Still there or back again: *Brachystomia scalaris* in the eastern part of the Oosterschelde (Gastropoda, Euthyneura, Pyramidellidae)

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Het mosselslurpertje *Brachystomia scalaris* werd levend op twee plaatsen in de oostelijke Oosterschelde waargenomen, respectievelijk bij de Bergse Diepsluis en bij Bruinisse. De slakken parasiteren daar op mossels, die er in commerciële hangcultures voorkomen.

Brachystomia scalaris is reported alive from rope cultures of *Mytilus edulis* in the eastern part of the Oosterschelde in the Dutch province of Zeeland, where this species had not been observed anymore after 1985.

Key words: Gastropoda, Euthyneura, Pyramidellidae, *Odostomia*, *Brachystomia*, ecology, distribution, The Netherlands.

According to De Bruyne et al. (2013: 245), the small gastropod species *Brachystomia scalaris* (MacGillivray, 1843), formerly *Odostomia scalaris* (see Høisæter, 2014), which is known to live as a parasite mainly on mussels (Høisæter, 2014), has not been recorded anymore from the eastern part of the Oosterschelde in the province of Zeeland after 1985. The authors mention a decline in records for the species, adding that this might be due to a reduction in monitoring effort, however, instead of indicative for an increasing rareness of these small snails. The white shells, which are provided with an obsolete denticle situated high at the columellar side of the aperture, are up to only 4 mm in height and may be easily overlooked.

Here we report *B. scalaris* (Fig. 1) from rope cultures of *Mytilus edulis* L., 1758, in the Oosterschelde, The Netherlands, in the southeast at the Bergse Diepsluis (51° 31.070″N; 4° 10.116″E) and in the northeast off Bruinisse (51° 40.156″N; 4° 08.202″E). At both localities the snails were found on mussels at a depth of about 1-2 m. In total 13 shells were collected, with a size of 2.3-2.8-3.5 mm (minimum-average-maximum).

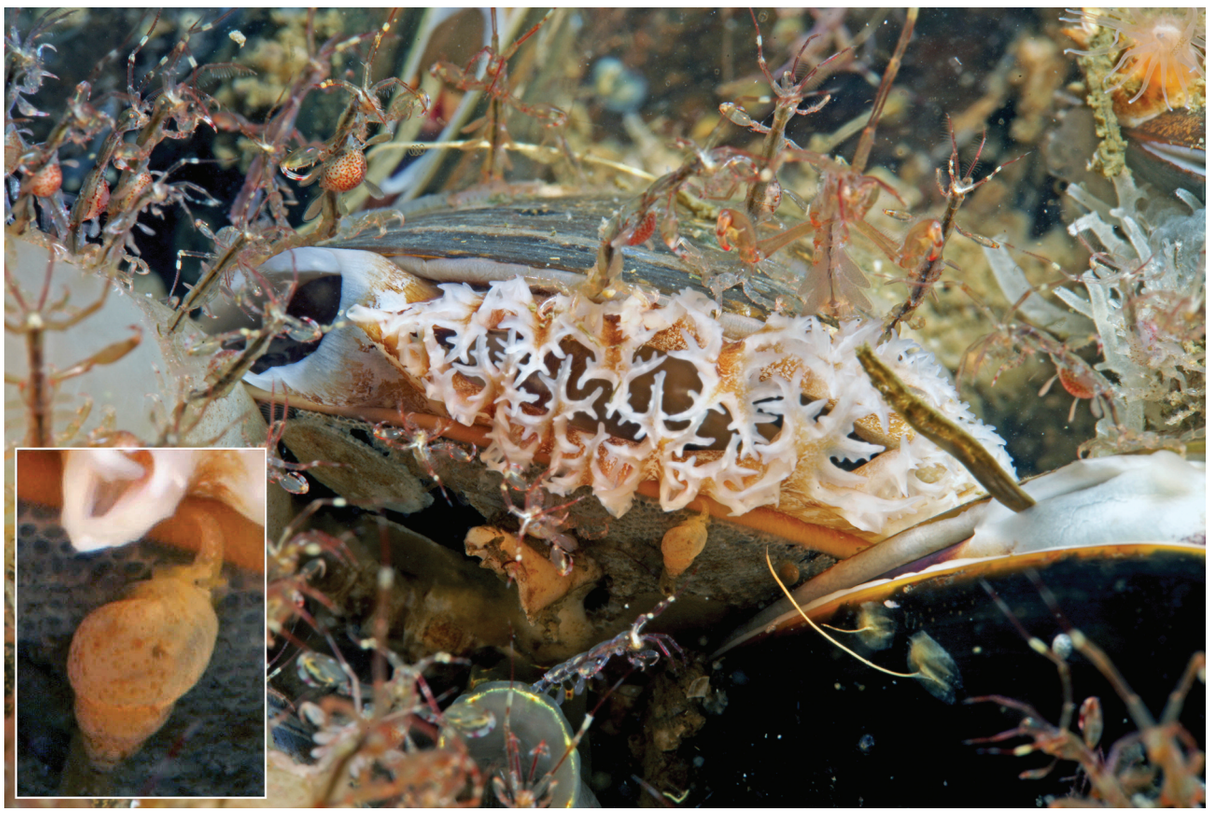
On August 16th, 2015, a scuba dive was made at a rope culture mussel farm at the Bergse Diepsluis. At a depth of about 1.5 m one specimen of *B. scalaris* was photographed within a species-rich fouling community, feeding on the mantle edge of a mussel (Fig. 2). No additional snails were found.

