
*BRIEF NOTE*OCCURRENCE OF THE FRESHWATER JELLYFISH *CRASPEDACUSTA SOWERBYI* LANKESTER IN THE OHIO RIVER¹DAVID C. BECKETT and EDWIN J. TURANCHIK², Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221

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The east-central portion of the United States (Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana) constitutes the area of North America from which *Craspedacusta sowerbyi* has been most commonly reported (Beitman 1975). Dexter *et al* (1949) summarized Ohio reports of *C. sowerbyi*, most of which were reports of medusae from ponds, lakes, and quarries in northern Ohio. Hubschman and Kishler (1972) found that both the

polyp and medusa forms of *Craspedacusta* were widely distributed in western Lake Erie. Our paper is the first report of *C. sowerbyi* from the Ohio River.

Medusae were collected at 4 different sites in the Ohio River during the summer of 1978. Each of the 4 collection sites is located in a different river pool. Jellyfish were collected on 12 September at river mile 817 near Diamond Island (Uniontown pool) (Averill, Dames & Moore, Cincinnati, personal communication) and on 2 June, 31 June, and 29 August near river mile 453 (Markland pool) (WAPORA, Inc., Cincinnati, per-

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sonal comm.). Collections of *C. sowerbyi* were also made on 29 June, 27 July, and 8 September in the Meldahl pool (river mile 403-408) and on 1 September near river mile 260 (Gallipolis pool) (WAPORA, Inc., personal communication). All collections were made using a 505 μ mesh ichthyoplankton net while conducting larval fish tows. Based on the Meldahl pool sampling, it is apparent that the medusae are not limited to a certain portion or depth in the river. *Craspedacusta* was present in tows conducted near shore and at mid-river, and in tows at the surface and at 3 m depth. Similarly, medusae were found in tows made at the surface and near the river bottom in both day and night samples near Diamond Island. Another notable feature of the Ohio River medusae is their small size. While Pennak (1953) lists a bell diameter of 22 mm as a maximum size, the largest collected Ohio River jellyfish have a diameter of 8 mm, with the great majority of medusae being in the 2-5 mm range.

Since only 8% of the reports of *Craspedacusta* medusae are from flowing waters (Beitman 1975), efforts by Beitman to locate *C. sowerbyi* in the Cincinnati area from June 1971 to November 1973 concentrated on quarries, gravel pits, lakes, ponds, and pools. He was unsuccessful in locating *C. sowerbyi* in such habitats in this area. A possible explanation for the lack of previous records of *Craspedacusta* from the Ohio River may be that the fairly recent placement of high dams along the Ohio has created a habitat favorable to *C. sowerbyi*. Beitman (1975) states however, that the infrequent collection of freshwater jellyfish from flowing waters may not really reflect a preference by *Craspedacusta* for lentic waters. The great majority of reports of *Craspeda-*

custa are the result of direct visual observation. Since flowing waters are frequently turbid and are usually not as heavily used by man as lentic waters, the few reports of medusae from lotic waters may be an artifact of the difficulty in making visual observations of the jellyfish in turbid waters. Since the medusae in the Ohio River were noted only as a consequence of larval fish tows, the latter explanation of the paucity of lotic records of jellyfish may be correct.

Two of the lotic *Craspedacusta* records that have been made are from Ohio. Baird (1932) reported freshwater medusae from the Vermilion River (northern Ohio) while Kostir reported *Craspedacusta* from the Scioto River near Columbus (Beitman 1975). With the increasing study of larval fishes in Ohio's rivers and streams, a likely by-product will be an increasing number of freshwater jellyfish reports from such waters.

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