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# First Gulf of Mexico Record for *Biancolina brassiacephala* (Amphipoda: Biancolinidae)

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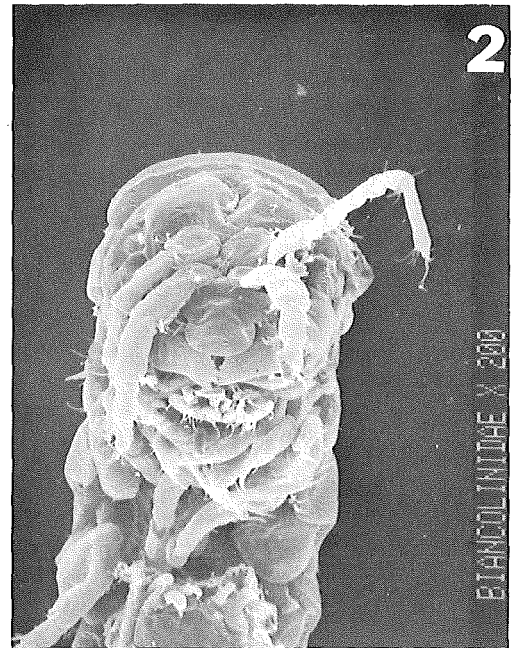
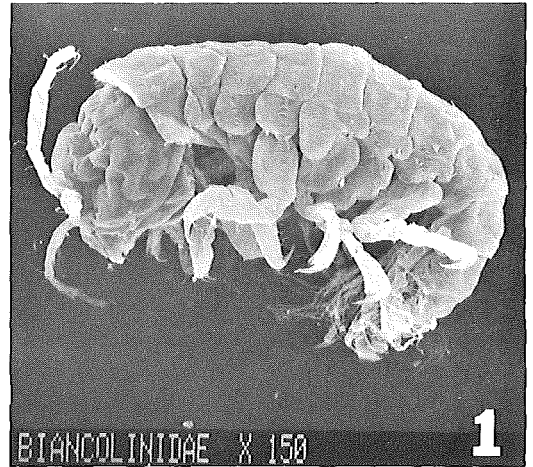
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## FIRST GULF OF MEXICO RECORD FOR *Biancolina brassiacephala* (AMPHIPODA: BIANCOLINIDAE)

Six specimens of the monotypic family of marine amphipods, Biancolinidae Barnard, 1972, were found attached to rafts of *Sargassum natans* and *S. fluitans* collected in surface neuston tows in the northeastern Gulf of Mexico. Single specimens of *Biancolina brassiacephala* Lowry, 1974 (Figs. 1-7) were collected in each of three tows at Station C near the Florida Middle Ground, 28°36'N, 84°15'W, in June-July 1976, over 27 m of water, and three others were collected in three tows at Station D southwest of Tampa Bay, 27°24'N, 84°07'W, over 96 m of water, in August 1976 (Fig. 8). All specimens were nongravid females. Several other species of amphipods were found with *B. brassiacephala* on *Sargassum* rafts, including *Lestrigonus bengalensis*, *Hemigina minuta*, and *Phoxocephalus* spp.

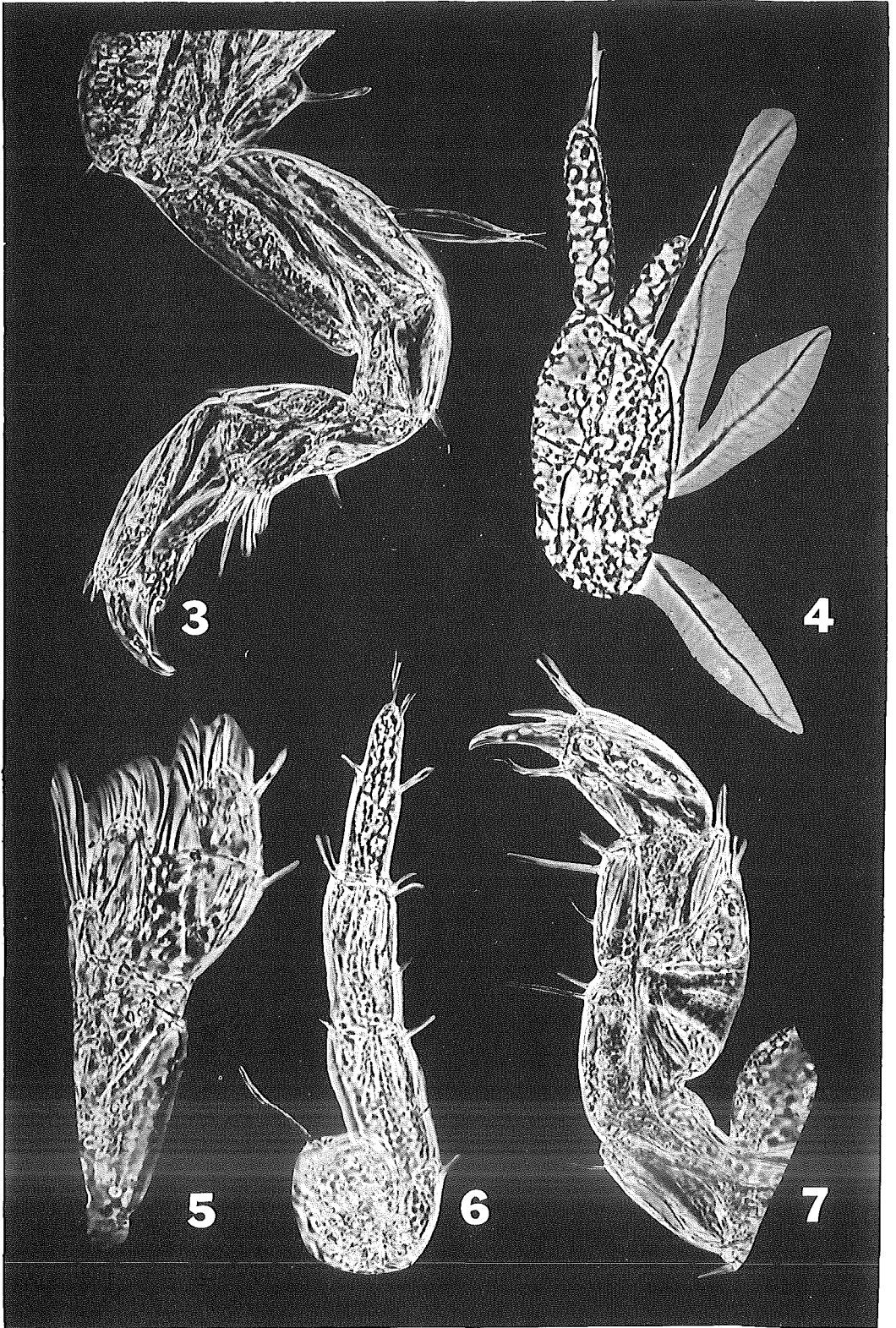
*Biancolina algicola* was first established by Della Valle (1893) for specimens collected on algae in the Bay of Naples, Italy, and was later included in the family Ampithoidae by Stebbing (1906). Nichols (1939) expanded the genus to include *B. australis* from Rottnest, Western Australia, and placed it in the Prophliantidae. Ruffo and Wieser (1951) redescribed *B. algicola* from specimens collected from the Mediterranean. Gurjanova (1958) included *Biancolina* in a newly erected family, Eophilantidae. Barnard (1970) added the species *B. mauihina*, found on intertidal *Sargassum* at Oahu, Hawaii. The possession of non-talitroidean characteristics, e.g., rough epidermis and biramous uropod 3, prompted Barnard (1972) to remove *Biancolina* from the Eophilantidae (superfamily Talitroidea) and place it in the newly erected, monotypic family Biancolinidae. Lowry (1974) described *Biancolina brassiacephala* from specimens associated with rafts of *Sargassum*



