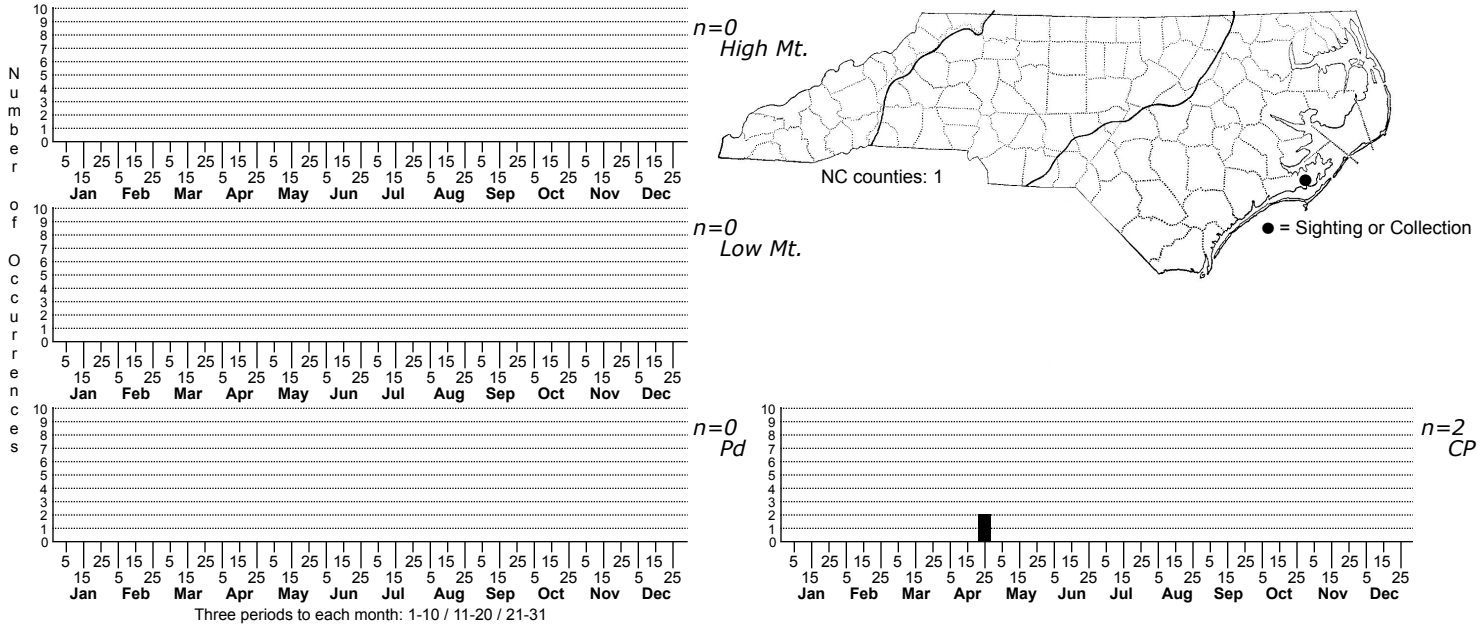
Batillipes pennaki



FAMILY: Batillipedidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This species appears to be cosmopolitan, but distinct morphological traits were found for Western Atlantic, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean populations by Santos et al. 2019 suggesting a pseudocryptic complex. DNA studies have not been conducted on these populations.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Marine. Relatively well studied as far as marine tardigrades go, see Santos et al. 2019 for review. This record has not been published in peer reviewed literature.

ID COMMENTS: Thickset body; eyes not visible after slide mounting; dorsal cuticle finely punctated with poorly marked transverse folds. A small lateral body projection (projection 1) is present between the head and first pair of legs; well-developed body projections between legs III and IV (projection 4) that are lobeshaped with a rounded contour (Fig. 2 A, C). Cephalic sensory organs: unpaired median cirrus, paired external cirri, paired internal cirri, lateral cirri A and primary clavae. Primary clavae exhibit the peculiar division into proximal and distal portions by a constriction (Fig. 2 B). Cirri E present. Leg sensory organs short, especially those on legs I and IV. The caudal appendage is a sharp spine inserted into a swollen basal support (Fig. 2 C). Femur of legs IV short, very broad with a prominent lateral process (a malleolus in the terminology used by Gallo D’Addabbo et al. 2005).
In the fourth pair of legs (Fig. 2 D), medial toes 3 and 4 are of equal lengths (toe arrangement pattern A, according to Kristensen & Mackness 2000 and subsequent modifications by Santos et al. 2018, 2019); toes 2 and 5 are the longest and similar to each other; toes 1 and 6, also similar to each other, are of intermediate length. Medial toes (3 and 4) on legs IV very short (so short that toe discs appear to be sessile). Toe discs large; larger on shorter middle toes and smaller on longer toes. Female gonopore bordered anteriorly by two platelets, continuing posteriorly to the anus by a deep groove. Male gonopore circular with a cuticular crescent-shaped fold. -Santos et al. 2019

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: Most commonly reported from intertidal beach sand but also collected from shallow subtidal sediments.

OBSERVATION METHODS: DIC or Phase Microscopy.