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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Cnidaria, Hydrozoa, Anthoathecata, Pandeidae, *Stomotoca atra*: Distribution Extension

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The genus *Stomotoca* L. Agassiz, 1862 is characterized by medusae with two opposite marginal tentacles and a stomach on a broad peduncle, extending beyond bell margin (Kramp 1961). The genus has only four species: *Stomotoca atra* L. Agassiz 1862, *S. geogrinae* Hadzi 1913, *S. mira* Fewkes, 1883 and *S. pietschi* Martin, 1975 (Bouillon and Boero 2000; van der Land et al. 2001). Some of these species have their sessile polyps known and their life cycles described (Larson 1982; Boero and Bouillon 1989; Boero et al. 1991). A number of works was performed about the bodily processes responses of these species (e.g. Lenhoff 1964; Mackie 1975; Mackie and Singla 1975; Schwab 1977).

The species *Stomatoca atra* was normally reported to Pacific waters (Kramp 1961; Wrobel and Mills 1998). However, there was recorded to Papua New Guinea (Boero and Bouillon 1989) and to Indian Ocean (Navas 1971; Vannucci and Navas 1973; Navas-Pereira and Vannucci 1991).

In this note we present records of two specimens of *Stomotoca atra* found in the water column close to the Laje de Santos (24°15'48"S, 46°12'00"W), a parcel ca. 40 km off Santos (State of São Paulo, Brazil) (Figure 1) on January 10th, 2006 (Figure 2) and December 23th, 2006 (Figure 3). Laje de Santos is a State Marine Conservation Park under the supervision of the NGO Instituto Laje Viva. The photographs (Figure 2 and 3) were made underwater using digital resources.

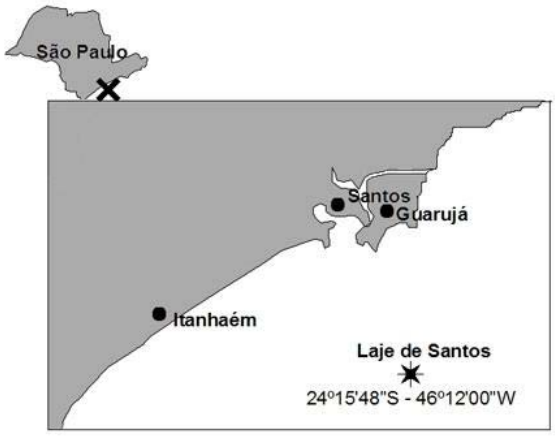

Figure 1. Map showing the location of Laje de Santos, State of São Paulo, Brazil.

The jellyfish (Figure 2 and 3) photographed in Brazilian waters greatly resemble the description of *Stomotoca atra* by Agassiz (1862): umbrella bell-shaped, mouth not crenulated, gonads simple folds, numerous rudimentary tentacles. The arrangement of tentacles and long manubrium with conspicuous gonads in regular transverse folds, besides the high cone bell shape, clearly characterize this species.

Figure 2. Alive specimen of *Stomotoca atra* L. Agassiz, 1862, photographed underwater in the Laje de Santos. Scale: 4 cm.

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Figure 3. *Stomotoca atra* L. Agassiz, 1862 swimming in the Laje de Santos. Scale: 3 cm.

A new record of a given species is always an interesting issue. However, when this record occurs in another ocean and different environments (NE and tropical Pacific waters according to Boero & Bouillon 1989; Wrobel and Mills 1998) it becomes more important, because distributional patterns and biology of the species can be emphasized. The distribution of the species *Stomotoca atra*, with this new record, is very hard to understand, because the ocean currents are not coincident with this allocation (see more in Valiela 1995). That can be hypothesized as the first evidence of a cryptogenic or a report of an extremely rare species in Brazilian waters. Bouillon et al. 1991 discuss about this distribution (NE Pacific, Papua New Guinea and Indian Ocean) and the taxonomy of *S. atra*. They conclude that is really one species and it is necessary more studies about life cycle and other aspects to understand something about the zoogeography of this species.

This work again emphasizes the importance of photographic records in ocean areas. The Laje de Santos is a sanctuary in which sampling is very much restricted. In this way, high quality photography is very useful to record species and the identification is performed without sampling in a protected area.

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