0.02		1.82	0.28		7.15	0.10	12.80	0.35	6.63	1.31	2.30	2.48	2.62	0.55
C20:5n3	2.26	0.13		4.07	0.90		6.04	0.09	6.73	0.63	5.84	1.27	2.46	0.74	2.20	0.41
C22:6n3	-	-		-	-		5.03	0.13	1.89	0.11	4.01	0.72	0.87	0.49	0.73	0.22
C22:6n6	-	-		0.70	0.10		1.69	0.09	0.65	0.07	1.40	0.10	0.60	0.02	0.63	0.11
Total polyunsaturates	22.16			24.36			36.77		34.25		33.17		19.39		16.00	
Others	0.44	0.01		0.94	0.12		0.75	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	100.00			100.00			100.00		100.00		100.00		100.00		100.00	

3.3. *Polychaetes fatty acids*

TFA content differences between seasons were observed for polychaetes belonging to Nereidae family (one-way ANOVA, $F_{3,4}=11.767$; $p=0.019$) (Fig. 2). TFA content decreased considerably but not significantly ($p=0.082$) by more than half from October'08 to February'09 (from 72.5 to 33.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW), then increased significantly by almost three times (up to 95.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW) on average from February'09 to June'09 ($p=0.018$), and finally decreased by half (to 48.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW) from June'09 to September'09 ($p=0.046$).

Saturated fatty acids (SAFAs) 16:0 and 18:0 were found in values higher than 10% (Table 2). Temporal variation in polychaetes was found between September'09 and the rest three seasons (no data was available for August'08 samples). No signal was detected in September'09 samples for 18:1 (n-7) and 20:4 (n-6), while for other seasons they presented representative values (3.2-4.6% and 5.7-12.4% respectively). Also EPA, 18:1 (n-9) and 22:5 (n-3) represented only 2.8%, 3.5% and 2.6% respectively for September'09, whereas values ranged from 3.0 to 5.7% for EPA, from 8.5 to 10.8% for 18:1 (n-9), and from 3.3 to 4.2% for 22:5 (n-3) for the other seasons. Only 20:1 (n-9) and 18:3 (n-6) were higher in the last season (September 2009) compared to previous ones (8.0% compared to <2%, and 4.3% compared to <2%, respectively).

The sum of 15:0, 15:1, 17:0 and 17:1 (named from here as bacterial markers; Budge et al., 2001; Howell et al., 2003; Stevens et al., 2004; see Dalsgaard et al., 2003 for a review) represented 1.4-1-6% of total fatty acids for February'09 and June'09, while they had a more than five-fold increase (7.3-8.2%) in the other seasons sampled (Table 3).

3.4. *Ammothella longipes fatty acids*

The most abundant pycnogonid species recorded at the studied area was *A. longipes*, representing 54.8% of the total pycnogonid abundance found, compared to the second and third most abundant species *Achelia echinata*, *Callipallene emaciata*, with 22.9% and 12.7% respectively (Soler-Membrives, personal observation). *A. longipes* was selected as target pycnogonid species due to this high abundance relative to the other species and the very low dry-weight biomass of each specimen (a mean of 150 individuals were needed for each replicate).

No different fatty acid composition was found between males and females of *A. longipes* (one-way ANOVA, $F_{1,10}=0.226$; $p=0.635$). No significant variation in the seasonal average of dry weight-specific TFA content for sea spiders was observed (Fig. 2), but values near to significance were found (one-way ANOVA; $F_{4,11}=3.142$; $p=0.06$). TFA content was 39.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW in August'08, whereas a higher value was found for early October'08 (52.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW). All three seasons in 2009 presented similar but lower values of TFA content (33.4-35.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ DW) than 2008.

Table 2: Fatty acid concentrations as percentages of the total fatty acid in polychaetes and *Ammothella longipes* (Pycnogonida) in each season sampled. X= mean; SD= standard deviation.

Fatty acid	Polychaeta				<i>Ammothella longipes</i>				
	Oct08 n=2	Feb'09 n=2	June'09 n=2	Sept'09 n=2	Aug'08 n=3	Oct'08 n=6	Feb'09 n=2	June'09 n=3	Sept'09 n=2
C13:0	0.71	1.01	-	-	2.01	0.73	-	-	-
C14:0	2.41	0.45	1.60	0.57	1.66	0.17	1.26	0.48	1.42
C15:0	0.65	0.36	0.38	0.07	0.42	0.62	-	0.27	0.73
C16:0	15.29	6.74	16.26	3.74	19.15	2.04	9.90	1.93	13.05
C17:0	1.42	0.16	0.82	0.23	1.29	0.14	1.49	0.28	1.93
C18:0	19.61	11.93	12.28	4.62	33.11	4.60	36.19	8.60	34.70
C20:0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.35	0.50	-
C23:0	0.81	0.75	0.30	0.13	2.30	0.30	1.05	1.73	-
C24:0	0.50	0.61	0.24	0.33	1.42	0.28	1.44	0.68	-
Total saturates	41.41	26.05	31.87	45.01	61.65	48.37	50.25	48.64	51.82
C14:1	0.78	0.59	1.32	0.31	1.71	0.66	0.28	0.39	0.56
C15:1	3.40	4.80	0.19	0.05	9.13	1.72	7.73	1.16	-
C16:1n7	5.17	5.48	10.77	1.16	1.49	0.16	9.93	1.27	9.26
C16:1n9	1.13	0.72	2.86	1.18	1.49	0.16	-	0.92	7.61
C17:1	2.72	3.85	-	0.83	12.56	1.38	-	0.53	1.14
C18:1n7	3.25	1.59	3.18	0.12	0.71	0.71	14.44	0.88	1.37
C18:1n9	9.88	4.25	10.79	0.81	2.34	0.21	11.51	2.55	1.94
C20:1n7	5.52	3.20	2.52	0.41	0.72	0.66	1.22	0.03	2.43
C20:1n9	-	-	1.66	0.07	-	-	-	-	5.28
C24:1	0.52	0.73	0.78	0.31	-	-	2.05	1.41	2.08
Total monosaturates	32.35	35.12	34.07	26.67	28.65	26.18	39.43	36.97	20.46
C16:2n6	0.62	0.87	1.21	0.04	-	-	-	-	0.81
C18:2n6	4.31	4.44	6.45	0.59	0.40	0.56	0.87	1.23	2.47
C18:3n6	1.04	1.46	1.81	0.38	1.07	0.30	-	-	1.13
C18:4n3	-	-	-	0.02	-	-	-	0.40	0.36
C20:2	-	0.37	0.31	0.44	-	-	-	-	-
C20:3	1.08	0.45	0.91	0.11	-	-	-	-	0.64
C20:4n3	0.23	0.33	1.10	0.16	-	-	-	-	0.91
C20:4n6	5.68	2.08	7.50	0.19	-	-	-	-	-
C20:5n3	3.02	0.32	5.72	0.10	0.40	0.56	1.14	0.53	0.55
C22:2n6	1.51	1.70	0.44	0.07	-	-	1.69	0.68	2.19
C22:3/4?	1.61	0.20	0.95	0.21	-	-	1.13	0.25	7.98
C22:4n3	1.18	0.14	1.52	0.19	-	-	-	-	-
C22:5n3	3.29	0.12	4.15	0.67	-	-	-	-	-
C22:6n3	-	0.98	1.21	0.39	-	-	0.51	0.14	6.27
C22:6n6	-	0.94	1.33	0.55	-	-	1.79	0.71	2.34
Total polyunsaturates	23.57	38.15	33.27	26.37	2.22	20.20	8.84	11.70	24.38
Others	2.68	1.31	0.79	0.50	7.48	2.03	1.48	2.83	3.34
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Ammothella longipes was the most seasonally variable taxon (Table 2). 16:0 was around 10-20% and 18:0 was almost twice (23.2-36.2%). Important seasonal differentiation was also found in other trophic markers: 16:1 (n-7) ranged from 1.5 to 2.7% for 2008 seasons, while it increased considerably in 2009 seasons (7.6-9.9%); the monoenoics 18:1 (n-7) and 18:1 (n-9) accounted for more than 10% for February'09 and June'09; with 18:1 (n-7) ranging from 0.7 to 2.4% in other seasons; 4.3-5.3% proportions were found for 18:1 (n-9) in October'08 and September'09 samples, and 2.3% for August'08. The mean ratios of 18:1 (n-7) and 18:1 (n-9) for February'09 and June'09 were 1.1 and 1.3 respectively, whereas for other seasons the ratio did not exceed 0.5 (Table 3). EPA (20:5 (n-3)) presented important temporal variations: October'08 and September'09 showed 10.9% and 8.0% respectively, while it was lower than 2% in other seasons. Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA; 22:6 (n-3)) accounted for 6.3% in October'08, half of this in September'09, and lower values ($\leq 2\%$) in other seasons. DHA/EPA ratio was 1.1 and 1.3 for February'09 and June'09, whereas September'09 ratio was 0.8 and 2008 seasons did not exceed the 0.3 (Table 3).

Bacterial markers (15:0, 15:1, 17:0 and 17:1, as defined before) represented the 23.7% and 15.1% of the fatty acids recovered for August'08 and October'08 respectively, while in February'09 and June'09 did not exceed the 2%, and 4.0% found in September'09 samples (Table 3).

Table 3: Percentage composition of different fatty acid groups, ratios of DHA/EPA, 18:1(n-7)/ 18:1(n-9) and the sum of bacterial biomarkers (15:0/1+17:0/1) of the total fatty acid in *Halopteris* spp., seston, polychaetes and *Ammothella longipes* (pyncogonida) in each season sampled. DHA= docosahexaenoic acid (22:6 (n-3)); EPA= eicosapentaenoic acid (20:5 (n-3)); SAFA= saturated fatty acids; MUFA= mono-unsaturated fatty acids; PUFA= polyunsaturated fatty acids.

	<i>Halopteris</i> sp.					Seston					Polychaeta				<i>Ammothella longipes</i>				
	Aug'08	Oct'08	Feb'09	June'09	Sept'09	Aug'08	Oct'08	Feb'09	June'09	Sept'09	Oct'08	Feb'09	June'09	Sept'09	Aug'08	Oct'08	Feb'09	June'09	Sept'09
DHA/EPA	-	-	-	-	-	0,83	0,69	0,28	0,35	0,33	-	0,22	0,21	-	-	0,30	1,06	1,25	0,79
18:1n7/18:1n9	0,29	0,25	0,07	0,14	0,07	0,36	0,31	0,59	0,77	0,72	0,33	0,54	0,29	0,00	0,30	0,38	1,26	1,05	0,46
SAFA	40,34	36,24	42,51	41,24	26,67	31,62	34,63	30,31	29,00	41,40	41,41	26,05	31,87	45,01	61,65	48,37	50,25	48,64	51,82
MUFA	37,06	34,57	32,89	33,47	30,78	30,86	32,19	35,45	51,61	42,59	32,35	35,12	34,07	26,67	28,65	26,18	39,43	36,97	20,46
PUFA	22,16	24,85	23,57	24,36	40,89	36,77	33,17	34,25	19,39	16,00	23,57	38,15	33,27	26,37	2,22	20,20	8,84	11,70	24,38
PUFA/SAFA	0,55	0,69	0,55	0,59	1,53	1,16	0,96	1,13	0,67	0,39	0,57	1,46	1,04	0,59	0,04	0,42	0,18	0,24	0,47
15:0/1+17:0/1	0,73	0,22	0,81	0,90	0,40	1,02	0,86	0,96	3,23	1,12	8,19	1,58	1,38	7,33	23,70	15,10	1,49	1,63	4,03
SAFA/MUFA	1,09	1,05	1,29	1,23	0,87	1,02	1,08	0,86	0,56	0,97	1,28	0,74	0,94	1,69	2,15	1,85	1,27	1,32	2,53

3.5. Relationships among the trophic chain

The dry weight-specific TFA content showed high variations depending on the species (Fig. 2). About ten times higher contents were found for polychaetes and pyncogonids compared to those of seston and *Halopteris* spp. samples.

The fatty acid profiles of *Halopteris* spp., seston, polychaetes and pyncogonids were different but showed some general similarities (Table 1, 2 and 3). Polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) ranged from 16 to 41% in all samples apart from sea spiders which showed moderate concentrations (from 2 to 24%). The major polyunsaturated acids varied depending on the species; the 18:2 (n-6) dominated in all groups except for pyncogonids. The 20:5 (n-3) was the most important PUFA for sea spiders (up to 11%), and was also found in moderate amounts in the other three species (ranged from 2 to 9%). The 20:4 (n-6) was

important for both seston and polychaetes, representing up to 13% of the fatty acids recovered, but found in neither *Halopteris* spp., nor pycnogonids.

The dominant mono-unsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs) in all groups were 16:1 (n-7) and 18:1 (n-9), only seston samples presented high amounts of 16:1 (n-9). 18:1 (n-7), which typically accounted for less than 10%, was represented by 10-14% in sea spiders during two seasons, February and June 2009. The monoenoics 15:1 and 17:1 were present in sea spiders only during two seasons. The dominant SAFAs in all groups were 16:0 and 18:0. Palmitic acid (16:0) ranged from 10 to 32% in all species, but stearic acid (18:0) had different values depending on the species; *Halopteris* spp. had less than 8%, while 5-13% was isolated from seston samples, and higher amounts were found in polychaetes and pycnogonids (10-24% and 23-36%, respectively).

MDS analysis of Bray-Curtis similarities showed a similar trend in fatty acid profiles of seston and *Halopteris* spp. samples (Fig. 3). The MDS ordination showed polychaetes being closely to seston and *Halopteris* spp., demonstrating the high similarity between their fatty acid profiles. Pycnogonids appear scattered as their fatty acid composition varied throughout the seasons; the group was far from seston and macroalgae samples and closer to nereids.

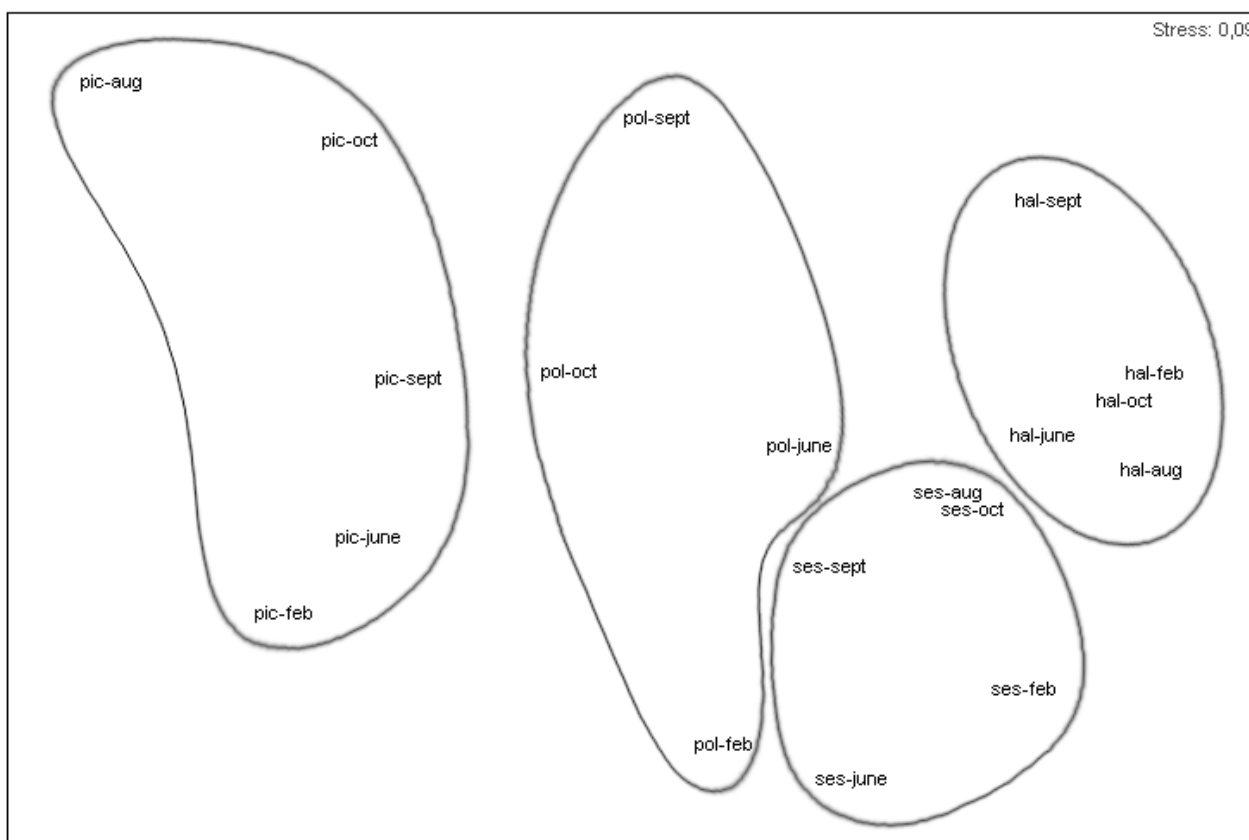


Figure 3. Seston, *Halopteris* spp., polychaetes, *Ammothella longipes*. Multidimensional scaling plot of fatty acid profiles extracted from samples throughout the five seasons sampled. hal = *Halopteris* spp., ses = seston, pol = polychaetes, pic = *Ammothella longipes* samples; aug = August'08, oct = October'08, feb = February'09, june = June'09, sept = September'09.

