

## Correspondence

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### First record of the exotic isopod *Sphaeroma serratum* (Crustacea: Isopoda) from Uruguayan waters (southwestern Atlantic)

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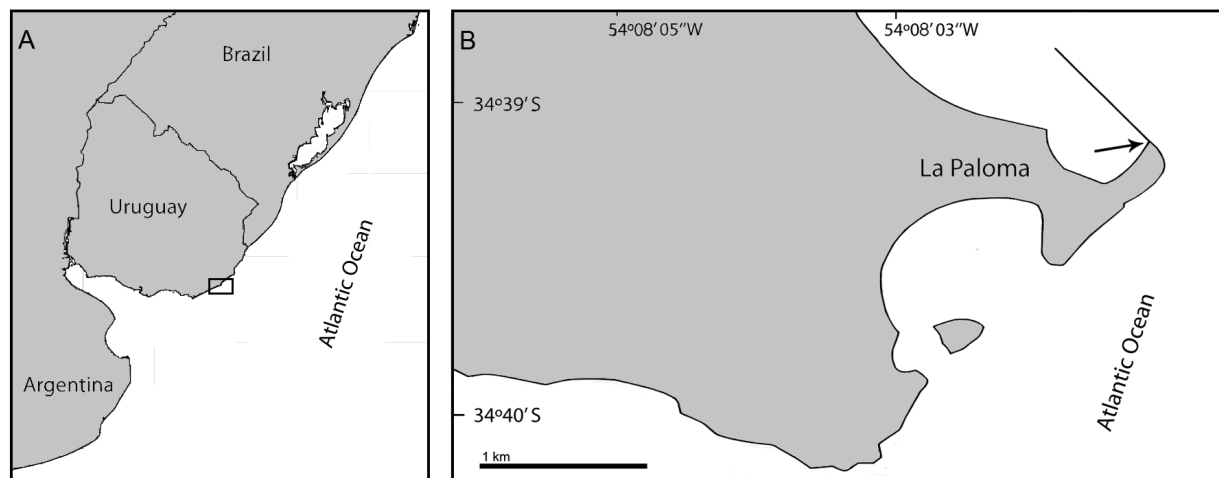
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The isopod *Sphaeroma serratum* (Fabricius, 1787) is reported from Uruguay for the first time and it is considered an introduced species in the region. The species was found very abundant and specimens were collected under the rocks in an intertidal area at La Paloma port in 2002 (34°39'S, 54°08'W). The specimens we examined fully agree with previous descriptions. Considering that this species has been reported as introduced in Argentina and Brazil, here we hypothesized the potential routes of introduction to Uruguay.



**FIGURE 1.** A, Map of Uruguay. B, La Paloma port, where the isopod *Sphaeroma serratum* was collected.

The genus *Sphaeroma* Bosc, 1802 includes several species that have been introduced in many tropical and temperate regions worldwide (e.g. Holdich & Harrison 1983; Jacobs 1987; and references therein). This is the case for *Sphaeroma serratum*, which shows a remarkably wide geographic distribution, being found in the intertidal zone under stones in marine waters, as well as in brackish habitats. This species is likely to be native of the North Atlantic; it has been studied from many localities in the NE Atlantic (from the British Islands to Morocco), including most of the coastal areas of the Mediterranean Sea, the Azores (where it is considered cryptogenic by Cardigos *et al.* 2006), the Black Sea (in Bulgarian, Rumanian and Turkish coasts), the Aegean Sea, the Suez Canal and NW Africa (Monod 1931; Omer-Cooper & Rawson 1934; Holdich & Tolba 1985; Castelló 1986; Kirkim *et al.* 2006; and references therein). In the southern hemisphere *S. serratum* was reported introduced in Australia (Holdich & Harrison 1983; Hass & Knott 1998), South Africa (Kensley 1978), Argentina and Brazil. In Argentina, it was first detected by 1964 in Mar del Plata (38° SL), and rapidly became a very abundant organism in rocky shores and ports of warm temperate areas southern Mar del Plata (Roux & Bastida