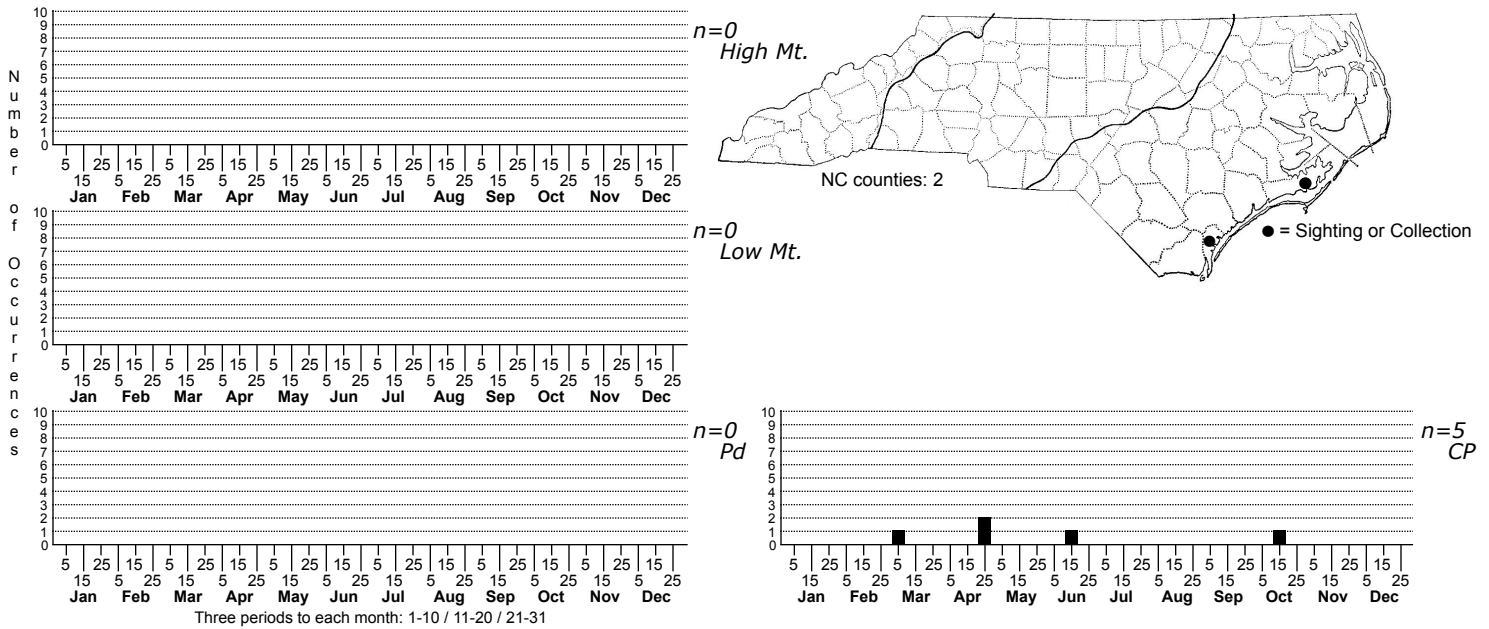


Batillipes bullacaudatus



FAMILY: Batillipedidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Batillipes* is the most speciose of all marine tardigrade genera, containing almost 40 species (about 16% of all marine tardigrade species).

SPECIES COMMENTS: Marine. Only 8 published records worldwide. Reported from Eastern US and western European coasts.

ID COMMENTS: Median cirrus (20 microns) lacking base, internal buccal cirri (20 microns) with base; external buccal cirri (14 microns), inserted on the cephalic papillae; clavae (13 microns); lateral cirri (28~) originating from a base common with the clavae. The median cirrus, the internal buccal, and those lateral are notched at the distal end (often trifid). Cuticle transparent, with uniformly arranged pores. Mouth ventral, buccal tube straight and narrow; pharynx subspherical. Eyes absent. The cephalic region is bound by a constriction, posterior to the lateral cirri. The width of the body is caudally increased; two lateral conical and pointed projections, anterior to the 4th pair of legs; a long flexible spine (22 microns) on each side, in postero-lateral position with respect to the conical projections. Short spine on the first three pair of legs, a long spine (28~) on the 4th pair, extending over the extremity of the leg and distally notched; legs telescopic; adults with 6 digits of various length, terminated in a disk. Caudal spine obvious, distally bearing a conspicuous bulbous hollow structure, characteristic, and of a type until now unknown among the tardigrades. Such appendage makes the determination of the species easy, which has a certain variability (individuals with a lateral "V" extension in the region of the neck, variation in the curvature and in the distal notching of the cirri and of the spines, in the size, in the shape of the 4th pair of legs at the base, in the presence or absence of the lateral spines and of those on the legs).
-Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Intertidal sand. In collections on Pawley's Island, SC, much more common on sound-side than ocean-side.

OBSERVATION METHODS: PC, DIC, and fluorescent microscopy.