4. Discussion

4.1. Seasonal variation of TFA in different trophic groups

The fatty acid concentration found in the study area (3.71-6.94 $\mu\text{g FA/mg DW}$) is in agreement with previous studies made nearby, where total lipids were analyzed through an annual cycle (Medes Islands, minimum 1.2 $\mu\text{g total lipid/mg DW}$ and maximum 21.8 $\mu\text{g total lipid/mg DW}$, with a mean value of 7.91 $\mu\text{g total lipid/mg DW}$; Rossi et al., 2003). Fatty acids constitute an important part of the total lipids in the suspended particulate matter (Parrish, 1988), and our present results of fatty acid content fit very well with previous findings.

In general, the TFA content found in the seston samples showed no clear seasonal trend, according to what found Rossi and Gili (2005), in part due to the variability of the water column near the bottom (Rossi and Gili, 2007). Additionally, a significant part of the seston in coastal near bottom shallow water layers come from the phanerogam and macroalgal detritus (Rossi and Gili, 2009), so the TFA content found in *Halopteris* spp. (1.82-5.61 $\mu\text{g FA/mg DW}$) fits well with the TFA contents found in the present study. This result is also in line with previous results in which the total lipid content of macroalgae are seasonally analyzed (2-6 $\mu\text{g/mg DW}$; Haroon et al., 2000). Generally in macroalgae and phaeophytes in particular, the major biochemical component are carbohydrates (15-20% dry weight), while proteins represent the 3-11%, and lipids only about 0.6-7% (Ito and Tsuchiya, 1977; Renaud and Luong-Van, 2006; Wahbeh, 1997), which seems to be reflected in our results showing a low TFA content in *Halopteris* spp. analyzed (< 6 $\mu\text{g FA/mg DW}$ or 0.6%).

In polychaetes, TFA content varied significantly according to seasons (Fig. 2). Other Mediterranean benthic taxa show similar trends in which minimum values are found in late autumn-early winter (Fraga, 1956; Herrera and Muñoz, 1963; Establier, 1969; Fernández, 1998; Rossi et al., 2006a; Gori et al., 2007). There are several factors which may explain such variation related to the species life cycle and food availability. During reproductive activity when the gut content is reabsorbed and feeding ceases (Golding and Yuwono, 1994; Last and Olive, 1999), energy invested in gamete production can be as high as 70% of total energy (Fidalgo e Costa, 2003) and this could be one possible explanation for the increase in TFA during June 2009. In fact, two breeding peaks are known for polychaetes from the Iberian Peninsula, one at the end of summer/beginning of autumn, and the other during spring (Arias and Drake, 1995; Fidalgo e Costa, 2003). Both peaks coincide with our results showing major concentrations of TFA in October and June (see Figure 2) (both periods in which there are peaks of productivity in primary and secondary production in coastal waters, Ribera d'Alcalá et al., 2004). Seston quality is very high in spring in the Mediterranean sea (Grémare et al., 1997), mainly because of the spring planktonic blooms developed during these weeks (Estrada, 1996), but the quality of seston is also higher at the end of the summer time (Grémare et al., 1997), even if its concentration is lower (Rossi et al., 2003). Some benthic organisms have moderate-high lipid concentrations just before the autumn trophic crisis (Herrera and Muñoz, 1963; Establier, 1969; Rossi et al., 2006a; Gori et al., 2007; Rossi and Tsounis, 2007) when the energy storage drops to minimum values in many coastal organisms (November to beginning of February) (Fraga, 1956; Herrera and Muñoz, 1963; Establier, 1969; Fernández, 1998; Rossi et al., 2006a; Gori et al., 2007), a fact

revealed in the polychaetes studied here. The main factor is a decrease in the quality of available food, reaching a minimum lipid concentration in the suspended matter and, in turn, in all the other trophic steps (Grémare et al., 1997; Rossi et al., 2003). Heavy rainfall and easterly storms make the seston more refractory (Duarte et al., 1999; Grémare et al., 2003; Rossi and Gili, 2005), and the benthic community is constrained by a trophic crisis (Rossi et al., 2006a; Rossi and Gili, 2009).

A different situation seems to be reflected in the *Ammothella longipes* total fatty acid concentration. TFA content of pycnogonids in this study were comparable with other marine invertebrate species, such as crustaceans species in which lipid concentration has been studied (Establier, 1963; Hill et al., 1992; Hopkins et al., 1993; Mayzaud et al., 1999; Limbourn and Nichols, 2009), but these animals tend to present high seasonal variation in their TFA content, mainly because of their feeding and reproductive requirements (Hill et al., 1992; Mayzaud et al., 1999). The pycnogonids in the present study do not show a clear TFA content seasonal trend. *A. longipes* reproduces throughout the year, except from May to July, period during the reproduction activity seem to decrease (Munilla, 1980). According to *A. longipes* life cycle, TFA content should be similar throughout the year; so the differences found in our study based on slight increase in October'08 and its maintenance during June09 may be due to their feeding behavior.

There was no clear variation in fatty acid concentration between males and females, fact that differs from most marine invertebrates (Morris, 1973; Guerra-García et al., 2004; Kilada and Riad, 2008), in which females accumulate lipids during the period that precedes spawning. However, the results of this study agree with the known pycnogonid reproductive strategy, in which after female oviposition and secretion of male sperm, fertilized eggs are transported into a bracelet-like eggs mass around the male ovigerous leg (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987). Therefore, lipid concentrations affected by reproductive activity should be similar between females, producing and moving their ovules within the femora to be expelled out through genital pores, and males, carrying eggs masses (fertilized eggs) attached to their ovigerous legs. The presence of eggs in both males and females might explain high amounts of lipids and no male/female differences observed. For sea spiders it is still unknown which part of energy storage is expended on reproduction and which is deployed in preparing for periods of low food availability, as lipids seem to be the main storage source to fend off starvation in many benthic organisms (Hill et al., 1992; Fernández, 1998; Rossi et al., 2006b; Gori et al., 2007).

4.2. FFAA Characterization of seston, *Halopteris* spp. and polychaetes

The FFAA markers found in the seston partly correspond to those found in *Halopteris* spp. (Table 1). One example is the 18:2(n-6), a marker very abundant in *Halopteris* spp. and also found in significant amounts in the seston. This 18:2(n-6) fatty acid has been related to different types of macroalgae (Wahbeh, 1997; Hofmann and Eichenberger, 1997), which is not surprising, as part of the suspended material may come from the same algal facies in the studied area. In fact, the different macroalgae species might play an important role on the chemical composition of any detrital material created, due to decomposition of macrophytes in various degrees, such as parts of the vascular plants or reduced to microphytodebris. Previous works found a relationship between the local flora (vascular plants or macroalgae) and the detritus, but the importance for the different trophic groups vary seasonally and

could be differ according to the habitat (Meziane and Tsuchiya, 2000; Carlier et al., 2007a, b). An important biomarker found in the present study both in *Halopteris* spp. and the seston is the 16:1 (n-7), which has been largely described for Bacillarioficeae (Chuecas and Riley, 1969; Volkman et al., 1989; Pedersen et al., 1999; Reuss and Poulsen, 2002). This biomarker has been shown to be especially abundant in February and June, when diatom blooms are largely transferred to near bottom water layers in the coastal areas of the Mediterranean Sea (Ribes et al., 1999; Ribera d'Alcalá et al., 2004; Rossi and Gili, 2005). However, we found these markers throughout the year and also present in *Halopteris* spp., so this explanation is unlikely given the present dataset. There are some previous works indicating that palmitoleic acid seems not to be specific only for diatoms, it can be found also in Phaeophyceae in high values ranging from 8 to 19.5% (Ito and Tsuchiya, 1977; Polat and Ozogul, 2008). More precisely, studies on brown algae *Cystoseira* spp. (which is similar to *Halopteris* spp.) showed values of about 20% for 16:1 (n-7) (Durmaz et al., 2008). Palmitoleic acid found in seston samples may thus come partly from *Halopteris* spp. and partly from Bacillarioficeae. In fact, the similarities found in the fatty acid composition seen above are in accordance to MDS analysis, where seston and *Halopteris* spp. samples were close.

Generally trophic links between primary productivity and zooplankton can be observed with fatty acid composition, because these lipids are incorporated unmodified into the herbivorous storage lipids (Lee et al., 2006). The PUFA 20:4 (n-6), occurring in high proportions in polychaetes, might reflect assimilation of phytoplankton (Dunstan et al., 1994; Jeffreys et al., 2009). Polychaetes also showed high concentrations of 18:2 (n-6), an essential fatty acid that animals require from the diet (e.g. primary producers) as they cannot biosynthesise them *de novo* (Pond et al., 2002). The high values of this biomarker detected in macroalgae and seston samples might suggest polychaetes feed directly on them, reflecting an herbivorous diet (grazing macroalgae or feeding directly from phytodetritus), a fact also observed in the MDS analysis. Also considerable values from bacterial (15:1, 17:1; Budge and Parrish, 1998; Budge et al., 2001; Copeman and Parrish, 2003) and protozoan (20:4(n-6); Zhukova and Kharlamenko, 1999; Broglio et al., 2003) fatty acid were found. These results show that suspension feeding or deposit feeding seem to be the feeding behaviors adopted by the polychaetes analyzed. Our findings are in accordance to other studies (Figalgo e Costa et al., 2006) in which the authors analyzed gut contents of *Nereis diversicolor* and found that mucus was the most frequent item found in the digestive tracts, indicating filter-feeding followed by sand swallow large amounts of sediment in sweep-and-plough food-searching strategy.

4.3. Temporal variations in pycnogonid feeding strategies through the FFAA analysis

Tracking trophodynamic relationships in omnivorous and carnivorous species, using FATM, is more complex than for herbivores, since lipid signatures may originate from a variety of different dietary sources (Dalsgaard et al., 2003) and may suffer different metabolic pathways (Tocher and Harvie, 1988; Tocher, 1993). The actual study takes into account the main food sources not only from the fatty acids but also from the previous observations of the feeding behavior and diet of the different groups (i.e. polychaetes and pycnogonids). In the present study, *Ammothella longipes* seem to adopt different type of feeding strategy depending on the sources they find, as showed the MDS ordination.

The 18:1(n-7)/ 18:1(n-9) ratio has been used to distinguish carnivores from herbivores (Falk-Petersen et al., 1990; Graeve et al., 1994; Auel et al., 2002); also the ratio DHA/EPA may potentially also be used to determine carnivory, increasing toward higher trophic levels (Dalsgaard et al., 2003), being values over 1 in typical carnivorous taxa in both index. In *A. longipes*, values higher than 1 were found for 18:1(n-7)/ 18:1(n-9) and DHA/EPA ratios in February'09 and June'09, while in other seasons they were always much lower than 1. These results are in accordance with electron microscopy proboscis studies for *Ammothella* species (Fahrenbach and Arango, 2007; Soler-Membrives et al., in review), which showed that in this genus the jaws have become pointed tridents, presumably for optimal retention of contacted prey. This fact, together with the intrinsic musculature, responsible for the suctioning action, appears to represent *Ammothella longipes* with typical predator life style. 1.8% from all pycnogonids analyzed (23 from the 1271 specimens analyzed) in this study were found with polychaetes retained by the proboscis (Soler-Membrives, personal observations, see Fig. 4), so small polychaetes seem to be an optimal prey for this species, but other prey less likely to be found *in situ*, such as hydroids or bryozoans, should not be excluded from the *A. longipes* carnivore diet.

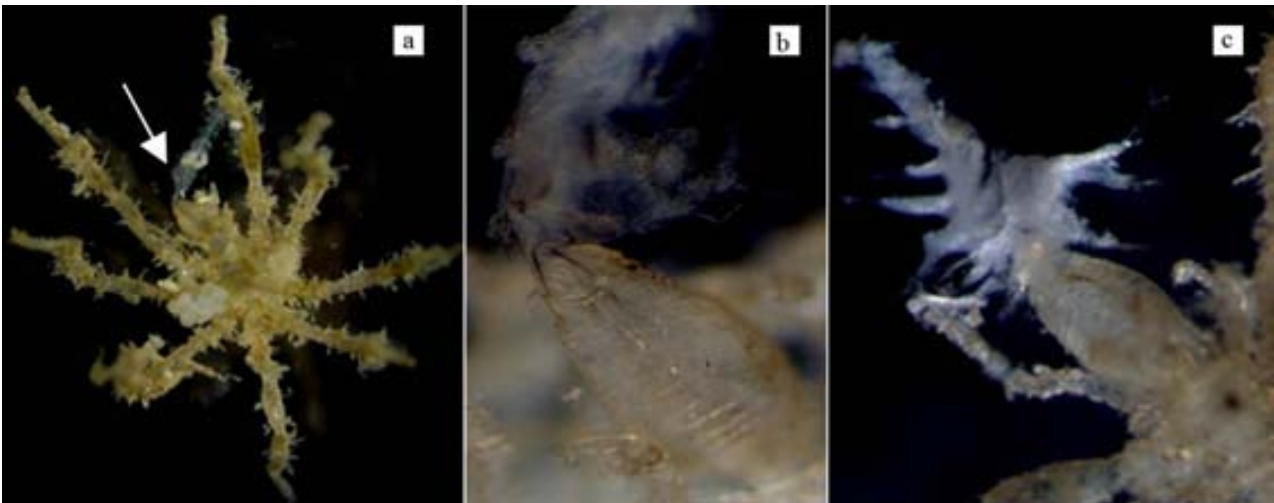


Figure 4. Different specimens of *Ammothella longipes* feeding on a polychaete (Nereidae). Photographs taken by a stereomicroscope StereoZeiss Discovery V8 at magnification x10, x80, and x40 (respectively).

Lipids of sea spiders in September'09 showed a mixed diet, with relatively values for phytoplanktonic biomarkers, 7.98% for 20:5(n-3) and 6.27% for 22:6(n-3); also the 18:1(n-7)/ 18:1(n-9) ratio was low (0.46) in September'09, but the ratio DHA/EPA was moderate (0.79) compared to 2008 seasons (<0.5). This can be interpreted as carnivory, but not necessarily as main feeding strategy but probably these pycnogonids also show a detritivorous behavior. It seems to be a period of omnivory half-time between summer, when the pycnogonids find prey like small polychaetes easily, and winter time, when prey decline or are more difficult to capture. In this second period, detritus seems to be the main food source.

Similar pattern could be observed during autumn 2008, but carnivory was even less evident. Diatom (20:5(n-3)) and dinoflagellates (22:6(n-3)) biomarkers were also good represented, as well as 20:4 (n-6), typical from microeukariotes. Different from other seasons, bacterial biomarkers, mostly 15:1 and 17:1

(Budge and Parrish, 1998; Budge et al., 2001; Copeman and Parrish, 2003), are significantly high, representing more than 15.% of total fatty acids analyzed. In August'08, even phytoplanktonic biomarkers declined in the pycnogonids, and almost a quarter of the fatty acids analyzed (23.7%) corresponded to bacterial biomarkers. The exceptionally high values, mostly of 15:1 and 17:1, denoted an important lipid contribution of bacteria. Different explanations could be given: i) sea spiders might suck the detritus from their own outside surface, *Halopteris* or other substrates, finding alive bacteria in the decomposing detritus, bacterivorous protozoan and other epibionts (Arnaud and Bamber, 1987), in times when it is more difficult to catch prey ii) pycnogonids might have live free-living bacteria in their guts or within their fecal pellets helping digestion of seston (Nagasawa and Nemoto, 1988), and iii) *de novo* biosynthesis of odd-chain fatty acids from propionate as initial molecule. Exceptional amounts have been only reported for the North Atlantic benthic amphipod *Pontoporeia femorata*, in which the odd-chain fatty acids comprise up to half of the total fatty acids (Paradis and Ackman, 1976), and 20% reported in the gastropod *Clione limacine* from both polar oceans (Kattner et al., 1998). Odd-chain fatty acids may serve as chemical defense agents, as indicated by their antifungal effect, a possible advantage in these tiny sea spiders, together with the production of secondary antifeedant metabolites (Bryan et al., 1995).

