

New brittle-stars (Echinodermata: Ophiuroidea) from New Zealand waters

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Abstract

Thirteen new species of brittle-stars (Ophiuroidea: Echinodermata) and one new genus are described from the New Zealand region. These include: Ophiacanthidae (*Ophiolebes*); Ophiomyxidae (*Ophiolycus*, *Renetheo* n. gen.); and Ophiuridae (*Amphiophiura*, *Ophiocten*, *Ophiophycis*, *Ophiura* (*Dictenophiura*), *Ophiura* (*Ophiuroglypha*), *Ophiomidas*, and *Ophiophyllum*). Keys are provided to the described species of *Ophiophycis* and 4 closely related species of *Amphiophiura* occurring around New Zealand.

Key words: Echinodermata: Ophiuroidea, Ophiomyxidae, Ophiacanthidae, Ophiuridae, new genus, new species, New Zealand, Southwest Pacific Ocean

Introduction

The first brittle-star (Ophiuroidea: Echinodermata) described from the New Zealand region was *Ophiopsammus maculata* (Verrill, 1869a,b). Since then species have been gradually added to the fauna, notably by Mortensen (1924), who included a history of the fauna to that time. Significant more recent additions have been made by Fell (1951, 1953, 1958, 1960) and Baker (1974, 1977, 1979), and at present some 188 species are recorded from the New Zealand region. In examining ophiuroids in the collection of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, Wellington, a further 13 new species have been found and are described below. Included in these collections is a new genus in the Ophiomyxidae, genera new to New Zealand, and represented by new species are *Ophiolycus* (Ophiomyxidae), *Ophiolebes* (Ophiacanthidae), *Ophiophycis*, *Ophiolepis*, and *Ophiomidas* (Ophiuridae). In genera already recorded from New Zealand, new species are described in the genera *Amphiophiura*, *Ophiocten*, *Ophiura* (*Dictenophiura*) and *Ophiura* (*Ophiuroglypha*). Keys are given for 4 closely related species in the genus *Amphiophiura* and also for described species of the genus *Ophiophycis*. This contribution forms part of a study of the New Zealand ophiuroid fauna. Type and other specimens are deposited in the collections of NIWA, Wellington. Station details are appended to this report.