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*Doridicola astrophyticus* Humes, 1973 (Cyclopoidea: Lichomolgidae) is a commensal copepod associated with the basketstar, *Astrophyton muricatum* (Lamarck, 1816) (Ophiuroidea: Gorgonocephalidae) (Humes & Stock, 1973). The copepod occurs very commonly on this seastar and is occasionally found in the stomach of its host. Seventy-five of 152 (49.3%) *A. muricatum* examined in July 1977 had specimens of *D. astrophyticus* in their stomachs. Only 15 (9.9%) had more than 3 of these copepods each. The stomach of 1 of these basketstars contained 49 specimens of *D. astrophyticus*. This individual was very emaciated with a disc diameter of 49 mm, but a disc weight of only 13.2 gm and a body weight of only 79.2 gm. These weights are very low compared to the average weights of presumably healthy individuals of this disc size (Wolfe, 1978). This specimen also lacked evidence of gonads even though individuals of similar size contained gonads. The unusual number of *D. astrophyticus* in the stomach of this unhealthy *A. muricatum* may indicate a large number of this copepod associated with this host may have damaged or contributed to the damage of the host and/or the starving host consumed its commensal copepods. This case indicates the lack of knowledge concerning the health of non-commercially important invertebrates.

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LITERATURE CITED


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