The former and latter alternatives might be more likely in sea spiders, perhaps occurring simultaneously especially in August'08. Ammonotheids, and particularly this species *Ammothella longipes* are usually heavily covered in setae and spines throughout their body, facilitating deposit of detritus on their body surface (30.5% of their DW belong to detritus in the non-sonicated pycnogonids in this study), so this could be an available food source to be considered too (this is why we carried out an initial sonication of the sea spiders, see Material & Methods section). Polychaetes also present high values for these biomarkers (8.2% in August'08) but not as high as in pycnogonids, possibly indicating these high amounts of 15:1 and 17:1 might not all come from detritus feeding. The *de novo* biosynthesis of odd-chain fatty acids from propionate has to be also taken into account. Ackman (1965) and Ackman et al. (1965) suggested that this fatty acid may originate from the phytoplanktonic dimethyl-b-propiothetin (DMPT), so it could be that sea spiders rapidly accumulate DMPT with the ingestion of phytoplankton during periods when prey are not available for the synthesis of odd-chain fatty acids by chain elongation. Moreover, the amounts of DMPT available for pycnogonids may also be affected to the seasonal variations, due to changing phytoplankton biomass and composition (Kattner et al., 1998).

Ammothella longipes seem to be capable to shift their diet throughout the year. Their proboscis type might lead to think of a predatory life style (Fahrenbach and Arango, 2007), but their limited mobility could be a problem to find a suitable prey all year long. When prey are abundant and size-suitable, they seem to prefer those prey with a thin cuticle and soft body (and represent a very good energy source), such as polychaetes. This may be done easily making a cut in the cuticle and sucking the body liquids. On the other hand, during periods when prey are not easily accessible, they seem to be capable to obtain energy from other sources, such as detritus and possibly bacteria living and decomposing the detritus, which have a significant concentration and carbon content during this period in Mediterranean coastal and near bottom seston waters (Vaqué et al., 1997; Ribes et al., 1999). Finally, herbivory seem not to be a chosen strategy for *Ammothella longipes* in *Halopteris* spp. communities. Future studies will depict a clearer picture on the trophic links in this algal community, but the present study shows not only seasonal

variability among some of the trophic steps, but also a potential adaptation to food resources in *Ammothella longipes*.

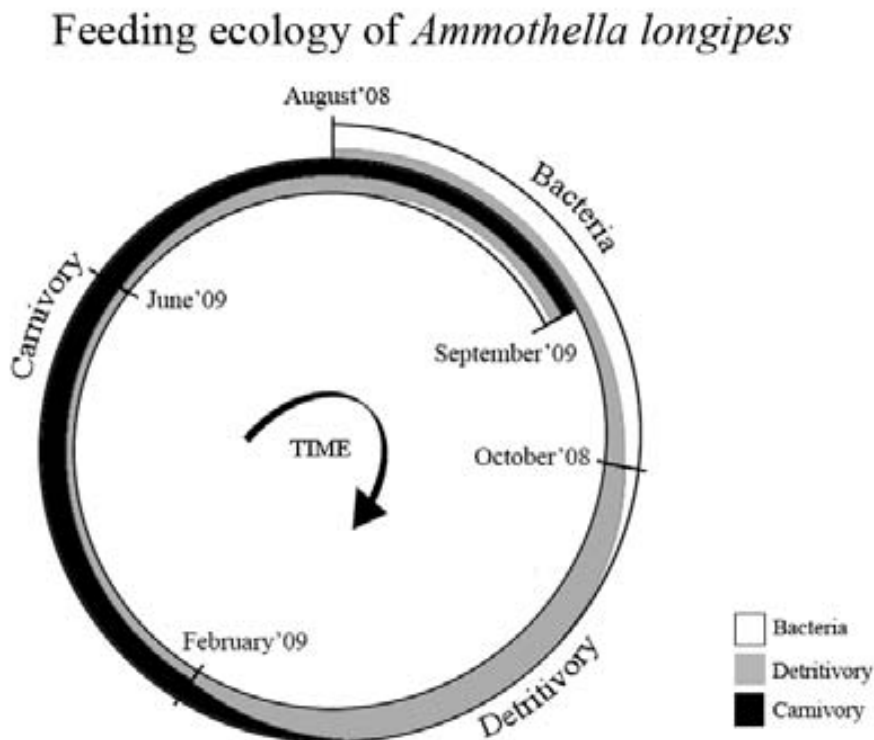


Figure 5. Illustration of the feeding ecology proposed for *Ammothella longipes* in NW Mediterranean Sea in a *Halopterus* spp. community.

Acknowledgments

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RESUM DELS RESULTATS I DISCUSSIÓ

IV.1. BIOGEOGRAFIA DE LES ESPÈCIES ANTÀRTIQUES

La fauna bentònica marina que envolta el continent Antàrtic ha estat sempre considerada com una de les més isolades del planeta, a causa de la fragmentació del supercontinent Gondwana, la conseqüent formació del corrent circumpolar antàrtic (ACC), i refredament de les seves aigües (Crame 1999). Així, la fauna antàrtica va patir un procés vicarià que va començar quan les barreres geogràfiques (distància), batimètriques (profunditat) i oceanogràfiques (ACC) es van establir fa uns 25 milions d'anys.

S'han elaborat dues hipòtesis complementàries que podrien explicar les vies d'origen i dispersió de les espècies bentòniques antàrtiques (Clarke i Johnston 2003), aplicables també als picnogònids antàrtics:

- És molt probable que la fauna que trobem avui dia provingui parcialment d'un estoc *in-situ* de fauna cretàtica, present a la costa de Gondwana, quan l'Antàrtica encara formava part del super-continente. Aquesta hipòtesi està recolzada per alguns gasteròpodes (Clarke 1990), algunes famílies d'isòpodes (Brandt 1992) i alguns grups sèssils com alcionaris i esponges (Gili et al. 2006), entre d'altres, i en picnogònids per les famílies Colossendeidae i Austrodecidae.
- També es podria haver donat un intercanvi amb la fauna profunda dels oceans contigus, com és el cas dels tanaidacis i amfípodes (Brandt 1999). Així, una possibilitat que engloba aquesta hipòtesi seria que la fauna antàrtica provindria, en part, de la regió de Magallanes, i que han migrat per les aigües profundes a través del Passatge de Drake o bé a través de l'Arc d'Escòcia. Alguns grups com els seròlids (Held 2000), poliquets (Montiel et al. 2004) i briozous (Moyano 2005; Barnes 2006) recolzen aquesta hipòtesi.

Per tant, les comunitats modernes antàrtiques podrien ser una mescla entre taxons que han migrat des de les aigües profundes durant els períodes interglacials, i la fauna que ha evolucionat a partir dels antecessors cretàtics de Gondwana, com es conclou en el Capítol I (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009) respecte els picnogònids. Conforme amb aquest escenari, la fauna bentònica que ocupa avui dia la plataforma continental antàrtica de la Península Antàrtica i Mar de Weddell està estretament relacionada amb la fauna característica de la zona magallànica (Clarke i Johnson 2003). Així ho demostren les 14 espècies comunes entre Sud-Amèrica i l'Arc d'Escòcia, i les 10 i 5 espècies comunes entre les aigües magallàniques i la Península Antàrtica i el Mar de Weddell, respectivament.

Quant a la dispersió de la fauna antàrtica, s'ha proposat dues vies: per una banda, des de Sud-Amèrica a la Península antàrtica, a través de l'Arc d'Escòcia (Thompson 2004). Per altra banda, des de la zona Oest a la zona Est, gràcies a l'ACC, com corroboren els resultats en picnogònids en que les espècies de la Península Antàrtica i la zona est del Mar de Weddell són força similars, igual que la fauna dels mars de Ross i Bellinghausen. En canvi, cadascuna de les zones sub-antàrtiques presenta fauna exclusiva amb valors de similitud prou baixos respecte a la fauna antàrtica.



La riquesa específica extremadament alta (143 espècies, que representen el 75% de les espècies antàrtiques, de les quals 55 són circumpolars, i 26 endèmiques de la zona) que presenten els arxipèlags de l'Arc d'Escòcia pot ser explicada per dues raons. La primera, anteriorment esmenada, és relativa a l'origen de la fauna antàrtica: en el moment de la fragmentació dels Andes amb la Península Antàrtica, l'Arc d'Escòcia va servir de protecció per a les espècies, i aquest actualment encara pot retenir espècies cretàiques, que posteriorment seran dispersades en direcció est gràcies al corrent circumpolar antàrtic (ACC). A la vegada, l'Arc d'Escòcia representa l'única barrera física de l'ACC, que actua com a pinta retenint les espècies que circulen gràcies a aquest corrent (Fig. 10).

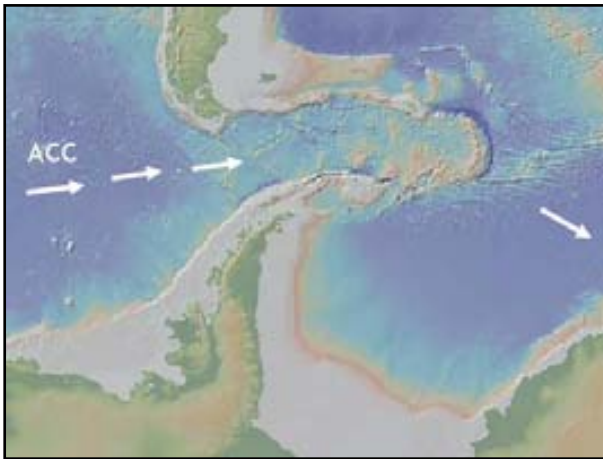


Figura 10. Batimetria de l'Arc d'Escòcia, mostrant a la part superior la zona magallànica, i a la inferior la Península Antàrtica, a la dreta el Mar de Weddell i a l'esquerra el mar de Bellingshausen. Les fletxes blanques senyalen la direcció del corrent circumpolar antàrtic (ACC). Modificat del Marine Geoscience Data System (<http://www.marine-geo.org/portals/gmrt/>).

Així, tant l'Arc d'Escòcia com les aigües circumdants del Mar de Weddell i Península Antàrtica són unes de les zones que més han captat l'atenció dels investigadors que pretenen esbrinar l'origen i evolució de la fauna antàrtica. No obstant, recentment s'està plantejant la possibilitat d'augmentar l'esforç de mostreig en altres zones molt menys prospectades, com pot ser la Zona Est, per detectar possibles nous punts d'origen i dispersió de la fauna antàrtica bentònica (Barnes i Sands comunicació personal).

Aquest augment en l'esforç de mostreig també pot comportar una disminució de l'endemisme zonal, i conseqüent augment de la circumpolaritat de les espècies, tal i com s'ha detectat recentment en picnogònids (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009).

Per últim, tot i la isolació que pateix el continent que resulta amb un alt endemisme d'espècies antàrtiques (de les 192 espècies d'aranyes de mar antàrtiques, 107 (56%) han estat descrites com a endèmiques de l'Antàrtica; Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009), recentment, algunes evidències han suggerit el restabliment del contacte entre la fauna antàrtica i magallànica (Clarke et al. 2005; Thatje et al. 2005). Dues hipòtesis han estat proposades: per una banda, l'augment del tràfic marítim entre els dos continents com a conseqüència del turisme i les activitats científiques (Thatje 2005) o l'augment exponencial de residus flotants, que són capaços de transportar invertebrats marins (Thiel i Gutow 2005). Per altra banda, la segona hipòtesi considera que el grau d'isolació entre els continents ha canviat històricament, com a conseqüència de la deriva continental i constant moviment de plaques; per tant, el ritme variable de les successions entre els períodes glacials i interglacials, permetria que

aquells invertebrats amb altes capacitats de dispersió puguin connectar-se superficialment (Thompson 2004). Donat que el període interglacial que caracteritza el temps actual és més llarg que els precedents, les probabilitats de dispersió i connexió entre els dos continents de la fauna bentònica serien majors.

IV.2. DISTRIBUCIÓ BATIMÈTRICA ANTÀRTICA: EL MAR DE WEDDELL COM A CAS D'ESTUDI

En termes generals, la profunditat és el factor més important que afecta a la distribució de les espècies (Brandt et al. 2007); de fet, Brandt et al. (2005) va proposar que la profunditat explica millor la riquesa específica en isòpodes que no pas la longitud i la latitud juntes. Més concretament ja en aranyes de mar, San Vicente et al. (1997) va reportar que la profunditat explicava més l'agrupament i distribució de les espècies que no pas altres factors analitzats com la temperatura, l'hidrodinamisme, la salinitat, la pressió o el gradient de penetració de la llum. Tot i que la majoria d'aquests factors estan implícits en la profunditat.

Durant el període més fred del Pliocè, el gel va envair la plataforma continental, i els mars circumdants van resultar coberts per una gruixuda i permanent capa de gel marí (Grobe i Mackensen 1992). El pes d'aquesta capa de gel sobre la plataforma continental va fer que aquesta s'enfonsés notablement en comparació amb la resta de mars i oceans. La plataforma continental del Mar de Weddell està caracteritzada per la profunditat fins la qual s'estén, arribant al punt d'inflexió entre la plataforma i el talús vora els 900-1000 m (Brandt et al. 2007; Clarke 2003; Clarke i Johnston 2003), afectant així a la distribució batimètrica de les espècies bentòniques antàrtiques. Les aranyes de mar antàrtiques segueixen perfectament aquest patró batimètric; tal i com es conclou en el Capítol II (Soler-Membrives et al. 2009), existeixen dos tipus de comunitats de picnogònids molt ben definides per aquest gradient batimètric. La comunitat de plataforma o superficial (que arriba fins als 900 m) i la comunitat profunda (amb espècies que apareixen a partir dels 900 m), que es diferencien per la composició específica i el canvi de proporció d'espècies en funció de la fondària.

Es suggereix pels picnogònids, igual que passa en d'altres grups (ex. gastròpodes, amfípodes i briozous, entre d'altres; Brandt et al. 2007; taula III), que en general estan confinats a la plataforma continental, i que només algunes són capaces d'estendre la seva distribució a les aigües profundes. Aquestes últimes espècies que, per tant, presenten un alt rang batimètric, poden haver estat forçades a sobreviure en aigües profundes a causa de la inestabilitat que presenta la plataforma continental com a conseqüència de les grans capes de gel, el gruix de les quals ha variat al llarg del temps (Munilla 2001). Aquestes troballes suporten la hipòtesi que els picnogònids han evolucionat i s'han diversificat a la plataforma continental, i que posteriorment, algunes espècies s'han submergit a les aigües profundes, on avui dia només es troben en un baix nombre d'espècies. Contràriament amb el que succeeix a la plataforma continental antàrtica, la qual està zoogeogràficament aïllada gràcies a l'ACC, la fauna del mar austral profund pot migrar lliurement (Brandt et al. 2007; Munilla i Soler-



Membrives 2009), fet que explica que les aranyes de mar que s'ha trobat al Mar de Weddell no difereixin gaire de les espècies profundes que es troben en altres regions antàrtiques, com ara la Península Antàrtica, la zona Est o l'Arc d'Escòcia.

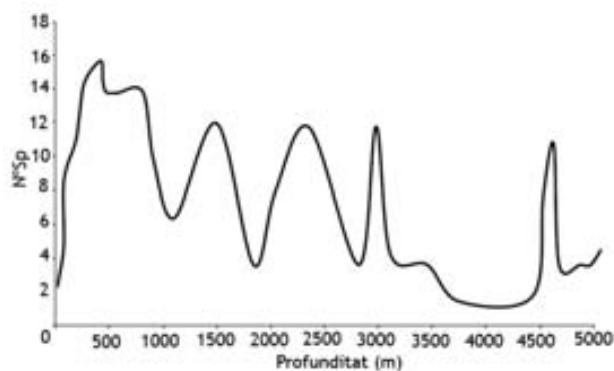
Taula III. Número d'espècies i taxa d'endemisme per a taxons seleccionats de l'Oceà Austral. Taula modificada a partir de Brandt et al. (2007), amb els picnogònids afegits a partir de Munilla i Soler-Membrives (2009).

