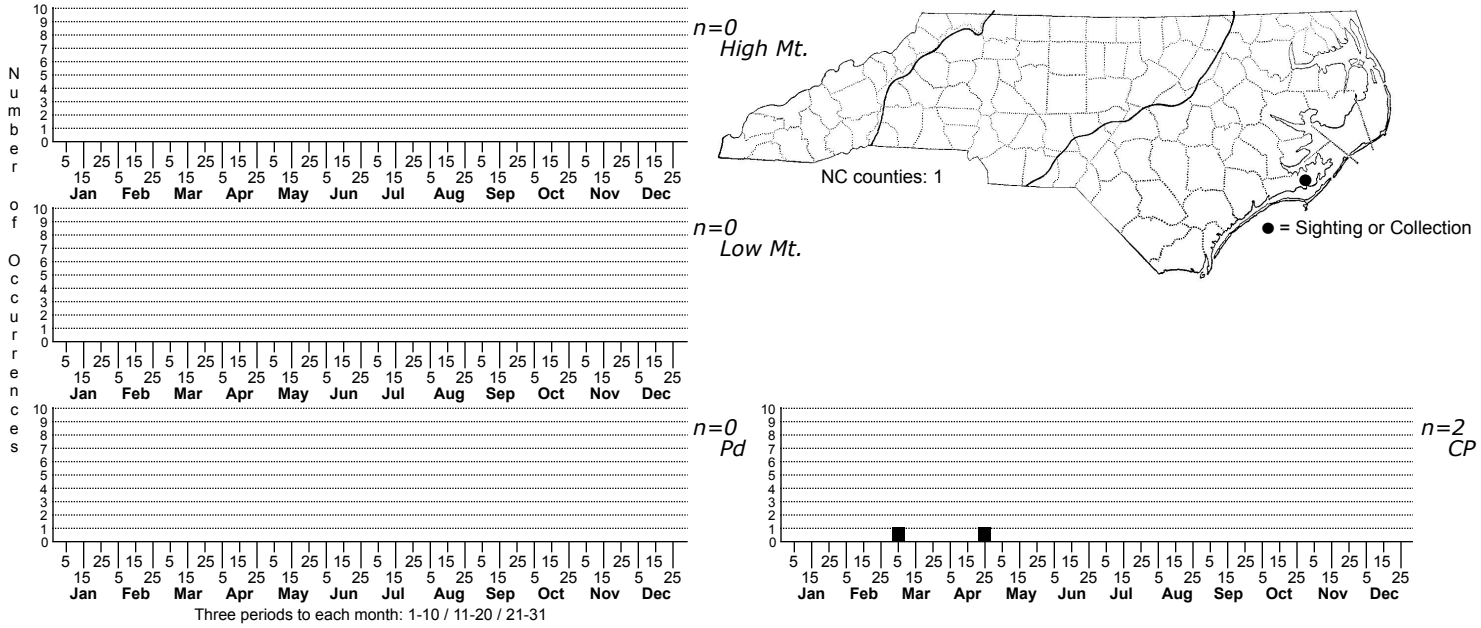
Tanarctus arborspinosus



FAMILY: Tanarctidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: There are currently (Oct 2023) 15 species known for this genus, this was the second species described in the genus.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Marine. First described from intertidal beach sand near Iron Steamer Pier, Bogue Bank, near Morehead City. Beyond this original observation there are no other records of this species.

ID COMMENTS: Small, delicate, and flattened. The cephalic cirri and the caudal spines are very developed. There exists the dorsal median cirrus, directed forward; the internal cephalic cirri are 24-25 microns long, the externals are inserted ventral to the cephalic papilla, and are 16-18 microns long; lateral cirri and clavae are inserted on a common base. In the original description of this species, as well as of Tan. tauricus, it was described as the clavae being short appendices, while those considerably longer were considered as cirri A. Lindgren however, in the description of this species, has advanced the hypothesis that in reality the long appendices are the clavae, and those short, slender, and pointed are in reality the cirri A. This hypothesis was later adopted by other authors, and applied to the descriptions of later species. Nevertheless, more consideration verified that in Tan. arborspinosus the cirri A are 8 microns long, while the clavae, somewhat flattened, supplied with short bristles, are 205-220 microns long. There exists a short cirrus E (13-17 microns) between the 3rd and 4th pairs of legs. The conspicuous posterolateral spines are composed of a principal branch, which reaches 195-210 microns, from which branches three (sometimes two or four) secondary branches as well as numerous much shorter branches. The cuticle is transparent, with small uniformly distributed pores. The mouth is ventral. The legs are telescopic and the first three pair bear a short spine. The digits, with claws, are four per leg, and arise from a bulbous base; the internal digits are longer than the externals.
-Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Intertidal beach sand.

OBSERVATION METHODS: PC.