

On the Distribution of the Shallow Water Coral *Coenocyathus Bowersi* (Anthozoa: Scleractinia) in Chile

Olave, Valentinaa;
Mellado, Claudiob;
Zambrano, Nicolása, c;
Aliaga, Juan Antoniod;
Ballesteros, Luise;
Araya, Juan Francisco

Abstract

New geographical records for the azooxanthellate ahermatypic scleractinian coral *Coenocyathus bowersi* Vaughan 1906, including the southernmost distribution record for the species, are presented based on colonies and fragments of colonies recovered by fishermen and commercial divers, as bycatch, from several locations at northern Chile, from Arica (18°28' S; 70°19' W), in the extreme northern limit of the country to Chañaral de Aceituno (29°04' S; 71°29' W), a high biodiversity area in northern Chile. These results confirm the presence of this species in Chile, ruling out accidental introductions, and they indicate that this species is apparently more common below some depth along northern Chile than previously known. It is thus possible that the current disjunct distribution of this species merely reflects lack of sampling efforts for *C. bowersi* (and similar invertebrates) along the south American coast from Panamá to S of Perú, where this species may be present in similar subtidal depths. © 2023, The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

Author keywords

Cold water corals; Mesophotic; Range extention; Reefs; Scleractinian