Oceà Austral	Endèmiques	Plataforma continental (0-1000 m)	Exclusives de plataforma continental	Talús (>1000 m)	Exclusives de talús	
50	60%	27		~45	~30	Hexactinellida
20	60%	14		~15	~10	Calcarea
400	60%	~350		100	~60	Demospongiae
155		148		13	7	Hydrozoa
158	57%	122	76	82	36	Bivalvia
535	80%	463	365	160	62	Gastropoda
8	60%	8	6	2	0	Polyplacophora
8	50%	3	3	6	5	Scaphopoda
36	100%	25	22	11	9	Cephalopoda
264	64%	231	165	96	30	Pycnogonida
510	85%	470	427	84	38	Amphipoda
127	23%	~80		~50		Tanaidacea
77	95%	72	68	9	5	Cumacea
991	87%	371	327	~650	~600	Isopoda
37	51%	37	24	13	0	Mysidacea
10		10	8	4		Natantia
27		27	21	1		Reptantia
342		~315		~30		Bryozoa
19	79%	13	6	13	5	Brachiopoda
74	70%	60	38	36	14	Echinodermata

Nymphon australe, és una de les espècies més freqüents en aigües antàrtiques (juntament amb *Colossendeis megalonyx*). A diferència de *C. megalonyx*, la primera té la capacitat de colonitzar les aigües profundes del Mar de Weddell; no obstant, les poblacions profundes presenten alguns trets morfològics diferencials amb les poblacions someres, com ara l'absència d'ulls i de pigment; també Mahon et al. (2008) i Arango et al. (2010) van trobar diferències genètiques, suggerint una potencial especiació d'aquesta variant o subespècie (veure discussió de l'apartat IV.4).

Avui dia, la riquesa específica està dominada per les espècies que es troben a la plataforma continental, mentre que les ocurrencies a les aigües profundes encara són escasses; tot i que és probable que les aigües poc profundes tinguin més abundància i riquesa d'espècies, segurament aquestes dades estan subestimades a causa de la dificultat de mostrejar les aigües més profundes i abissals (Brandt et al. 2007). En la figura 11 es mostra un exemple del perfil batimètric que presenten la majoria dels taxons de meiofauna i macrofauna bentònica antàrtica.

Figura 11. Exemple d'un perfil batimètric que representa el que succeeix en la majoria de taxons de meiofauna i macrofauna bentònica antàrtica. Modificat de Brandt et al. (2007)



Les aranyes de mar antàrtiques són molt comunes a la plataforma continental i menys comunes però sí presents al talús antàrtic, i en canvi, no s'han trobat en les zones abissals. En el Mar de Weddell, com a exemple, 11 dels 14 gèneres analitzats de picnogònids són exclusius de la plataforma continental (*Rhynchothorax*, *Pycnogonum*, *Pentapycnon*, *Pentanympion*, *Endeis*, *Austroraptus*, *Austropallene*, *Austrodecus*, *Anoplodactylus*, *Ammothea* i *Achelia*), incloent 73 espècies. Mentre que els gèneres *Pallenopsis* i *Colossendeis* es troben al talús, aquestes ocurrencies són puntuals, ja que aquests gèneres són força més comuns a la plataforma continental; en canvi, *Nymphon* és el gènere amb major riquesa específica en el talús: cinc espècies d'aquest gènere són comunes a plataforma i talús (*N. australe*, *N. charcoti*, *N. gracilipes*, *N. proximum* i *N. typhlops*), mentre que només dues espècies d'aranyes de mar són exclusives del talús en aquestes aigües (*N. articulare* i *N. longicollum*). Donat que la fauna d'aquestes zones profundes pot migrar lliurement, i donat el gran desconeixement actual, és necessari continuar augmentant els esforços en estudiar millor aquestes zones tant profundes; el coneixement d'aquesta fauna ens podria permetre d'entendre nous aspectes sobre l'origen, l'evolució i la biologia de les espècies antàrtiques.

IV.3. PICNOGÒNIDS ASSOCIATS A ESTRUCTURES VOLCÀNIQUES DE L'ESTRET DE BRANSFIELD

L'Estret de Bransfield, comprès entre les illes Shetland del Sud i la Península Antàrtica, presenta una estructura geològica especial. La conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield (CCEB) està dominada per sèries d'edificis volcànics amb morfologies diverses, que il·lustren diferents estadis evolutius.

La zona amb major riquesa biològica, no només d'aranyes de mar, sinó també d'altres grups zoològics (Ramil i Ramos 1997), fou la situada en una zona relativament poc profunda (~650 m) de conus volcànics i cims plans esquerdat per una falla, que donen lloc a dues meitats amb forma de mitjalluna separades per una falla volcànica longitudinal (Fig. 12).

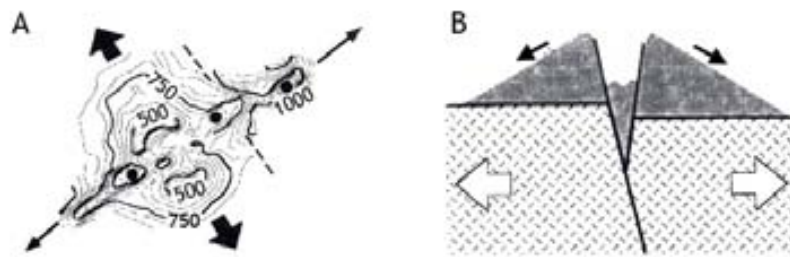


Figura 12. Cotes orogràfiques (A) i perfil morfològic (B) de l'estructura volcànica de la zona mostrejada amb més riquesa, abundància i biomassa de la conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield (DR6). Modificat de Canals i Gracia (1997).

En el Capítol III (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2007) s'han proposat dues hipòtesis per explicar la diferència de riquesa, abundància i biomassa respecte a les altres zones. Com s'ha descrit en l'apartat anterior (veure apartat IV.2), l'abundància dels picnogònids, igual que succeeix en altres grups bentònics, decreix a mesura que augmenta la profunditat, segurament perquè la font d'aliment és més abundant i més accessible en estacions poc profundes. Per altra banda, la lleugera orografia inclinada de l'estació més abundant (Fig. 12B) pot afavorir l'arribada de matèria orgànica resuspensa, que podrà ser filtrada per briozous, hidrozous i porífers, augmentant aquests la seva biomassa i els quals, a la vegada, serviran de font d'aliment per a les aranyes de mar.

El límit de plaques que separa la microplaca (o bloc tectònic) de les illes Shetland del Sud amb la Placa Antàrtica està en un estadi naixent (Canals i Gracia 1997); no obstant, els resultats de l'estudi de la composició faunística de picnogònids indica que aquella zona estava inactiva en el moment del mostreig, ja que no es va trobar cap indicatiu dels efectes dels elements volcànics en les aranyes de mar estudiades, com ara mucus filamentós bacterià extern, incrustacions negres de sulfidat, ni tampoc cap espècie del gènere *Sericosura*, exclusives de fonts hidrotermals i descrites en zones similars a les estudiades.

En aquesta zona els gèneres més abundants foren *Colossendeis* i *Nymphon*, ambdós adaptats a caminar per fons sorrencs, com és la zona prospectada. Tot i que els dos gèneres van presentar la mateixa abundància, la biomassa del gènere *Colossendeis* fou gairebé 10 vegades superior que la de *Nymphon*. El fet que el gènere *Colossendeis* sigui un dels gèneres que presenta més gigantisme en aigües antàrtiques, amb una mida prou superior a la mitja dels picnogònids, pot tenir importància en relació a la seva alta longevitat (Munilla 1991), i indica que probablement són estratègies de la *K* (estabilitat ambiental, lent creixement, gran mida, i baix metabolisme), contràriament del que succeeix amb els Nymphonidae, que segueixen l'estratègia de la *r* (inverteixen més energia en la reproducció que en créixer).

IV.4. DIVERSIFICACIÓ GENÈTICA D'UNA ESPÈCIE CIRCUMPOLAR: *Nymphon australe*

En els ecosistemes terrestres la isolació antàrtica va provocar l'extinció de la gran part de la macrofauna i macroflora. Aquest escenari però contrasta dràsticament amb la gran

diversitat i abundància de la fauna bentònica marina, que ocupa la plataforma continental antàrtica (Clarke i Johnston 2003). Actualment, s'han descrit 264 espècies de picnogònids en aigües australs (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009), que representen el 20% del total mundial de les espècies. La família més diversificada és la Nymphonidae, amb 71 espècies, però només 4 gèneres: el gènere més divers és *Nymphon* que inclou gairebé 250 espècies en tot el món, de les quals el 25% es troben en aigües australs. L'espècie antàrtica més abundant és *Nymphon australe* Hodgson 1902, circumpolar i euribàtica (8-4136 m) (Munilla i Soler-Membrives 2009).

N. australe és considerada la precursora del grup “*australe*”, un complex d'espècies morfològicament similars. No obstant, aquest complex “*australe*”, en el que Child (1995) va incloure vint espècies, està pendent de ser revisat amb cura, ja que hi ha algunes espècies que sí que són força diferenciables morfològicament respecte *N. australe* (ex. *Nymphon villosum*, *Nymphon glabrum*, entre d'altres) amb una alta variació genètica (10-20% de variació genètica segons 554 pb de COI analitzats) (Arango i Soler-Membrives en preparació), i que presumiblement es podrien excloure del complex. D'altres, en canvi, són morfològicament més similars (inclús algunes són críptiques) i amb valors de diferenciació més baixos (5-8%), però superiors del que es considera, en la majoria d'invertebrats bentònics, variació intraespecífica (fins a 3%) (Arango et al. 2010) (veure Taula IV i Fig. 13); són necessàries anàlisis que integrin la morfologia i la genètica per estudiar les possibles variants (ex. *Nymphon australe* var. *caecum*) i espècies críptiques incloses dins del grup, i els nivells de variació genètica, per tal de definir quantes espècies reals formen el complex “*australe*” (Arango i Soler-Membrives en preparació).

Taula IV. Matriu de pairwise-distances a partir de seqüències de COI de diferents espècies del gènere *Nymphon*. Les espècies marcades amb verd corresponen a *Nymphon australe* (Pen= Península Antàrtica; East= Zona Est Antàrtica; Wed= Mar de Weddell) amb valors de variació genètica inferiors a 3%, considerant-la variació intraspecífica. Les espècies pintades amb taronja corresponen a espècies que pertanyen al complex “*australe*”, i són espècies críptiques o variants encara per descriure (BL= blind, la variant cega) amb variacions d'entre el 7-9% respecte *N. australe*. Per últim, les espècies colorejades de groc corresponen a dues espècies que no pertanyen al complex “*australe*” (Nvi: *Nymphon villosum*; Nsp. 1, encara per descriure), i que presenten percentatges de distància genètica de 12-19% respecte *N. australe*.

	Nau-Pen	Nau-East	Nau-Wed	Co-Sp1	Co-Sp2 (BL)	Co-Sp3	Nvi	Nsp.1
Nau-Pen	0-1.7							
Nau-East	0.2-2.2	0-1.3						
Nau-Wed	0.7-2.2	0.7-1.7	0-0.2					
Co-Sp1	7.6-12.8	7.6-8.6	8.4-7.5	0-0.3				
Co-Sp2 (BL)	8.1-9	7.7-8.6	7.7-8.1	7.2-12.9	0			
Co-Sp3	8.1-9.9	7.7-9.1	7.9-9	4.2-13.8	6.9-8.1	0-1.3		
Nvi	14.9-19	15.4-18.9	15.4-18.6	7.9-19.3	15-17.9	15.9-20.2	0.2-2	
Nsp.1	12.2-13.3	12.6-13.2	12.8-13.4	11.2-15.3	9.9-10.4	11-11.4	17-18.1	0-0.3

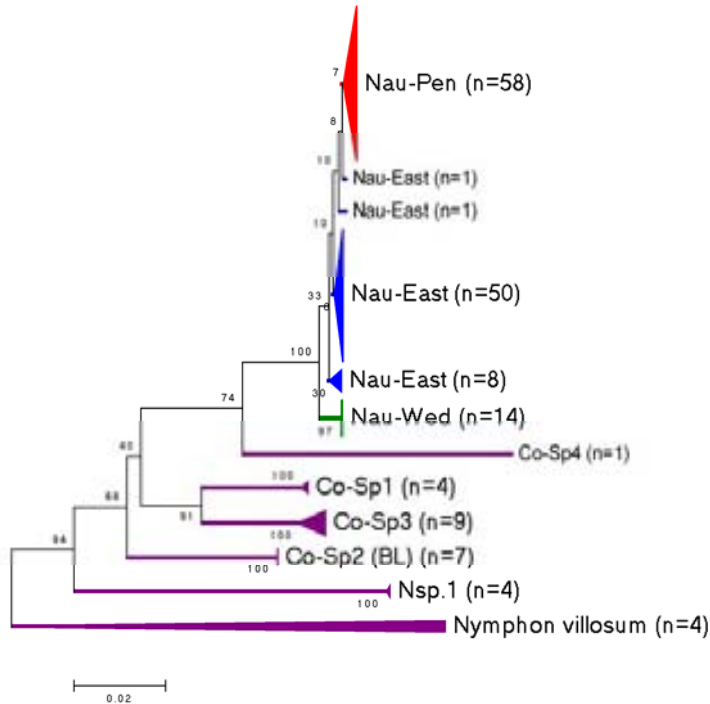


Figura 13. Arbre Neighbor-joining de variació genètica del gen COI basat en les pairwise-distances d'espècies antàrtiques del gènere *Nymphon*. Seguint la nomenclatura de la taula IV, les espècies marcades amb vermell corresponen a *Nymphon australe* de la Península Antàrtica; les espècies pintades de blau corresponen a *N. australe* de la part East de l'Antàrtica i les colorejades de verd són les del Mar de Weddell; per últim, les espècies colorejades de lila són espècies diferents a *N. australe*, 4 espècies del complex "australe" i dues que no pertanyen al complex. Entre parèntesi el número de mostres analitzades per a cada grup, i els números al costat de les branques representen els valors de suport Bootstrap.

En el capítol IV (Arango et al. 2010) s'ha estudiat la diferenciació genètica al llarg de l'Antàrtica de *Nymphon australe*, incloent exclusivament l'espècie *N. australe*, amb una variació intraespecífica màxima de 2.2% (en un fragment de 554 pb de COI, o bé de 1.4% en un fragment concatenat de 1016 pb de COI + 16S), i excloent-ne les espècies similars del complex "australe".

N. australe està descrita (i els resultats actuals ho confirmen) com una espècie amb distribució circumpolar. No obstant, s'observa una clara diferenciació genètica entre les tres zones geogràficament distants, la Península Antàrtica, el Mar de Weddell i la part Est de l'Antàrtica, el que indica un quasi absent flux genètic (Fig. 14), i conseqüentment un aïllament efectiu de les poblacions actuals.

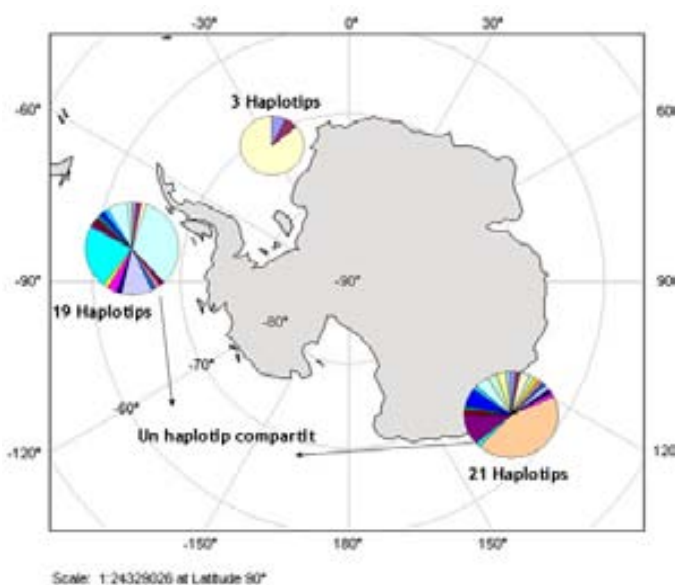


Figura 14. Haplotips que presenta cadascuna de les zones prospectades, on queda palès el limitat flux genètic entre les tres poblacions geogràficament aïllades; només es comparteix un haplotip entre la Península Antàrtica i la zona Est, i cap amb el Mar de Weddell (segurament a causa de la baixa diversitat haplotípica).

A escala més petita, tant a la Península Antàrtica com a la zona Est, el limitat flux genètic també queda palès entre les diferents estacions dins de la mateixa zona. Cadascuna de les zones presenta una estructura genètica complexa. Així, la Figura 15 mostra la complexa xarxa haplotípica de cadascuna de les zones, indicant que les diferents poblacions de cada zona d'aquesta espècie antàrtica representen una metapoblació que inclou una sèrie de poblacions, lleugerament diferents (0-1.7% de variació genètica en COI; taula IV).

