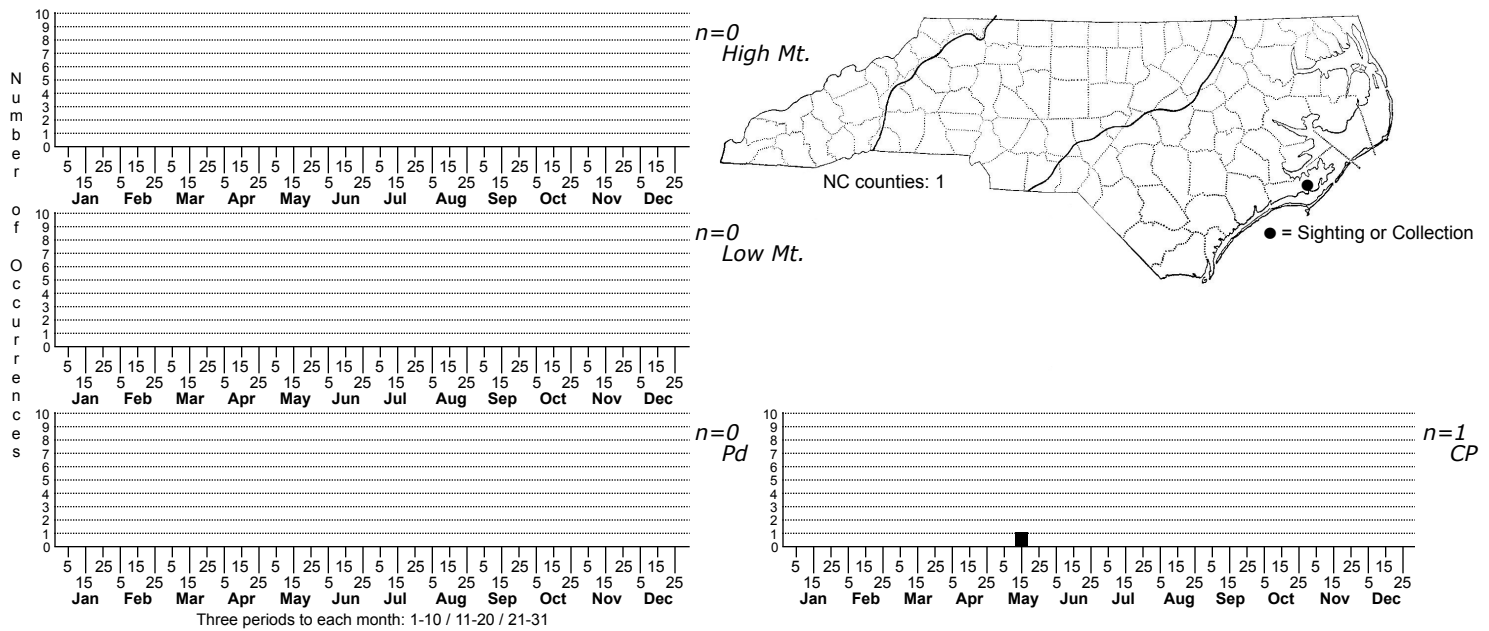


Tanarctus gracilis



FAMILY: Tanarctidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: There are currently (Oct 2023) 15 species known for this genus.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Marine. Discovered in NC at 4000 m depth off the coast of Cape Lookout. Also reported from Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean.

ID COMMENTS: Body oval, the head is trapezoidal, with lateral border posteriorly curved; the anterior part of the head is formed from a cuticular membrane, which unites the bases of the internal median cirri. The unpaired median cirrus is 11 microns long; the internal median cirri, distally pointed, has enlarged bases, and are 19 microns long. Ventrally is found the external median cirri, positioned on a base followed by a constriction; they are 12 microns long. The cirri A are dorsal and have size equal to the external median cirri. The clavae, situated on the poorly developed cephalic lobes, are ventral and bear a refringent organ at the base: length 110 microns. The ventral mouth forms a transverse cleft. Dorsally the cuticle is very finely punctated, while ventrally the body is roughly subdivided by folds at the level of the insertion of the legs. On the posterior part of the body exists cirri E (28 microns) inserted on lateral rounded prominences. On the 4th legs is found the long caudal non-branched bristles (220 microns). The telescopic legs consist of a coxal part (with distal filament), a femoral part, and a retractile tibial part. The legs bear four digits of which the internals measure 15 microns, the externals 8-9 microns; the claws, sickle-shaped, have one external spur. -Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Deep sea fine sand.

OBSERVATION METHODS: PC.