

Distribution of Brittlestar *Amphiodia (Amphispina)* spp. in the Southern California Bight in 1956 to 1959

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ABSTRACT

Brittlestars *Amphiodia* (Amphispina) spp., particularly *Amphiodia* (Amphispina) *urtica* (Lyman 1860), are of interest in southern California because they are rare or absent adjacent to municipal wastewater outfalls even where they are expected to be the community dominant. In the monitoring programs for the outfalls, impacts to the benthic communities are determined by comparing abundances near the outfall to the abundance in "reference" areas. In order help define reference conditions, data from a survey conducted between 1956 and 1959 were used to determine the effect of latitude, depth and sediment grain size on the distribution and abundance of *Amphiodia (Amphispina)* spp.

Brittlestars *Amphiodia* (Amphispina) spp. was generally lower north of Ventura than elsewhere in the Bight. The difference in abundance can, in part, be attributed to the character of the sediment. However, even in areas with suitable sediment, the abundance of *Amphiodia* (Amphispina) spp. north of Ventura was relatively low. The reason for this difference is unknown. It is also not known if *Amphiodia* (Amphispina) spp. are, at the present time, less abundant north of Ventura than elsewhere in the Bight.

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