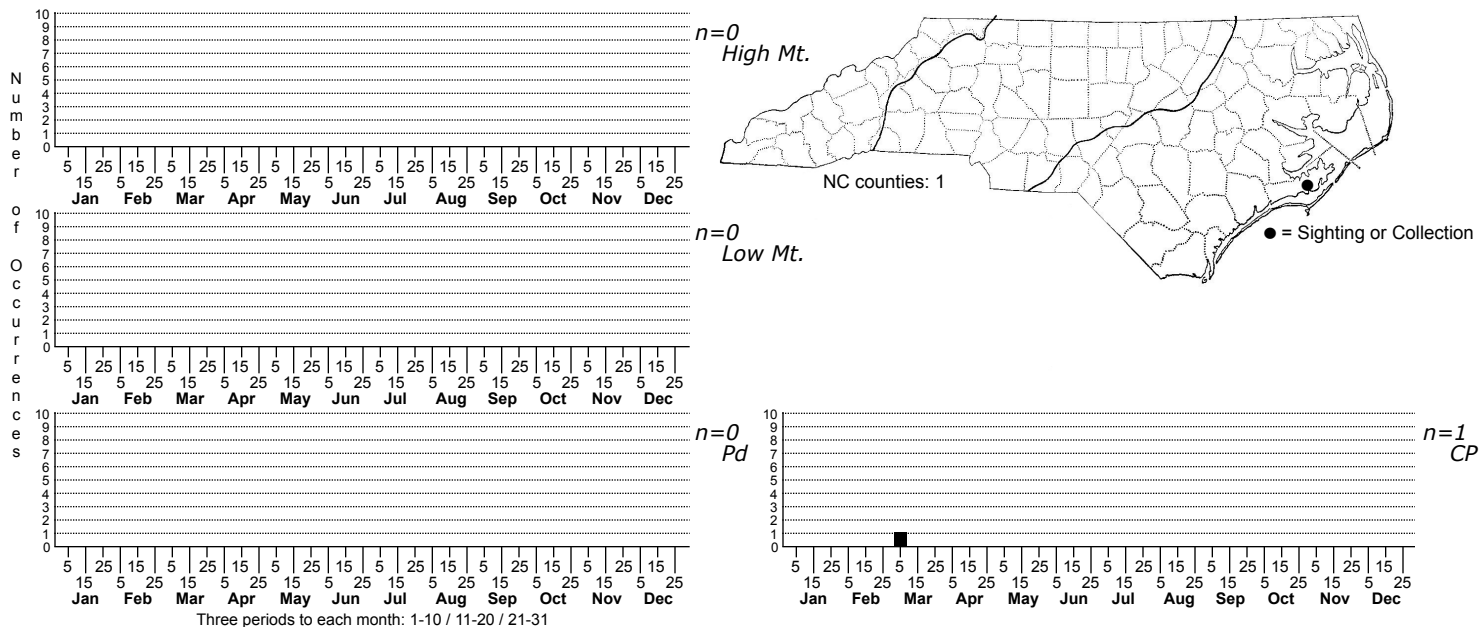


Batillipes mirus



FAMILY: Batillipedidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This species was originally described in Germany. Molecular studies have not been conducted for further comparison, and the author of this record did not give sufficient morphological detail to differentiate from *B. caudatus*. We have serious doubts about this species in NC vis-a-vis the very similar *Batillipes caudatus*. See that species for further discussion.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Marine. This species appears to be cosmopolitan but it is likely to be a cryptic species complex, and we doubt its occurrence on the NC and US east coast. See species account for *Batillipes caudatus*.

ID COMMENTS: Without eye pigment, however sometimes with small drops of fat, of variable size, on the external lobes of the supraesophageal (cerebral) ganglion; colorless, smooth cuticle, with weakly developed cuticular folds and barely visible external segmentation. Buccal aperture ventral; the cephalic appendages positioned dorsally with respect to the buccal aperture are: median cirrus (unpaired), internal and external medial cirri (both paired) slightly longer than the median cirrus; the internal medial cirri are positioned a little above, and the internals a little below the rostral margin of the tardigrade; between them there is the cephalic papillae (paired); the cirrus A (paired) is a long bristle, the clava is long, robust, slightly curved and has the characteristic clavate shaped point. All these appendices are inserted on a cuticular projection, or base, which in the case of cirrus A and of the clava is common to both and barely developed. Pharynx short oval, with three pharyngeal bars; stylet supports present. The appendices of the body are two robust lateral bristles, between the third and the fourth pair of legs, but closer to the latter, and a caudal median cirrus, a little shorter than the rostral median cirrus; there is also a small lateral marginal spine, not far from the base of the lateral bristle, but which may be present on only one side, or else totally lacking. The median part of the legs is telescopically retractile into the wider proximal part, each with a basal and external spine; the legs are terminated with 6 digits, all always very obvious on the 4th pair, and in general also on the 1st pair and especially on the 2nd pair, a digit is almost always very short, to such an extent as to easily escape observation. The four central digits are arranged in two rows and have different length: the two internal, shorter, are inserted somewhat ventrally, and the two external, longer, somewhat dorsally. Each digit is terminated with a cuticular expansion in the shape of a shovel, reinforced by a median longitudinal thickening.

-Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Intertidal beach sand.

OBSERVATION METHODS: PC and DIC microscopy