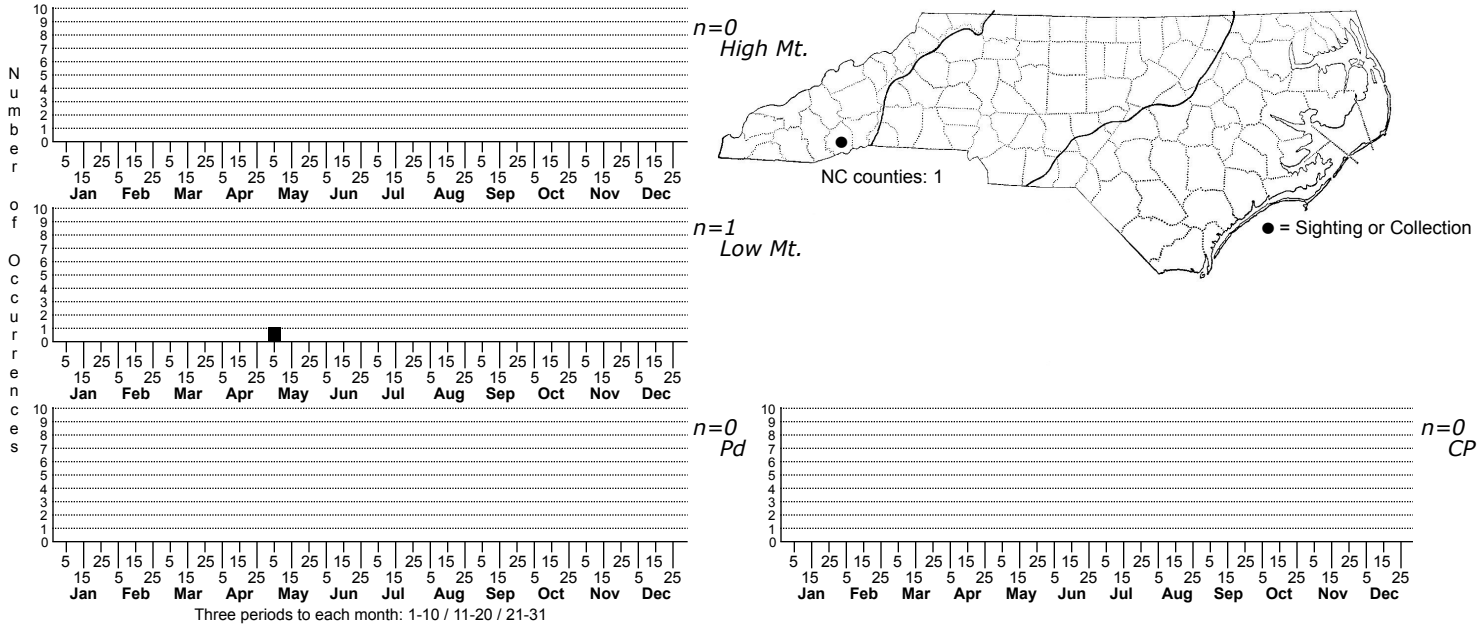
Dactylobiotus haplonyx



FAMILY: Murrayidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: Morphologically identical to species first recorded in Italy. No molecular data available for further comparisons. Also, no eggs have been found, and this is a taxonomically important trait in this genus.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Freshwater. A very rare species, this is the first record from North America, previously known only from Italy.

ID COMMENTS: Rather squat shape, with short legs. Eye spots present, obvious, composed of pigmented granules, very dense. Cuticle smooth, without pores. The mouth opening is surrounded by 10 buccal lamellae. The buccal tube is rather short and very wide (about 18% of the length). The stylet supports are fused to the tube at a distance from the opening to it, a little greater than the diameter of the tube. The pharynx is oval, slightly elongated. The apophyses are slender and elongated; there are two macroplacoids of very slender rod shape, the first of 12, the second of 6~; both the placoids, but especially the first has irregular thickness, with projections and constrictions, and the first has besides a deep constriction, which seems almost to divide it in two. Microplacoid absent. The claws are very large. Lacking the lunules, but the claws of each leg are connected to each other at the bases by means of a sclerified band. The principal branch, strongly arched, has accessory points. The secondary branch is inserted very near to the base of the claw, and on the first three pair of legs is very short, extremely slender, reduced almost to a spur. On the fourth pair of legs, the secondary pair - always considerably shorter than the principal -- has a normal development. Eggs have not been found, but two females contained respectively 5 and 10 eggs almost mature, strongly supplied with ornamentation, which seems to be slightly rounded cones, wide and low, distant from each other. It may be that such eggs are deposited free.
-Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Stream sediment.

OBSERVATION METHODS: PC, DIC microscopy