

Scavenging crustacean fauna in the Chilean Patagonian Sea

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The marine ecosystem of the Chilean Patagonia is considered structurally and functionally unique, because it is the transition area between the Antarctic climate and the more temperate Pacific region. However, due to its remoteness, there is little information about Patagonian marine biodiversity, which is a problem in the face of the increasing anthropogenic activity in the area. The aim of this study was to analyze community patterns and environmental characteristics of scavenging crustaceans in the Chilean Patagonian Sea, as a basis for comparison with future situations where these organisms may be affected by anthropogenic activities. These organisms play a key ecological role in marine ecosystems and constitute a main food for fish and dolphins, which are recognized as one of the main tourist attractions in the study area. We sampled two sites (Puerto Cisnes bay and Magdalena sound) at four different bathymetric strata, recording a total of 14 taxa that included 7 Decapoda, 5 Amphipoda, 1 Isopoda and 1 Leptostraca. Taxon richness was low, compared to other areas, but similar to other records in the Patagonian region. The crustacean community presented an evident differentiation between the first stratum (0-50 m) and the deepest area in Magdalena sound, mostly influenced by *Pseudorchomene* sp. and a marked environmental stratification. This species and *Isaeopsis* sp. are two new records for science. The discovery of undescribed species evidences that this region needs further studies exploring its biodiversity, which is most likely being already impacted by anthropogenic pressure. © 2020, The Author(s).