

## Rostral irregularity of *Penaeus (Farfantepenaeus) aztecus* in Greek waters

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The northern brown shrimp *Penaeus (Farfantepenaeus) aztecus* Ives, 1891, is an estuarine and oceanic littoral decapod naturally distributed along the western Atlantic. It has been reported in the Mediterranean Sea since 2010 and in 2013 in Thermaikos Gulf (N. Aegean Sea), where few individuals appeared in the shrimps' catches. This year, it represents 16% and 20% of the total abundance and biomass of the shrimps' catch respectively. According to literature, *P. aztecus* rostrum is armed with two ventral and five to eleven (usually 8-10) dorsal teeth. From the daily commercial catches (6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015) of *P. aztecus* collected in Methoni area, individuals with unusual teeth number in both not damaged rostral sides were recorded. Apart from the usual two rostral ventral teeth, individuals with zero (2.3%), one (1.2%) and three (0.6%) ventral teeth were recorded. Individuals having one or three ventral teeth, had only nine (100 %) dorsal teeth while other specimens having no ventral teeth, appeared three (25%), five (25%), six (25%) and eight (25%) dorsal teeth, equally. It seems that individuals with one and three ventral teeth appeared the same dorsal teeth with those having two ventral teeth while individuals with zero ventral teeth had fewer dorsal teeth (3-8). Rostral variability is commonly found in many shrimps, related to sex, sexual maturity and size. The number of teeth on the rostrum can vary widely, due to damage and incomplete regeneration. This latter characteristic could be considered as the most important reason for the rostral irregularity.

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