Figures 1, 2. *Biancolina brassiacephala* female, 2.5 mm: 1. Lateral view; 2. Anteroventral view.

*natans* and *S. fluitans* collected from the Gulf Stream and Sargasso Sea in the western North Atlantic Ocean off North and South Carolina. Our specimens extend the known range of *B. brassiacephala* into the Gulf of Mexico.

Specimens from the eastern Gulf of Mexico were collected with a 1 m Khalsico Floating Plankton sampler (mesh size = 202  $\mu$ m modified to sample the neustonic community from the surface down to 10 cm. Towing time ranged between 17 and



**Figures 3-7.** *Biancolina brassiacephala* female: **3.** Gnathopod 1; **4.** Uropod 2; **5.** Maxilliped; **6.** Antenna 2; **7.** Pereopod 1.

**TABLE 1.** Oceanographic and meteorological collection data, Summer, 1976.

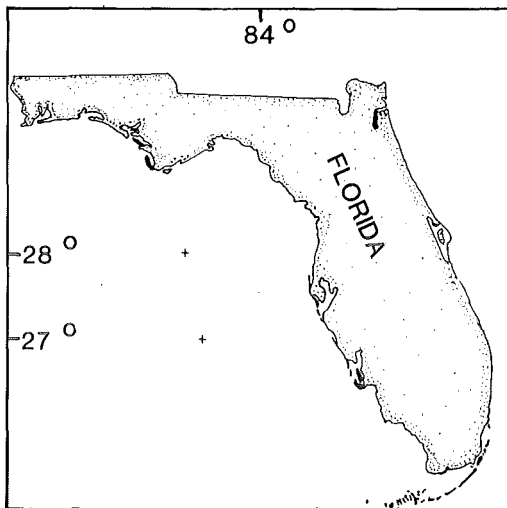
Station	Date	Latitude	Longitude	Depth (meters)	Time Set	Time Haul	Sea State	Temperature(°C)	
								Air	Surface
C-087	6/23/76	28°36'N	84°15'W	27	1800	1833	1	38.0	29.5
C-102	7/25/76	28°36'N	84°15'W	27	1202	1305	1	33.4	30.1
C-107	7/26/76	28°36'N	84°15'W	27	0205	0235	1	28.0	29.8
D-128	8/03/76	27°24'N	84°07'W	96	0600	0617	2	29.7	28.0
D-139	8/04/76	27°24'N	84°07'W	96	2000	2018	1	30.0	29.3
D-142	8/05/76	27°24'N	84°07'W	96	0200	0218	1	28.5	29.2

63 minutes at a ship speed of two knots. Physical oceanographic data and meteorological observations were made at the time of collection (Table 1).

*Biancolina brassiacephala* has been found only on algal rafts of *S. natans* and *S. fluitans*, suggesting a possible method for species dispersal between the northeastern Gulf of Mexico and the northwest Sargasso Sea. Loop Current circulation over the Florida Middle Ground during the summer of 1976 has been confirmed by Steward (1980). Individuals on rafts of pelagic *Sargassum* could be transported between the northeast Gulf and the northwest Sargasso Sea by the Loop Current, Florida Current and Gulf Stream systems.

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**Figure 8.** Sampling stations, June-August 1976.

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