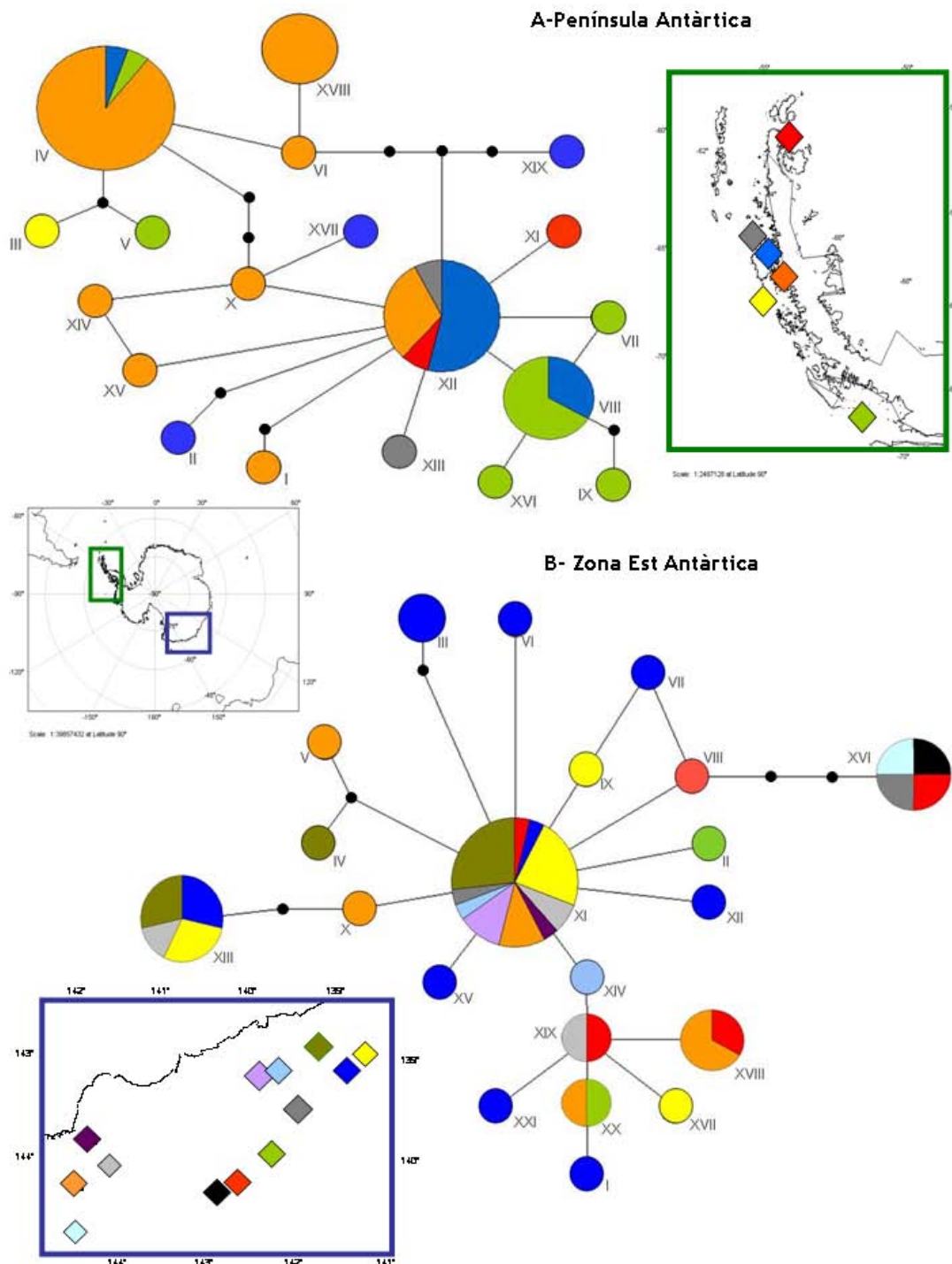


Figura 15. Xarxes haplotípiques de la Península Antàrtica i zona Est, mostrant la complexa estructura genètica de cadascuna de les zones. La mida de les rodones és proporcional al número d'individus corresponents a aquell haplotip. Les rodones negres petites són canvis nucleotídics o haplotips no mostrejat.



La isolació observada de les tres zones geogràfiques, així com l'estructuració genètica que presenta cadascuna de les poblacions, estan d'acord amb la limitada capacitat de dispersió que presenten els picnogònids a causa de l'absència d'un estat larvari planctònic.

El treball conclou que, tot i que *N. australe* segueix sent una espècie circumpolar, les poblacions de les tres zones estudiades estan aïllades, impossibilitant el flux genètic entre zones. Els resultats situen a *N. australe* en un punt entremig d'especiació al·lopàtrica, en el que les poblacions de les diferents zones ja estan aïllades genèticament i comencen a evolucionar de manera independent, però la diferenciació genètica i morfològica encara no és suficient com per considerar-les diferents espècies.

La naturalesa dels marcadors utilitzats (COI i 16S) ens permet estudiar processos de dispersió a llarg termini. Ara bé, per a estudiar els patrons de dispersió actuals a curta escala temporal s'haurà d'utilitzar marcadors microsatèl·lits. Actualment aquesta tècnica està sent molt utilitzada en altres taxons d'invertebrats marins, i tot just es comença a aplicar per aranyes de mar (Leese et al. amb *Colossendeis megalonyx*, comunicació personal). Així, és interessant continuar els estudis amb els microsatèl·lits per observar l'evolució a curt termini de la principal espècie de picnogònid a l'Antàrtica, *Nymphon australe*, així com amb altres espècies circumpolars (principalment dels gèneres *Colossendeis* i *Pallenopsis*) sospitoses de presentar metapoblacions.

IV.5. ESTRUCTURA INTERNA I FUNCIONAMENT DEL SISTEMA DIGESTIU

Les aranyes de mar del mediterrani acostumen a tenir una mida minúscula (d'uns pocs mil·límetres com *Ammothella longipes*, fins a com a molt un parell de centímetres, com *Endeis spinosa*, mesurats dels extrems de les potes esteses), tenen una forma molt fràgil i el cos extremadament reduït.

Una de les peculiaritats singulars d'aquests artròpodes marins, és l'alta relació de superfície/volum, i conseqüentment l'alta proporció de cutícula respecte als teixits tous, fet que ocasiona que s'hagi de modificar els protocols estàndards de fixació i muntatge per a tècniques d'histologia clàssica (microscòpia òptica) i d'ultraestructura (bàsicament microscòpia electrònica de transmissió). Quant a la histologia clàssica, la parafina és una resina tova, útil per a teixits tous. Així, en picnogònids de mida gran dona bons resultats, mentre que en espècies menudes (com és el cas de la majoria presents a la Mar Mediterrània), s'ha de recórrer a resines més dures. En aquest cas, el metacril·lat és una bona alternativa i, tot i que limita la utilització de tincions diferencials, dona bons resultats en els talls histològics, ja que permet fer talls més fins (fins a 2 μm , comparat amb la parafina que s'acostuma a tallar a 4-10 μm), i obtenint així més detall de les estructures anatòmiques. La situació en les tècniques de fixació i muntatge de microscòpia electrònica és similar. Així com l'Epon és la resina més utilitzada en la majoria d'invertebrats marins (per exemple, Burighel et al. 2001, en tunicats; Lobo-da-cunha i Calado 2008, en mol·luscs; Baud

et al. 2004, en crustacis; Filimonova 2009, en àcars, entre d'altres), les aranyes de mar requereixen igualment una resina de més duresa. En aquest cas, la substitució de l'Epon per l'Spurr és una bona alternativa, i cada vegada està sent més utilitzada, no només en picnogònids (Bilinski et al. 2008; Miyazaki i Bilinski 2006). En l'apèndix de la tesi (apartats VII.3 i VII.4) es mostren el protocols de fixació i muntatge de metacril·lat i Spurr modificats utilitzats en les aranyes de mar.

L'estructura de l'aparell digestiu és única en picnogònids. Així com s'ha vist a la introducció i s'ha descrit detalladament en l'Annex 1 (Soler-Membrives et al. 2010a), el sistema digestiu de les aranyes de mar consta d'un digestiu anterior format per la boca, la faringe amb el seu filtre (situats a la probòscide) i el curt esòfag; un digestiu mig, que consta d'un tub que recorre tot el tronc i s'estén cap a les potes, i per últim un digestiu posterior situat al reduït opistosoma. El digestiu anterior i posterior són d'origen ectodèrmic, i per això estan recoberts internament per una fina capa cuticular mudable amb l'ècdisi, en canvi el digestiu mig és d'origen endodèrmic.

La boca i forma de la faringe dels picnogònids representa una excepció dins dels artròpodes. Així com en la resta d'artròpodes la boca i faringe són circulars, en aranyes de mar la boca presenta una forma trigonal amb tres llavis (veure exemples de diferents famílies a la Fig. 16) i la llum de la faringe té forma de Y. Aquesta característica també la presenten altres taxons dins dels Ecdysozoa com ara tardigrads, onicòfors i nematodes, entre d'altres (Schmidt-Rhaesa et al. 1998). Així doncs, aquesta característica podria considerar-se un caràcter plesiomòrfic en picnogònids, que ha derivat en la resta d'artròpodes en boca i faringe circular. La faringe, a la part posterior just abans de l'esòfag, presenta un filtre format per un conjunt de setes, més llargues o curtes i disperses o denses en funció de la família i dieta, té la funció d'evitar que alguna partícula que pogués danyar el tub digestiu continuï el camí cap a l'esòfag (Fig. 16). A la part anterior de la probòscide es troben situats simètricament a banda i banda de cada vèrtex dels llavis els teixits secretors salivals. Aquests probablement desenvolupen un paper important en la digestió oral de l'aliment, i mentre aquest roman al sac faríngic i esòfag. L'esòfag és un curt tub muscular recobert amb un epitelí simple i una fina capa cuticular d'origen ectodèrmic, i es separa del tub digestiu mig gràcies a una vàlvula tripartida (Schlottke 1933; Richards i Fry 1978).

El tub digestiu mig recorre el tronc i s'estén fins a diferents segments de les potes (veure Introducció, apartat II.1.3.1). Generalment el tub digestiu és circular i recte al llarg de tronc i potes. No obstant, recentment s'ha trobat algunes espècies amb modificacions del tub en les seves prolongacions a les potes; així, *Colossendeis australis* té el digestiu de les potes replegat en un sol pla, mentre que *Colossendeis scotti* té el digestiu de les potes com un tub digestiu pla amb cecs laterals multilobulats; també *Decolopoda australis* té el digestiu de les potes en una forma intermèdia entre *C. australis* i *C. scotti* (Fig. 17). Aquesta troballa (Soler-Membrives i Munilla, en preparació) corroboraria que l'espècie polimèrica *Decolopoda australis* prové d'una extra-segmentació de *Colossendeis australis*.

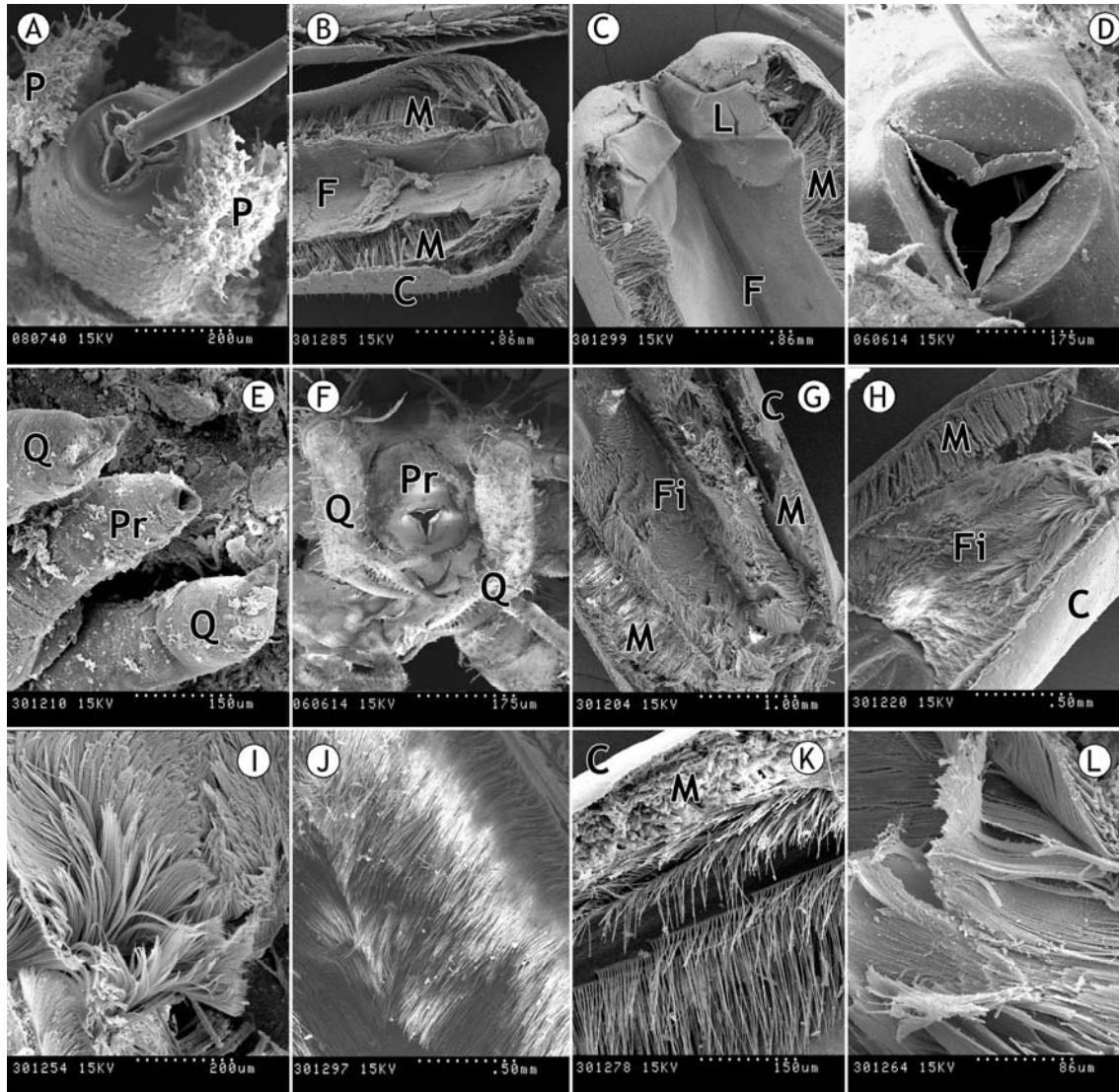


Figura 16. Imatges de microscòpia electrònica d'escombratge de la probòscide i filtre de la faringe. A: *Ammothella uniungiculata*, probòscide mostrant la boca amb els tres llavis en el moment d'alimentar-se d'un nematode; palps (P). B: *Pallenopsis buphthalmus*, tall longitudinal de la probòscide mostrant la cavitat de la faringe (F) en forma de Y; cutícula (C), musculatura (M). C: *Ammothea carolinensis*, tall longitudinal de la probòscide, mostrant la boca amb part de dos dels tres llavis (L); faringe (F), musculatura (M). D: *Nymphon villosum*, vista frontal de la probòscide mostrant la boca trigonal amb el tres llavis. E: larva protonimfa d'*Ammothea carolinensis*, en la que ja estan desenvolupats els quelícers (Q), i probòscide (Pr) amb la boca. F: *Nymphon villosum*, vista frontal en la que es veuen els quelícers (Q) i la probòscide (Pr) amb la llum de la boca en forma de Y. G: *Ammothea carolinensis*, tall longitudinal de la probòscide, mostrant el filtre (Fi) de la faringe; cutícula (C), musculatura (M). H: *Ammothea hesperidensis*, detall del filtre (Fi) de la faringe on s'acaba i connecta amb l'esòfag; cutícula (C), musculatura (M). I-L: detall de diferent formes de filtres de la faringe en els que les setes es disposen de diferent manera en funció de l'espècie; I: *Ammothea hesperidensis*; J: *Colossendeis australis*; K: *Colossendeis megalonyx*; L: *Nymphon newmayeri*.

Les tres espècies en les que s'ha trobat aquestes modificacions es caracteritzen per la seva mida extraordinàriament gran (fins a 30 cm de llargària de pota a pota). És probable que aquest augment de la mida corporal ocasioni la necessitat d'augmentar la superfície intestinal per tal d'absorbir el màxim de nutrients per suplir les necessitats de l'animal. Així, els

replecs i cecs laterals són estratègies idònies per augmentar la superfície d'absorció. Manca encara fer l'estudi d'anatomia i ultraestructura d'aquestes espècies per esbrinar si les adaptacions macroscòpiques es corresponen amb modificacions histològiques.