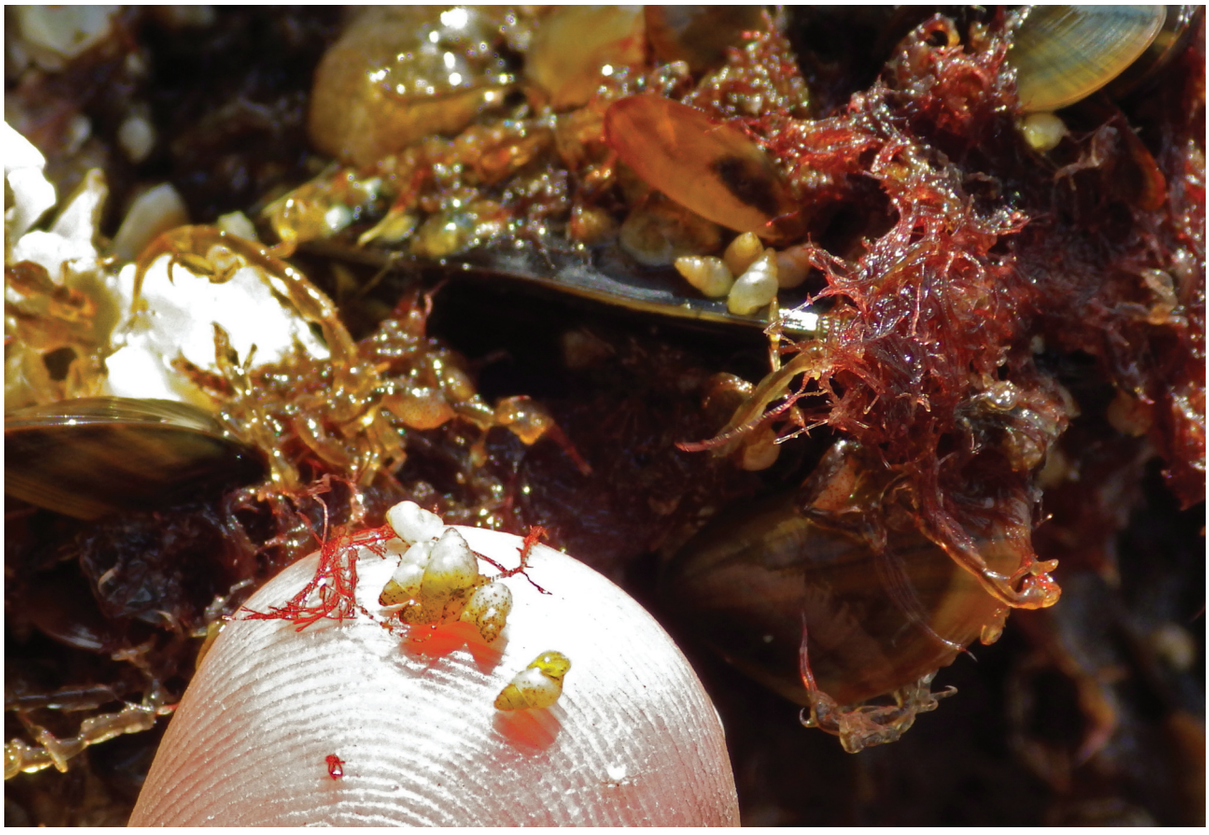
Fig. 1. (Left) *Brachystomia scalaris*. Specimen collected from a mussel rope off Bruinisse in the Oosterschelde. Shell height 2.7 mm. Photograph by Marjolein Rensing.

Fig. 2. (below) *Brachystomia scalaris* photographed in situ, with a protruded proboscis while feeding on the mantle edge of a mussel (*Mytilus edulis*), surrounded by Japanese skeleton shrimps *Caprella mutica* Schurin, 1935, the vase tunicate *Ciona intestinalis* (Linnaeus, 1767), and the bryozoan *Conopeum reticulum* (Linnaeus, 1767). Photograph by Adriaan Gittenberger.

Fig. 3. (top right) The rope cultures of *Mytilus edulis* in the northeast of the Oosterschelde off Bruinisse. Photograph by Marjolein Rensing.

Fig. 4. (below right) Specimens of *Brachystomia scalaris,* photographed in situ with *Mytilus edulis* on a rope culture in the northeast Oosterschelde off Bruinisse, and the index finger of the second author as a scale 'bar'. Photograph by Marjolein Rensing.





By using a crane from a boat to lift them out of the water (Fig. 3) on August 21st, 2015, 10 mussel ropes were searched for species co-occurring with mussels up to a depth of 2 m in a mussel farm off Bruinisse. On one of the ropes *B. scalaris* was recorded, very locally in a high density, with more than 10 snails per mussel (Fig. 4).

The fact that *B. scalaris* was found at two sites distant from each other within weeks' time may indicate that the decline in the records of this species after 1985 (De Bruyne et al., 2013) might be due to the fact this this species is easily overlooked. *Brachystomia scalaris* was found during the present surveys as they specifically focused on recording species living in the affinity of mussels.

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