



DEEP-SEA ASELOTA (CRUSTACEA, PERACARIDA) FROM THE MAR DEL PLATA SUBMARINE CANYON, SOUTHWEST ATLANTIC OCEAN: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

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The biodiversity of deep-sea asellotan isopods from the Mar del Plata submarine canyon is still poorly known. To improve the knowledge of this fauna, 23 benthic samples taken on board the RV *Puerto Deseado* during the Talud I–III expeditions (2012–2013) were examined. Samples were collected between 320–3,220 m depth, using a bottom otter trawl and two epibenthic sledges equipped with nets of 1 mm and 30 mm mesh size, respectively. A total of 1,793 asellotans were obtained, and 71 species belonging to 14 families were identified. The most speciose family was Munnopsidae (27 spp.) followed by Paramunnidae (15 spp.), Stenetriidae (6 spp.), Acanthapidiidae (5 spp.), Janiridae (5 spp.), Munnidae (3 spp.), Nannoniscidae (2 spp.) and Dendrotionidae (2 spp.). The families Joeropsididae, Katianiridae, Ischnomesidae, Haploniscidae and Haplomunnidae had only one species each. In addition, one species of *Xostylus* Menzies, 1962, a *incertae sedis* genus of the superfamily Janiroidea, is reported. Among the species identified at least ten are new species to science and are distributed in the following five families: Acanthapidiidae, Dendrotionidae, Janiridae, Katianiridae, Munnopsidae and Paramunnidae. Half of the species (35 spp.) were collected only once. Stenetriidae *incertae sedis serraticaudum* was obtained in seven samples, whereas all the remaining species were collected in 2–5 stations. The high number of singletons (species recorded once) may reflect the patchy distribution of these species.

Keywords: Argentine deep waters; Isopoda; species distribution.