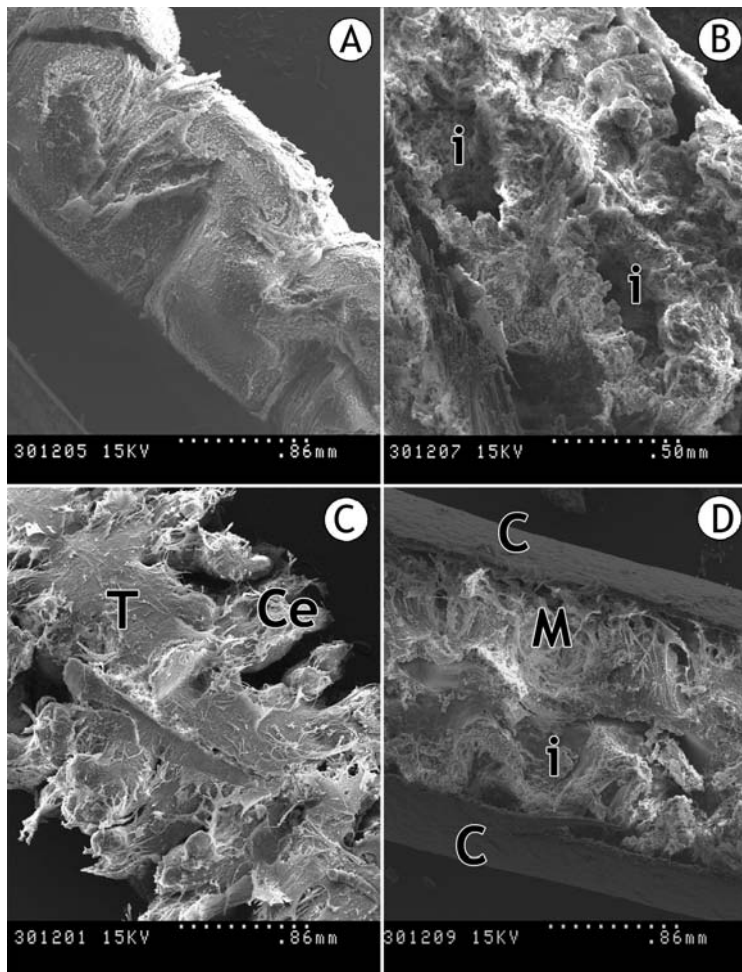


Figura 17. Imatges de microscòpia electrònica d'escombratge del tub digestiu de les potes de diferents espècies. A: *Colossendeis australis*, mostrant el digestiu replegat en un sol pla. B: *Colossendeis australis*, digestiu tallat per la meitat mostrant la llum intestinal (i) de dos replegaments. C: *Colossendeis scotti*, digestiu en forma de tub pla (T) amb cecs laterals (Ce) a banda i banda. D: *Decolopoda australis*, digestiu tallat per la meitat on s'observa els replegaments i la part interna (i) del tub digestiu; cutícula (C), musculatura (M).

La interpretació de la digestió en picnogònids està en constant controvèrsia. Per una banda, Schlottke (1933), Sanchez (1959) i King (1973) postulaven que existien tres tipus cel·lulars diferents en el digestiu mig de les aranyes de mar: les cèl·lules absortives, les cèl·lules glandulars, i les cèl·lules embrionàries, que poden donar lloc a qualsevol de les dues anteriors. Per altra banda, Richards i Fry (1978) proposaven que només existia un tipus cel·lular, responsable de les funcions absortives i secretores. A l'Annex 1 (Soler-Membrives et al. 2010a) s'estudia el sistema digestiu a nivell histològic i d'ultraestructura de dos espècies de picnogònids de la Mar Mediterrània catalana. El present treball suporta la hipòtesi de Richards i Fry (1978) de l'existència d'un sol tipus de cèl·lula totipotent, però amb algunes especificacions, i conclou proposant un nou esquema de la digestió. Segons la morfologia observada, les cèl·lules embrionàries descrites per Schlottke (1933), Sanchez (1959) i King (1973) corresponen probablement a les cèl·lules de l'epiteli digestiu durant períodes no actius. Així, la mateixa cèl·lula totipotent pot variar la seva morfologia en funció de l'estadi del procés digestiu, i és responsable tant de la secreció de grànuls de zimogen, com de



l'absorció de nutrients via intracel·lular, i l'excreció a la llum intestinal dels productes de rebuig o "cossos residuals" (descrits com a "residual bodies" per Richards i Fry (1978) i també anomenats enigmosomes, esferites o lisosomes terciaris en funció dels autors) que posteriorment viatjaran cap al digestiu posterior per a ser expulsats a través de l'anús. En aquest treball es postula per a una digestió intracel·lular a nivell del digestiu mig a través de la fusió de vacuoles pinocítiques amb lisosomes primaris, i posterior digestió als lisosomes secundaris. Tot i que hi ha senyal de digestió extracel·lular a través de secrecions de grànuls de zimogen, a diferència del que proposava Richards i Fry (1978), no s'ha observat cap cèl·lula exclusivament glandular, sinó que l'únic tipus cel·lular multifuncional és el responsable de les diferents funcions, sent més prevalent l'una o l'altra en funció de l'estadi de la digestió.

Així, l'absència de glàndules secretores i d'òrgans excretors (ex. tub de Malpighi) podrien ser interpretats com a una condició plesiomòrfica d'aquest taxó.

Tot i que els picnogònids són un grup molt conservat en relació als altres artròpodes, poden presentar una alta plasticitat morfològica dins de les famílies i gèneres (Arango 2002), i poden variar no tan sols per qüestions filogenètiques, sinó també comportamentals. Pel que fa l'alimentació, mentre que l'estructura tissular i cel·lular del sistema digestiu mig i posterior es conserva força entre espècies, s'ha observat una alta plasticitat en la morfologia de la probòscide, que es relaciona prou bé amb els diferents hàbits alimentaris de les espècies. *Endeis spinosa* presenta una probòscide llarga i estreta (Fig. 18), i té la capacitat moure-la en funció de les necessitats alimentàries; així, aquesta espècie considerada detritívora, pot moure la llarga i prima probòscide per situar-la entre esclètexes i aspirar-ne el detritus dipositat. En canvi, *Ammothella longipes* és considerada una espècie depredadora, tot i que pot variar els seus hàbits alimentaris en funció de l'estació de l'any, o el que és el mateix, en funció de la disponibilitat de les diverses fonts d'aliment (veure l'apartat IV.5 d'aquesta discussió quant als canvis estacionals); així, aquesta espècie necessita una probòscide robusta (Fig. 18), amb abundant musculatura, i fortes mandíbules per poder retenir les seves preses a la boca mentre que en succiona els líquids.

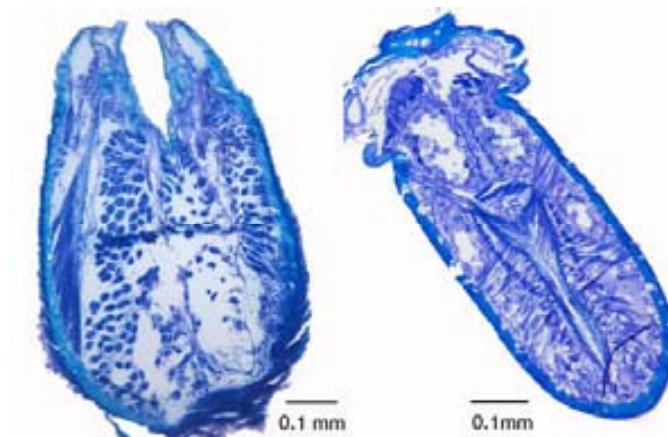


Figura 18. Seccions histològiques de talls longitudinals de la probòscide de *Ammothella longipes* (esquerra) i *Endeis spinosa* (dreta).

IV.5. RELACIONS TRÒFIQUES EN EL LITORAL CATALÀ

La gran part dels estudis sobre alimentació en picnogònids s'han basat en observacions puntuals o anàlisis del comportament alimentari d'aquests organismes (per exemple Wyer i King 1974; Stock 1978; Bain 1991); en canvi, les relacions tròfiques de la majoria de les aranyes de mar resten desconegudes. No obstant, l'anàlisi del contingut intestinal sembla no ser una bona eina a causa diversos factors (ex. la petita mida en el cas de les espècies mediterrànies, la pèrdua del contingut digestiu durant la captura i manipulació dels individus, la possible contaminació de la mostra amb la gran quantitat de detritus acumulat a la superfície externa del cos i potes alhora de fer l'extracció, i la impossibilitat d'identificar alguns dels ítems, entre d'altres) i, en conseqüència, es necessita un nou enfocament per comprendre quina pot ser la font d'aliment principal dels picnogònids al llarg de l'any. Els àcids grassos han estat molt utilitzats com a marcadors qualitius per traçar relacions de la xarxa tròfica en ecosistemes marins (FATM: àcids grassos marcadors tròfics; veure la revisió de Dalsgaard et al. 2003).

Les aranyes de mar del litoral català viuen majoritàriament en macroalgues i fanerògames, les quals proporcionen un refugi important per petits peixos i invertebrats, i serveixen de suport local per a les xarxes tròfiques bentòniques. L'espècie de picnogònid més important al nord-oest de la Mar Mediterrània és *Ammothella longipes*, la qual habita majoritàriament en les comunitats d'*Halopteris*. Així, en l'Annex II (Soler-Membrives et al. 2010b) s'ha estudiat les diferents estratègies tròfiques (l'herbivoria analitzant l'alga bruna *Halopteris* sp., la detritivoria, testada en el detritus circumdant, i la carnivoria, amb poliquets de la família Nereidae) utilitzades pels picnogònids i s'ha testat si aquestes varien al llarg de les diferents estacions de l'any.

Els resultats conclouen que *Ammothella longipes*, és capaç de modificar els seus hàbits alimentaris en funció de l'època de l'any, i per tant, en funció de la disponibilitat de l'aliment; a la primavera i primers d'estiu, l'època en la que eclosionen moltes de les larves dels invertebrats marins, l'aranya de mar presenta una dieta bàsicament carnívora, com demostren observacions d'aquesta espècie depredant vigorosos poliquets nereids, segurament les formes juvenils, abundants en aquesta època, ja que presenten una mida adequada per a ser ingerits; durant la tardor i hivern, en canvi, quan la disponibilitat de depredar preses baixa, aquesta espècie és bàsicament detritívora; durant l'estiu es combina la detritivoria amb la carnivoria (Fig. 19).

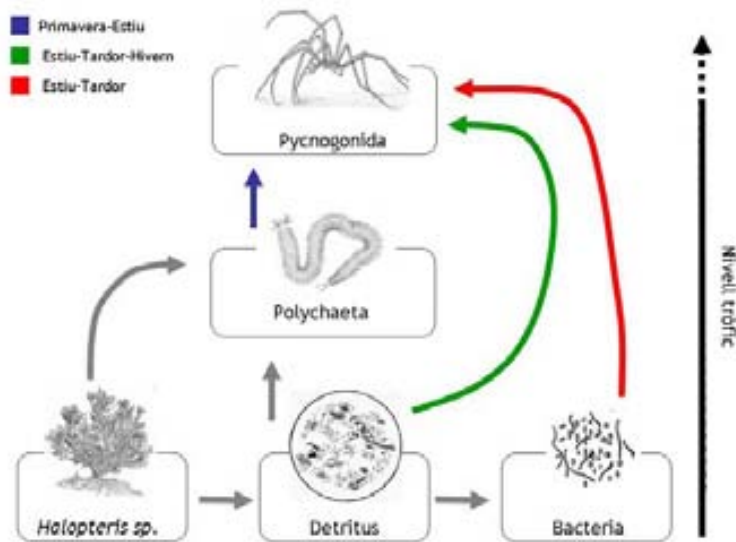


Figura 19. Xarxa tròfica simplificada proposada per a *Ammonoete longipes* en una comunitat d'*Halopteris*, al nord-oest de la Mediterrània. Els colors indiquen l'època de l'any on es dona majoritàriament l'estratègia alimentària. Blau: carnívoria; verd: detritívoria; vermell: bacterívoria

El contingut de lípids total (TFA) d'*Ammonoete longipes* no mostra variació interestacional. Aquesta espècie es reproduïx durant tot l'any, excepte entre maig i juliol, que presenta un petit descens (Munilla 1980). En aquesta època, quan s'hauria de notar el descens de TFA, és justament quan l'estratègia adoptada és la carnívoria, fet que comporta una major aportació de lípids comparat amb la detritívoria. Així, la combinació entre el comportament reproductiu i alimentari d'aquesta espècie expliquen el manteniment de contingut de TFA semblant durant les diferents èpoques de l'any. Així mateix, no es van observar diferències entre mascles i femelles, fet que no succeeix en la majoria d'invertebrats (ex. en caprèl·lids, Guerra-García et al. 2004; en mol·luscs, Kilada i Riad 2008) ja que les femelles acostumen a acumular lípids durant el període previ a la posta. En canvi, concorda amb la biologia reproductiva d'aquest taxó; en els picnogònids, després de la ovoposició per part de les femelles (període en el que podrien acumular gran quantitat de lípids), i de la secreció d'esperma per part dels mascles, els ous fertilitzats externament són transportats per els mascles en una massa en forma de sac o braçalet al voltant de l'ovíger. La presència d'òvuls de gran mida en les femelles, així com la presència d'ous ja fertilitzats en el mascle (també amb alts nivells de lípids), podria explicar el fet que no hi hagi diferència entre sexes.

Una altra troballa d'aquest treball, mai descrita fins ara en picnogònids, és el fet que durant l'estiu i tardor s'ha trobat alts nivells d'àcids grassos de cadena senar, indicadors típics de bacteris. S'ha proposat dos possibles orígens d'aquests indicadors; o bé provinents dels bacteris que han adquirit a través de la dieta detritívora, o bé de la biosíntesi *de novo* a partir del propionat. Es postula que és la combinació de les dues vies d'obtenció el que podria explicar durant aquestes estacions els nivells tant elevats de les cadenes saturades o monoinsaturades de 15 i 17 carbonis.

Per esbrinar si aquest fet és particular d'aquesta espècie, o és un fet comú en aquest taxó, caldria dur a terme estudis similar en altres espècies d'aranyes de mar. Així també, encara resta per saber si existeixen adaptacions particulars en funció de les variacions estacionals en espècies suposadament detritívores (*Endeis spinosa*, per exemple) o carnívores de preses sèssils en les que l'aliment és pràcticament tot l'any accessible (ex. *Picnogonum litorale*, depredador d'anemones).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Actualment hi ha 264 espècies censades en aigües australs, el que representa el 20% de les espècies mundials. Set espècies són cosmopolites, 107 espècies són endèmiques d'aigües antàrtiques, 62 d'aigües sub-antàrtiques, i 55 espècies són circumpolars.
2. Les comunitats actuals de picnogònids antàrtics podrien ser una barreja entre taxons que han migrat des de les aigües profundes durant els períodes interglacials, i la fauna que ha evolucionat a partir dels antecessors cretàtics.
3. Es proposen dues vies de dispersió de les aranyes de mar antàrtiques: per una banda, la dispersió des de la zona magallànica a la Península antàrtica, a través de l'Arc d'Escòcia. Per altra banda, la dispersió en direcció est, gràcies a la circulació del corrent circumpolar antàctic.
4. Es proposa la hipòtesi del refugi insular bentònic: Durant l'origen de la fauna antàrtica, l'Arc d'Escòcia va servir de protecció per a les espècies de la zona en el moment de la fragmentació de Gondwana; actualment encara pot retenir espècies cretàtiques que posteriorment seran dispersades en direcció est gràcies al corrent circumpolar antàctic. Aquest arxipèlag representa l'única barrera física de l'ACC, que actua com a pinta retenint les espècies que circulen gràcies a aquest corrent. Aquesta hipòtesi, junt amb la migració des de la regió Magallànica poden explicar l'alta riquesa específica que presenta l'Arc d'Escòcia (143 espècies, que representa el 54% de les espècies australs i 75% de les antàrtiques).
5. S'ha observat una tendència a la disminució de l'endemisme zonal antàctic, i conseqüent un augment de la circumpolaritat, com a conseqüència del major esforç de mostreig que s'està duent a terme al continent Antàctic.
6. Els picnogònids del Mar de Weddell mostren dues zones de distribució vertical, una comunitat poc profunda, típica de la plataforma continental (des de superfície fins als 900 m), i una altra comunitat batial (amb espècies presents a partir dels 900 m) caracteritzada bàsicament per la presència del gènere *Nymphon*.
7. La composició específica de picnogònids de la plataforma continental del Mar de Weddell varia respecte a la del talús, com a conseqüència del canvi de proporció d'espècies amb la profunditat. Mentre que la majoria d'espècies d'aranyes de mar estan confinades a les profunditats de la plataforma continental, només algunes són capaces d'estendre la seva distribució a les profunditats del talús. Aquest fet suporta la hipòtesi que aquest taxó ha evolucionat i diversificat a la plataforma, i després s'ha submergit als fons profunds, on només es presenten en un baix nombre d'espècies.
8. Contràriament al que succeeix a la plataforma continental de l'Oceà Austral, que està zoogeogràficament aïllada a causa de l'ACC, la fauna profunda d'aigües australs pot migrar lliurement. Així, s'ha observat que les dades obtingudes de les espècies profundes de picnogònids del Mar de Weddell no difereixen generalment d'aquelles espècies profundes d'altres talús antàrtics.
9. Les famílies més abundants en la conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield són Colossendeidae i Nymphonidae. Tot i que són iguals en abundància, la biomassa molt



més gran en els primers. Aquest fet pot ajudar a explicar la gran longevitat dels colossendeids, i indica que probablement estan utilitzant l'estratègia de la K que inverteix més en creixement que en la reproducció, enlloc de l'estratègia de la r , típica dels nymphonids.

