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Two new species of Syllidae (Annelida: Polychaeta) from DIVA-Artabria I project (cruise 2002) to deep areas off NW Spain

YOLANDA LUCAS¹, GUILLERMO SAN MARTÍN² & JULIO PARAPAR³

¹Estación de Biología Mariña da Graña, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Rúa da Ribeira 1, A Graña, E-15590 Ferrol, Spain. E-mail: yolanda.lucas@usc.es

²Departamento de Biología (Zoología). Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Calle Darwin 2, Canto Blanco, 28049 Madrid, Spain. E-mail: guillermo.sanmartin@uam.es

³Departamento de Biología Animal, Biología Vexetal e Ecoloxía, Facultade de Ciencias, Universidade da Coruña, Rúa da Fraga 10, 15008, A Coruña, Spain. E-mail: jparapar@udc.es

Abstract

Based on material collected during the DIVA-Artabria I project (2002 cruise) from deep areas (629–1132m) of the shelf and upper slope off the Ártabro gulf (Galicia, NW Spain), two new species of Syllidae (Annelida: Polychaeta) are described. *Eurysyllis mercuryi* **sp. nov.** is characterized by having compound chaetae with elongated blades, provided with long spines, and *Syllis mercedesae* **sp. nov.** is diagnosed by the possession of a unique combination of straight aciculae, protruding from parapodial lobes in posterior-most chaetigers, and moderately long spiniger-like chaetae in midbody provided with indistinct subdistal tooth, appearing almost unidentate. *Eurysyllis mercuryi* **sp. nov.** is the fifth species of the genus described worldwide and the second reported species in European waters after *E. tuberculata* Ehlers, 1864.

Key words: *Eurysyllis*, *Syllis*, Atlantic Ocean, Iberian Peninsula, new species, deep sea

Introduction

The family Syllidae Grube, 1850 comprises one of the most diverse families of polychaetes (Annelida, Polychaeta, Phyllococida), with 72 accepted genera and almost 700 species (San Martín 2003; Aguado & San Martín 2009; Aguado *et al.* 2011). Their mode of life, moving actively over the surface or in crevices of very diverse substrata together with their generalist feeding strategy (Giangrande *et al.* 2000), has made syllids a very abundant and diverse component of the epifaunal (e.g. sponges, corals, hydrozoans) and epiphytic (e.g. algae, seagrasses) fauna on hard bottoms (San Martín 2003) but also in soft bottoms.

The knowledge on this family in the Iberian Peninsula littoral has increased substantially in the last three decades from the outstanding work of Campoy (1982), who reported 96 species, to the recent compilation of San Martín (2003) who recorded 161 species included in 36 genera. Since then, four new species have been described in the area (Nygren 2004; Lattig *et al.* 2007; Lattig & Martín 2009; Del Pilar Ruso & San Martín 2012). While the general composition and distribution of benthic assemblages, including polychaetes, in the intertidal zone and shallow waters of Galician coasts (NW Spain) are well documented (e.g. López-Jamar 1978; Viéitez 1981; Mora *et al.* 1982; López-Jamar & Mejuto 1985; Junoy & Viéitez 1990; Parapar *et al.* 1996; Parapar *et al.* 2009), the benthos of the deep continental shelf and slope has been far less studied (Bellan 1964; Amoureux 1972, 1974).

In 2002, the Marine Biological Station of A Graña-Ferrol, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela (USC), Spain, started the DIVA-Artabria I project, whose main objective was to survey the benthic fauna off the Ártabro Gulf (Galicia, NW Iberian Peninsula) and to provide baseline data on diversity, composition and distribution of benthic assemblages, including also polychaetes (Moreira *et al.* 2011; Moreira & Parapar 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Parapar & Moreira 2008, 2009). The present paper is based on the DIVA-Artabria I (cruise 2002) samples focusing on the description of two new species belonging to the family Syllidae, *Eurysyllis mercuryi* **sp. nov.** and *Syllis mercedesae* **sp. nov.**