

## **A further record of *Liocarcinus corrugatus* (Pennant, 1777) in Northumberland, England, northwestern North Sea (Crustacea, Decapoda, Brachyura)**

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Within the British Isles, the swimming crab *Liocarcinus corrugatus* (Pennant, 1777)<sup>1</sup> is usually considered to be restricted to the Atlantic coastline, spreading as far north as the Orkney Islands, and absent from the North Sea coast of Great Britain (Clark, 1986). However, the latter author states that the true distribution of *L. corrugatus* has yet to be established, as there are unconfirmed records in the North Sea. Indeed, the species had been previously recorded from the Bay of Berwick (about 55°46'N 002°01'W) by Embleton (1834: 70), who gave the following short account of the record:

*Portunus corrugatus*, Leach, Ma.. Brit. tab. 7, figs. 1-2. Wrinkled crab. Penn. Brit. Zool. iv. tab. 5, fig. 9. Berwick Bay, rare. Dr Johnston.

The exact date of collecting is not known, but it was presumably in the early 1830s, as Davis (1995) stated that "during the 1830s George Johnston's interests transformed from botany to marine zoology".

This record was repeated by Bell (1853) who stated: "it has been found by Dr. Johnston in Berwick Bay, but is rare". Clark (1986) dismissed this record as probably erroneous, because he was not aware of any further records of the species in the North Sea, except for an imprecise and indeed dubious record from Yorkshire (Ingle, 1980). Yet, Bell (1853: 95) stated that "the characters of *P. corrugatus* are so strongly marked as to preclude the possibility of its being confounded with any other species" and Embleton (1834) explicitly referred to Leach (1816), who gave excellent figures of the species, which gives support to his record.

On 17.04.2011, during a trip with Belgian marine naturalists, the author found a carapace (34 x 42 mm) of an adult *L. corrugatus* of unknown sex washed ashore on the sandy beach in front of the castle of Bamburgh (55°36'45"N 001°42'24"W), i.e. not far from Berwick. This confirms that *L. corrugatus* must indeed be present in northern Northumberland, and that there is no reason to question the validity of the record of

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<sup>1</sup> The generic affiliation of many European portunoid crabs is unsettled (Schubart & Reuschel, 2009), and the usual generic name for the present species is used herein, although it is certainly incorrect.

Embleton (1834). On the other hand, it remains an open question, whether there is indeed a permanently established population in the area or whether isolated crabs sporadically settle there during favourable years. The carapace from Bamburgh, which was dark purplish-coloured, is now deposited at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels under the registration number I.G. 31764 - INV.100661.

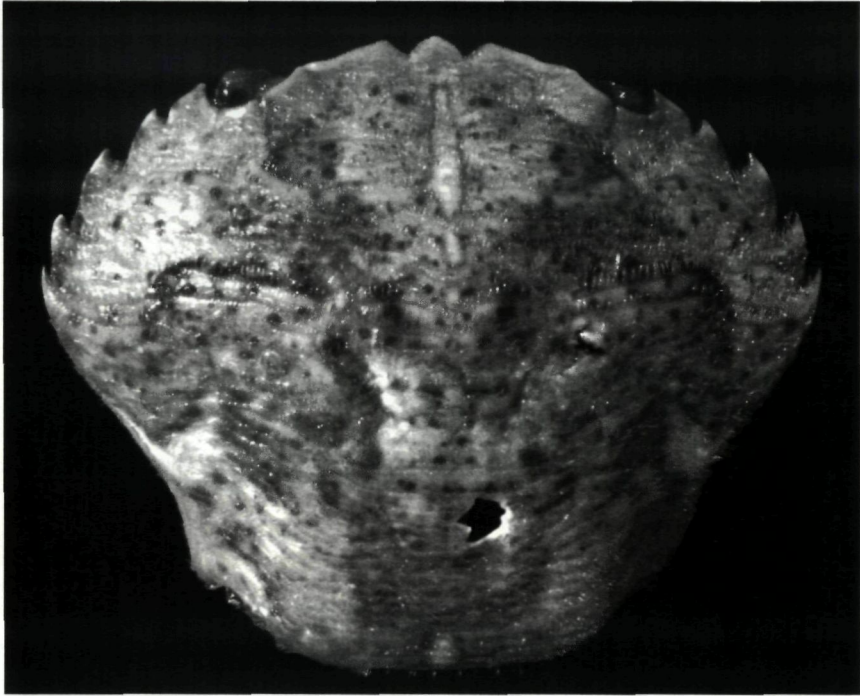


Fig. 1.- *Liocarcinus corrugatus* (Pennant, 1777), sex unknown, antennae omitted from the picture, 34 x 42 mm, North Sea, England, Northumberland, Bamburgh, 55°36'45"N 001°42'24"W, washed ashore, 17.04.2011.

## Summary

On 17.04.2011, a carapace of the swimming crab *Liocarcinus corrugatus* (Pennant, 1777) was found washed ashore in front of the castle of Bamburgh (55°36'45"N 001°42'24"W), Northumberland, England, northwestern North Sea. This is only the second record of the species in Northumberland in nearly 200 years.

## Samenvatting

Op 17.04.2011 werd een aangespoeld rugschild van de zwemkrab *Liocarcinus corrugatus* (Pennant, 1777) gevonden vóór het kasteel van Bamburgh (55°36'45"N 001°42'24"W), Northumberland, Engeland, noordwestelijke Noordzee. Dit is slechts de tweede waarneming van de soort in Northumberland in bijna 200 jaren.

## References

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