10. Les estructures volcàniques de la conca central de l'Estret de Bransfield eren inactives durant el 1996, donat que no es van observar signes de fenòmens hidrotermals en cap dels individus de picnogònid.
11. *Nymphon australe* Hodgson 1902, l'espècie de picnogònid més abundant a l'Oceà Austral, ha colonitzat amb èxit grans parts dels ecosistemes marins antàrtics, com a conseqüència de la història geològica, i representa una única espècie circumpolar antàrtica, sense senyals d'especiació críptica.
12. No obstant, la forta estructura filogeogràfica al llarg de l'Antàrtica, i la clara diferenciació genètica entre i dins de les diferents zones, indiquen que el flux genètic és limitat, i que probablement *N. australe* està en un procés d'especiació al·lopàtrica al llarg de l'Antàrtica. Aquest fet és consistent amb les característiques biològiques dels picnogònids indicant una limitada capacitat de dispersió.
13. Les principals diferències en el sistema digestiu de les aranyes de mar s'observen en la probòscide. *Ammothella longipes* presenta unes mandíbules afilades i puntegudes, el filtre de la faringe està reduït i limitat a la tercera part posterior de la probòscide, i una musculatura de la probòscide molt desenvolupada, adaptacions d'acord amb el comportament alimentari depredador. En canvi, *Endeis spinosa* presenta mandíbules més dèbils amb diverses setes esparses per la superfície dels llavis i la trompa, i el filtre de la faringe que ocupa gairebé tot el sac de la faringe, adaptacions apropiades per a un comportament alimentari detritívor. El teixit de secreció salival es troba situat a l'extrem distal de la probòscide en les dues espècies i té un paper important en la digestió oral.
14. El tracte digestiu dels picnogònids difereix del de la majoria dels artròpodes, bàsicament a causa de l'absència de cèl·lules glandulars, i la presència d'un únic tipus de cèl·lula epitelial digestiva multifuncional.
15. Es proposa un esquema hipotètic del procés digestiu en picnogònids: durant períodes de dejú, les cèl·lules epitelials resten en forma de 'repòs'. Durant la digestió intestinal, els lisosomes primaris es mouen al marge apical, i es fusionen amb vesícules pinocítiques, transformant-se en lisosomes secundaris, on es produeix la digestió intracel·lular. Els cossos residuals es formen dins la cèl·lula epitelial i s'alliberen al lumen del tracte digestiu per a ser transportats cap al digestiu posterior.
16. El contingut total de lípids en ambdós sexes d'*Ammothella longipes* es manté constant sense variacions interestacionals; gràcies a la reproducció es mantenen els nivells alts durant tot l'any excepte entre maig i juliol, període durant el qual l'estratègia alimentària adoptada és la carnívora, que permet que els nivells lipídics es mantinguin igualment elevats.

17. *Ammothella longipes* és capaç de variar la seva dieta al llarg de l'any, en funció de la font d'aliment disponible; així la carnívoria es dona durant la primavera i estiu, i la detritívoria bàsicament durant la crisi de tardor i hivern.
18. S'ha detectat nivells alts d'àcids grassos de cadena senar, típics marcadors bacterians, en *Ammothella longipes*, durant l'estiu i tardor. La combinació dels bacteris adquirits a través de la dieta detritívora, juntament amb la *biosíntesis de novo* a partir de propionat podrien explicar els als nivells de marcadors bacterians.



1. To date 264 austral species have been recorded, accounting for 20% of the species recorded worldwide. Seven species are cosmopolitan, 107 species are endemic to Antarctic waters, 62 to sub-Antarctic and 55 species are circumpolar.
2. Modern Antarctic sea spiders communities are composed of a mixture of taxa which migrated from the deep ocean during interglacial periods, and a component of fauna that evolved from common Gondwana Cretaceous ancestors.
3. Two main probable dispersion routes of Antarctic pycnogonids are proposed: on the one side, from South America to western Antarctica going along the route of the Scotia Arc. And on the other side, from Western Antarctica to the Eastern zone, by means of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current.
4. The benthic insular refuge hypothesis is proposed: The Scotia Sea islands sheltered the existing fauna at the time of its creation and they still retain the ancient Cretaceous fauna that the Antarctic Circumpolar Current subsequently carries around. The Scotia Arc is the only major barrier to the circulation of this current, and may act as a point retaining the species that circulates thanks to the current.
This hypothesis together with the migration from Magallanic region, may explain the high species richness of Scotia Arc (143 species, representing the 54% of the austral species and the 75% of the antarctic ones).
5. The circumantarctic pattern for the sea spider species has increased, with the constant increasing of samplings; thus, zonal endemicity of species has consequently decreased.
6. Weddell Sea pycnogonids show two distinct depth zones in vertical distribution, a “shallow” community, typical from the continental shelf (from the shallows up to 900 m), and a “deep” community (species occurring deeper than 900 m), characterized mainly by the presence of the genus *Nymphon*.
7. Weddell Sea pycnogonid shelf fauna differs in species composition from that of the slope because of the change in the species proportion with depth. While many sea spider species are confined to shelf depths, only some extend across the shelf break into the slope (deep sea), supporting the hypothesis that these taxa have evolved and radiated on the shelf and later submerged in the deep sea, where they occur only with a small number of species to date.
8. Contrary to the Southern Ocean shelf, which is zoogeographically well isolated through the ACC, the SO deep-sea fauna can freely migrate. According to this, data from the Weddell deep sea show that the deep species of sea spiders do not differ generally from that of the other deep-sea Antarctic regions.
9. The most abundant families in the Central Basin of the Bransfield Strait are Nymphonidae and Colossendeidae. Although they are equal in abundance, biomass is much greater for the Colossendeidae. This may help to account for the colossendeids greater longevity and indicates that they are probably employing the *K*-strategy (inverting more energy in growth than reproduction) instead of the *r*-strategy, which is typical of smaller pycnogonids such as nymphonids.

10. The volcanic structures of the Central Basin of the Bransfield Strait were inactive during 1996, since none of the specimens showed signs of hydrothermal phenomena.
11. *Nymphon australe* Hodgson 1902, which is the most abundant species of sea spiders in the Southern Ocean, has successfully colonised large parts of the Antarctic marine ecosystem through geological history and represents a single circum-Antarctic species, without indication of cryptic speciation.
12. However, the strong phylogeographic structure among the Antarctica and the clear genetic differences among and within different locations indicate that contemporary gene flow is limited, and *N. australe* is probably in a process of allopatric speciation around Antarctica. This is consistent with sea spiders life history traits indicating a limited dispersal capability.
13. Major differences in the digestive system of sea spiders are observed in the proboscis. *Ammothella longipes* presents sharp pointed jaws, the pharyngeal filter reduced and restricted to the posterior third part of the proboscis and a well developed proboscis musculature, according to its predatory feeding behavior. *Endeis spinosa* has weaker jaws with several setae scattered on the lips and proboscis surface and an extended filter throughout the pharynx sac, appropriated adaptations to a detritus feeding behavior. Salivary secretory tissue is found in both species at the tip of proboscis, helping in the oral digestion.
14. The pycnogonid midgut tract differs from most marine arthropods mainly because of the absence of midgut gland cells and the presence of a unique multifunctional type of midgut epithelial cell.
15. An hypothetical scheme of the digestion process in Pycnogonida is proposed: Epithelial cells are present in a small 'resting' form during starvation periods. During midgut digestion, primary lysosomes move to their apical border, then fuse to pinocytotic vesicles and transform to secondary lysosomes, where digestion occurs. Residual bodies are formed within the epithelial cell and released to the midgut lumen to be transported towards the hindgut.
16. Both sexes of *Ammothella longipes* do not show significant seasonal variations in the total fatty acid (TFA) content; this species reproduces throughout the year, except from May to July, when TFA levels are maintained thanks to the feeding behavior adapted on that period, which is carnivory.
17. *Ammothella longipes* may change its feeding behavior depending on the season, and therefore, on the food available. This pycnogonid appears as a carnivore during spring and summer, but they seem to feed on detritus during the autumn and winter crisis, when availability of food diminishes.
18. Notable high amounts of odd-chain fatty acids are found during summer and autumn for *Ammothella longipes*, which may come from a combination of bacteria acquired from detrital diet and from *de novo* biosynthesis from propionate.

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VII.1. TÈCNICA D'ANÀLISI DELS FATM (FATTY ACID TROPHIC MARKERS)

<u>Abreviatures:</u>	<u>Nota important:</u>
CLF → Cloroform	Sempre s'ha d'acondicionar la xeringa abans de fer-la servir:
DCM → Diclorometà	Per patró intern → DCM x30 + ISO x30
FA → Àcids grassos	Per la separació de la mostra → DCM x30 + CLF x30
Hx → Hexà	Per la metilació → DCM x30 + MeOH x30
ISO → Isoctà	Per la conservació de la mostra → ISO x30
MeBoF ₃ → Trifluor-bor-metanol	Neteja de la xeringa després d'utilitzar-la → ISO x20
MeOH → Metanol	
Na ₂ SO ₄ → Sulfat de sodi	
NL → Lípids neutres	
PL → Lípids polars	

Per a l'anàlisi i identificació dels àcids grassos s'han utilitzat dos patrons. Un patró intern, també anomenat de recuperació, format per uns components (2-Àcid Octildodecanoic i 5 β -Àcid Colànic) dels quals es coneix la seva proporció i quantitat exacta. A l'inici del procés, abans de l'extracció, s'afegeix una quantitat coneguda de patró intern a cada mostra, per tal que al finalitzar l'anàlisi es pugui quantificar la quantitat de mostra perduda durant el procés, a través del càlcul del percentatge recuperat de la quantitat de patró injectada a l'inici.

El segon patró és un patró extern format per èsters metílics d'àcids grassos (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester, FAME), el qual és utilitzat per a la identificació dels àcids grassos presents a les mostres. Per a l'anàlisi d'aquest es porten a terme un seguit de dilucions conegudes del patró original. Específicament una dilució 1:10, tres de 1:20 i dos de 1:100 amb la finalitat de corroborar la replicació entre els pics, és a dir, la fracció que presenten cada un respecte del total i el seu temps de retenció.

PREPARACIÓ DE LA MOSTRA

Les mostres congelades, es liofilitzen durant mínim 12 hores. Posteriorment es pesen, per saber la quantitat de pes sec i poder-la relacionar amb el contingut total d'àcids grassos (TFA).

Pesos mínims:

- Algues: ~ 40 mg mostra
- Detritus: ~ 60 mg mostra
- Poliquets: ~ 20 mg mostra
- Picnogònids: ~ 7 mg mostra



EXTRACCIÓ DE LA MOSTRA

Per a l'extracció de les mostres d'algues, detritus, poliquets i picnogònids, s'ha utilitzat un microones (MARS 5, CEM) el qual està equipat amb 14 vasos de tefló. El principi bàsic del microones és la capacitat de produir canvis a la rotació molecular i a la mobilitat iònica del medi sense alterar la mostra.

El primer vial, on hi van connectades les sondes de temperatura i pressió, s'ha utilitzat com a blanc per controlar la possibilitat de contaminació de les mostres durant el procés de tractament. El blanc consisteix en 15 ml de dissolució DCM:MeOH en proporció 3:1 i els 13 vials restants s'omplen amb la mateixa quantitat de dissolució juntament amb les mostres i 500 µl de patró intern (amb la xeringa acondicionada).

A cada vas se li afegeix un agitador magnètic (imant recobert de tefló) a fi d'obtenir una bona homogeneïtzació del contingut, i es tanca hermèticament per assegurar la pressió i temperatura adequades. El mètode utilitzat s'anomena BIOMARKERS, i funciona a partir d'una rampa de temperatures descrites a continuació:

Rampa de temperatures per al mètode BIOMARKERS

Temps	Temperatura
2'30''	fins arribar als 70°C
5'	a 70°C
22-25'	fins arribar als 30°C

Posteriorment a l'extracció, els vasos amb les mostres s'agiten bé per a barrejar el contingut. Seguidament les mostres s'aboquen a tubs de centrífuga grans.

- Centrifugar a 2400 rpm durant 10'

D'aquesta manera s'aconsegueix separar els trossos de filtre del sobrenedant, el qual és decantat a un tub d'assaig amb l'ajuda de pipetes de vidre Pasteur. Els tubs amb la mostra es deixen sota la campana durant una nit per a l'evaporació d'1/3 part del reactiu. El següent pas és l'evaporació completa de la mostra:

- Evaporació (centrifugar al buit) durant 2 hores

Si la mostra es processa a curt termini guardar-la a la nevera fins al moment del processat. Si no, al congelador a -20°C.

SEPARACIÓ DE LA MOSTRA EN TRES FRACCIONS

Per aconseguir les diferents fraccions dels lípids de les mostres (lípids neutres, àcids grassos i lípids polars) s'ha aplicat el protocol de Ruiz et al (2004) amb algunes modificacions.

- Posar 0.5 ml de CLF amb la xeringa acondicionada
- Vortejar durant 1'

La separació de les diferents fraccions dels lípid s'aconsegueix utilitzant columnes de 500 mg d'amino-propil (Waters Sep-Pak® Cartridges). Primer es rotulen 3 tubs de 10 ml per cada mostra (NL, PL i FA, respectivament) i es preparen les columnes i les connexions (les connexions han d'estar ben netes i sonicades). És essencial que no es deixi assecar la columna mentre duri aquest procés.

- Passar la mostra per la columna, i posar a sota el tub NL
- Posar 3 ml de CLF:2-propanol en proporció 2:1
- Canviar el tub i posar el de FA
- Passar 8.5 ml de dietilèter:àcid acètic en proporció 98:2
- Canviar el tub i posar el de PL
- Passar 4 ml de MeOH
- Guardar les mostres a la nevera (màxim fins a 3 mesos)

METILACIÓ

- Evaporar (centrifugar al buit) les mostres de FA durant unes 2 hores
- Preparar la placa calefactora a 90°C
- Posar 0.5 ml de MeBoF₃ al 20% amb la xeringa acondicionada
- Tapar immediatament amb un tap de tefló (net i sonicat)
- Incubar a 90°C durant 1 hora exacta
- Deixar refredar (mínim 1 hora, o bé tota la nit)

EXTRACCIÓ LÍQUID-LÍQUID

Per a l'extracció líquid-líquid, s'ha de preparar aigua amb sal saturada:

100 ml d'H₂O mQ

20 g NaCl

A partir de les mostres metilades:

- Afegim 4 ml d'aigua amb sal saturada+ 3 ml d'Hx

Els tubs s'han de tapar bé amb paperets de plata i agitar-los bé amb la mà per tal que les dues fases quedin ben barrejades

- Centrifugar a 2400 rpm durant 3'

Separar la fase superior sense tocar la fase inferior, i traspasar-la a un altre tub de 10 ml rotulat com a Hx

- Afegir 3 ml d'hexà al tub restant amb la fase inferior (tub FA)

Tornar a repetir el procés de tapar els tubs FA amb paperets i agitar bé.

- Centrifugar a 2400 rpm durant 3'

Tornar a separar la fase superior sense tocar la fase inferior, i traspasar-la al mateix tub d'abans (Hx).



CONCENTRACIÓ DE LA MOSTRA

A l'últim pas del tractament de la mostra, és la concentració dels àcids grassos i preparació per a ser injectats al cromatògraf de gasos (GC).

- Evaporar (centrifugar al buit) les mostres de FA durant unes 2 hores

La mostra que resta al tub d'assaig es recull netejant les seves parets amb cloroform, es repeteix la operació 3 vegades fins un màxim de 1,5 mL de CLF. Es preparen les columnes de vidre amb fibra de vidre i Na_2SO_4 , i s'acondicionen amb CLF.

