



THE NATURE AND POSITION OF THE ROCK SHORE FAUNA
OF TROPICAL WEST AFRICA IN RELATION TO THE EASTERN
ATLANTIC AS A WHOLE

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Using the same criteria as have been applied to the Natal coast, it is clear that the rock shore fauna of tropical West Africa is at the best *sub-tropical* and largely eurythermal in nature despite the geographical location. An important difference from Natal, however, exists in that whereas the Natal coast is bordered by the truly tropical Indian Ocean fauna from which it can recruit tropical species, the Eastern Atlantic coast has at no point a truly tropical fauna.

In assessing the range of influence of the West African fauna the extent of distribution of the characteristic assemblage or ecological unit of dominant zonal animals is taken as a criterion rather than the percentage of endemism of the total fauna list and only where the differences between two geographical regions are greater than the similarities is it considered to be a different biogeographical province. The characteristic W. African assemblage presents an almost homogeneous picture from Angola in the south, round the coast of Africa and penetrates deeply into the Western Mediterranean along the north coast of Africa and less deeply along the southern coast of Spain and Portugal where it overlaps but in some places dominates the typical Mediterranean assemblage. An important exception is, however, found in the barnacles. *C. stellatus* is dominant round the N.W. coast of Africa, but at some point between Dakar and Sierra Leone, which is under the influence of the Tropical Counter Current water, it gives way to *C. dentatus* which persists to Angola where barnacle domination in the midlittoral ceases. *C. dentatus* becomes prominent again in the S. African and Natal coasts.