- Passar la mostra a través de la columna i recollir-ho amb vials petits rotulats
- Evaporar sota la campana amb N_2 gas
- Recuperar la mostra netejant els vorals amb màxim 1.5 ml de CLF
- Posar-la en un insert dins del vial petit
- Evaporar sota la campana amb N_2 gas

Per a la conservació de la mostra hi ha dues opcions:

- A analitzar a mitjà termini:
Deixem una mica de dissolvent saturat de N_2 gas i tancar el vial
- A analitzar a curt termini:
Deixar evaporar completament i afegir 30 μl d'ISO i tancar el vial

ANÀLISI AL CROMATRÒGRAF DE GASOS (GC)

Un cop llesta la mostra es passa pel cromatògraf de gasos. El resultat final és un cromatograma que ens aporta dos tipus d'informació, qualitativa i quantitativa. La primera és fruit de la capacitat del cromatògraf de gasos de separar els compostos, en aquest cas orgànics, és a dir, cada compost analitzat presenta un temps de retenció diferent segons l'afinitat que tingui cada analit amb la fase estacionària i això queda representat a el cromatograma en forma de pics. Els components que presenten un temps de retenció major són aquells que resten més temps en eludir de la fase estacionària i, per tant, triguen més en arribar al detector, aquests pics estaran situats a la part final del cromatograma. Per altra banda, la segona aportació és una informació quantitativa proporcionada per l'àrea que presenta cada pic, indica quina quantitat de cada analit hi ha a la mostra.

En un anàlisi, els diferents temps de retenció depenen de les següents variables: temperatura de la columna, velocitat de flux i composició de la fase estacionària, això fa que li resti fiabilitat al mateix. Per aquest motiu s'utilitza un patró, és a dir, un conjunt de substàncies conegudes, per tal d'injectar-lo al mateix temps que les mostres a analitzar i així es mantenen les mateixes condicions d'operació.

A partir del programa ChromQuest 4.1 s'han tractat tots els cromatogrames resultants. En primer lloc s'han identificat tots els principals pics que formen els cromatogrames i, a continuació, s'ha determinat l'àrea de cada un.

IDENTIFICACIÓ I QUANTIFICACIÓ DELS ÀCIDS GRASSOS

Els àcids grassos presents a les mostres s'han identificat a partir del patró extern injectat, aquest és un estàndard que conté en total 37 components FAME diferents (Supelco® Mix C4-C24), del qual s'han descrit els seus pics amb els seus temps de retenció i el corresponent ordre.

Tots els components FAME, determinats per pics en els cromatogrames, que no superaven una àrea major al 0,5% del total, han estat descartats per a no ser marcadors rellevants.

A partir de la semblança de temps de retenció, ordre entre els pics de la mostra i els del patró, s'ha establert una relació de cada pic, a més a més de la consulta de literatura per tal d'identificar els que no formen part del grup de 37.



VII.2. TÈCNiques MOLECULARS

PROTOCOL D'EXTRACCIÓ SEGONS EL KID D'EXTRACCIÓ NUCLEO-SPIN (Macherey-Nagel)

1. Digestió del teixit

Agafar el teixit (tot l'individu o una pota, en funció de la mida) en paper de plata i tallar-lo a trossets petits

Posar els trossets en eppendorfs

Afegir 180 µl tampó de lisis T1

Afegir 25 µl de proteïnasa K

Incubar a 56°C durant 12 hores

Vortejar durant 15 segons

2. Rentat de la lisis

Afegir 200 µl tampó de rentat B3

Incubar a 70°C durant 10 mins

Afegir 210 µl Etanol 100%

Posar la mostra en les columnes

Microcentrifugar a 11000 rpm durant 1 min

Descartar el col·lectat

Afegir 500 µl de tampó BW

Microcentrifugar a 11000 rpm durant 1 min

Descartar el col·lectat

Afegir 600 µl de tampó B5

Microcentrifugar a 11000 rpm durant 1 min

Descartar el col·lectat

Microcentrifugar a 11000 rpm durant 1 min per acabar d'assecar

3. Elució

Afegir 100 µl de tampó eluient

Incubar a temperatura ambient durant 1 min

Posar un tub eppendorf rotulat com a tub col·lector

Microcentrifugar a 11000 rpm durant 1 min

PROTOCOL DE LA REACCIÓ EN CADENA DE LA POLIMERASA (PCR)

Preparació de la mix per a PCR de 25µl de volum

Mantenir en placa de gel durant la preparació

Buffer 10X (200 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.4), 500 mM KCl) → 2.5 µl

MgCl₂ (50mM) → 1.25 µl

Nucleòtids (dNTPs, 10mM) → 2.0 µl

Encebador 3' (10µM) → 0.5 µl

Encebador 5' (10µM) → 0.5 µl

DMSO → 1,25 µl

Tag-polimerassa (Platinum® Tag Polimerasa Invitrogen)→ 0.15 µl

Aigua miliQ → 14.85 µl

Vortejar durant 15 segons

1. Preparació de la reacció

23 µl de la mix

2 µl de l'ADN de la mostra

Vortejar durant 15 segons

2. Reacció en cadena de la polimerassa

Posar la mostra amb la mix al termociclador

Programa:

PAS		16S		COI
Desnaturalització	X1	94°C → 2'	X1	94°C → 1'
Desnaturalització		94°C → 20''		94°C → 40''
Annealing	X35	48°C → 20''	X5	45°C → 40''
Extensió		65°C → 30''		72°C → 1'
Desnaturalització				51°C → 40''
Annealing			X35	45°C → 40''
Extensió				72°C → 1'
Extensió final	X1	65°C → 5'	X1	72°C → 1'
Finalització		23°C		23°C

PROTOCOL DEL GEL D'ELECTROFORESI

1. Preparació del gel

150 µl de TBE

1,8 g d'agarosa (punt de fusió mig)



- Muntar a la cubeta i la pinta
Abocar l'agarosa dissolta amb el tampó TBE a la cubeta
Deixar polimeritzar durant 1 hora
2. Carregar les mostres
5 μ l de producte d'extracció
1 μ l de l'intercalador EzVision
Carregar els 6 μ l de cada mostra en un pouet
Carregar 5 μ l de marcador molecular (100-1000 pb)
 3. Córrer el gel
A 90v durant 40'
 4. Llegir al transiluminador

PROTOCOL DE PURIFICACIÓ

1. Preparació dels blocs
Repetir el gel carregant 40 μ l de la mostra
Tallar amb el bisturí la banda que es vol seqüenciar
2. Preparació del purificat
Foradar amb una agulla un eppendorf de 0.5 ml
Posar-hi a dins un quadradet de paper de filtre de 5mmx5mm
Encaixar l'eppendorf de 0,5 ml dins d'un eppendorf gran de 1.5 ml rotulat
Posar la banda de gel tallada dins l'eppendorf petit
Microcentrifugar a 13200 rpm durant 10'

PROTOCOL DE PRECIPITACIÓ I SEQÜENCIACIÓ

1. Preparació de la mix de seqüenciació
4 μ l Big Dye Terminador
2 μ l de tampó
3.2 μ l d'encebador (3' o 5') (1 μ M)
2. Reacció de seqüenciació per a un volum de 20 μ l
6 μ l del producte purificat
4.8 μ l d'aigua miliQ
9.2 μ l de la mix de seqüenciació
3. Reacció de seqüenciació per a un volum de 20 μ l
Posar la mostra amb la mix al termociclador
Programar el termociclador amb el mateix programa que per la PCR
4. Precipitació del producte de la PCR
5 μ l d'EDTA (125 mM, pH=8.0)

Afegir el producte de la reacció de seqüenciació

Afegir 60 µl d'Etanol 100%

Incubar a temperatura ambient durant 15'

Microcentrifugar a 14000 rpm durant 20'

Descartar el sobrenedant tenint cura de no tocar el pellet

Microcentrifugar a 14000 rpm durant 20'

Descartar el sobrenedant tenint cura de no tocar el pellet

Afegir 250 µl

Vortejar durant 15''

Microcentrifugar a 14000 rpm durant 5''

Descartar el sobrenedant tenint cura de no tocar el pellet

Microcentrifugar a 14000 rpm durant 5''

Deixar secar les restes d'Etanol a temperatura ambient

5. Llegir amb el seqüenciador



VII.3. TÈCNIQUES EN MICROSCÒPIA ÒPTICA

Es van utilitzar diferents protocols durant el processament de les mostres per a l'observació al microscopi òptic.

Preparació dels fixadors

Formol al 10% (5 L)

500 ml de formol concentrat (37-40%)

4,5 L d'aigua de mar

Líquid de Davidson

600 ml alcohol 96%

200 ml d'àcid acètic

400 ml de formol concentrat (37-40%)

600 ml d'aigua de mar

PROTOCOL DE DESHIDRATACIÓ I INCLUSIÓ EN PARAFINA

1. Fixació

Formol 10% (o líquid de Davidson) durant mínim 2 hores

2. Transició fixació-deshidratació

Formol 10% : Etanol 50% (o líquid de Davidson : Etanol 50%) durant 2 hores

3. Deshidratació

Etanol 50% durant 1 hora

Etanol 70% durant 1 hora

Etanol 96% durant 1 hora

Etanol 100% durant 1 hora

4. Transició deshidratació-inclusió

Etanol 100% : Xilol durant 1 hora

Xilol durant 1 hora (x2)

5. Inclusió

Parafina (58-60°) durant 2 hores (x2)

PROTOCOL DE TINCIÓ EN HEMATOXILINA I EOSINA (HE)

1. Desparafinació

Xilol durant 5 mins (x2)

2. Hidratació

Etanol 100% durant 5 mins (x2)

Etanol 96% durant 5 mins

- Etanol 70% durant 5 mins
- Etanol 50% durant 5 mins
- Aigua corrent durant 10 mins
- 3. Tinció
 - Hematoxilina de Mayer durant 10 mins
 - Aigua corrent durant 25 mins
 - Eosina durant 5 mins
- 4. Deshidratació
 - Etanol 96% durant 15 segons (x2)
 - Etanol 100% durant 15 segons (x2)
- 5. Rentat
 - Xilol durant 5 mins (x2)

PROTOCOL DE DESHIDRATACIÓ I INCLUSIÓ EN METACRILAT (Resina TECHNOVIT 7100. Heraeus Kulzer).

1. Fixació
 - Formol 10% (o líquid de Davidson) durant mínim 2 hores
2. Transició fixació-deshidratació
 - Formol 10% : Etanol 50% (o líquid de Davidson : Etanol 50%) durant 2 hores
3. Deshidratació
 - Etanol 50% durant 1 hora
 - Etanol 70% durant 1 hora
 - Etanol 96% durant 1 hora
 - Etanol 100% durant 1 hora
4. Preparació de la solució d'infiltració Technovit 7100
 - 1 g de Hardener I en 100 ml de líquid base
5. Infiltració
 - Etanol 100% : solució d'infiltració (3 : 1) durant 30 mins
 - Etanol 100% : solució d'infiltració (1 : 1) durant 30 mins
 - Etanol 100% : solució d'infiltració (1 : 3) durant 30 mins
 - Solució d'infiltració durant tota la nit (amb els eppendorfs destapats)
6. Preparació de la solució de polimerització
 - 15 ml de solució d'infiltració amb 1 ml de Hardener II
7. Preparació dels blocs
 - Posar les mostres als motlles Histoform S
 - Afegir la solució de polimerització a cada motlle
 - Reorientar les mostres
 - Estufa 37°C durant 24 hores



8. Preparació del ciment i desmotllar

Rotular els histoblocs

2 parts Technovit 3040 pols : 1 part de líquid

Abocar dins l'histobloc i deixar polimeritzar durant 15-30 mins

Amb un tornavís fer palanca o amb tenalles estirar cap a dalt per desmotllar

PROTOCOL DE TINCIÓ EN BLAU DE TOLUIDINA SOBRE TALLS DE METACRILAT

1. Preparació del blau de toluidina al 1%

3 g de Blau de Toluidina

3 g de tetraborat sòdic

300 ml d'aigua destil·lada

2. Tinció

Blau de toluidina al 1% durant 1 min

Aigua corrent durant 2 mins

3. Muntatge dels talls

Deixar assecar les mostres fins que no quedin restes d'aigua

Muntatge amb DPX

Deixar assecar el DPX

Aigua corrent durant 2 mins

VII.4. TÈCNIQUES EN MICROSCÒPIA ELECTRÒNICA

Preparació dels fixadors

Tampó cacodilat sòdic 0,1M (100 ml)

100 ml d'aigua destil·lada

3,4 g de cacodilat sòdic

Tampó fosfat 0,1M (100 ml)1,63 g de sodi fosfat bisòdic $\text{PO}_4\text{HNa}_2 \cdot 12 \text{H}_2\text{O}$ 0,4 g sodi fosfat dibàsic $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$

100 ml d'aigua destil·lada

Glutaraldehyd 2,5% en tampó cacodilat sòdic 0,1M (20ml)

18 ml de tampó cacodilat

2 ml de glutaraldehyd 25%

Citrat de plom (50ml)

Per una banda:

0,32 g d'hidròxid sòdic ($\text{Na}(\text{OH})$)

8 ml d'aigua bidestil·lada

Per l'altra:

1,33 g de nitrat de plom ($\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$)2,4 g de citrat de sodi ($\text{NaH}_2(\text{C}_3\text{H}_5\text{O}(\text{COO})_3$)

30 ml d'aigua destil·lada bullida

Barrejar les dues solucions

Enrasar a 50ml amb aigua bidestil·lada i bullida

PROTOCOL DE PREPARACIÓ DE LES MOSTRES PER AL SEM1. Fixació

Glutaraldehyd al 2,5% durant 2 hores

Rentats amb cacodilat sòdic (0,1M; pH=7,4) durant 30 mins (x2)

2. Deshidratació

Etanol 30% durant 15 mins

Etanol 50% durant 15 mins

Etanol 70% durant 15 mins (si es vol es pot aturar el procés aquí)

Etanol 96% durant 15 mins

Etanol 100% durant 15 mins (x2)

3. Muntatge i recobriment en or

Muntar les mostres als staps ben orientades

Recobrir amb or



PROTOCOL DE PREPARACIÓ DE LES MOSTRES PER AL TEM

Preparació dels reactius

Tetraòxid d'osmi 1% (10 ml)

10 ml de tampó cacodilat sòdic 0,1 M

0,1 g de tetraòxid d'osmi

Acetat d'uranil 1% (10 ml)

10 ml d'etanol al 70%

0,1 g d'acetat d'uranil

1. Fixació

Glutaraldehyd al 2,5% a 4°C durant 2 hores

Rentats amb cacodilat sòdic (0,1M; pH=7,4) durant 30 mins (x2)

2. Post-fixació

Tetraòxid d'osmi 1% en tampó cacodilat sòdic a 4°C durant 2 hores

Rentats amb cacodilat sòdic (0,1M; pH=7,4) durant 30 mins (x2)

3. Deshidratació

Etanol 30% durant 15 mins (x2)

Etanol 50% durant 15 mins (x2)

Etanol 70% durant 15 mins (x2) (si es vol es pot aturar el procés aquí)

Etanol 96% durant 15 mins (x2)

Etanol 100% durant 15 mins (x2)

Protocol d'inclusió de mostres en resina SPURR

Preparació dels reactius

Resina SPURR

5 ml component ERL 4206

3 ml component DER 736

13 ml component NSA

0,2 ml component DMAE

1 ml component D d'araldita

1. Inclusió

Etanol 100% : resina SPURR (3 : 1) durant 15 mins

Etanol 100% : resina SPURR (1 : 1) durant 1 hora

Etanol 100% : resina SPURR (1 : 3) durant 1 hora

Resina SPURR durant 1 hora

Resina SPURR a 4°C durant 12-24 hores

2. Polimerització

A 80°C durant 48 hores

Etanol 50% durant 15 mins

Etanol 70% durant 15 mins (si es vol es pot aturar el procés aquí)

Etanol 96% durant 15 mins

Etanol 100% durant 15 mins (x2)

3. Muntatge i recobriment en or

Muntar les mostres als staps ben orientades

Recobrir amb or

Protocol de tinció de talls semifins en blau de toluidina

Blau de toluidina al 1% durant 1 min

Aigua corrent durant 2 mins

Protocol de tinció de talls ultrafins amb acetat d'uranil

Acetat d'uranil al 1% durant 10 min

Aigua destil·lada durant 5 segons (x4-5)

Protocol de tinció de talls ultrafins amb citrat de plom

Citrat de plom durant 18 min (es col·loquen unes gotes de citrat de plom en una àrea tancada juntament amb unes lleties d'hidròxid sòdic)

Aigua destil·lada durant 5 segons (x4-5)

"Aber darüber ist das letzte Wort noch nicht gesprochen"

Helfer i Schlottke, 1935