

ABSTRACT

DISTRIBUTION OF TARDIGRADE SPECIES AT THE MCKENZIE TABLE MOUNTAIN PRESERVE, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, WITH A DESCRIPTION OF TWO NEW SPECIES OF *ECHINISCUS*

A survey of the distribution of tardigrades was conducted at the McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve from April 2001 to September 2002. Tardigrades collected from two species of moss (*Grimmia leibergii* and *G. reflexidens*) at the top and the bottom of granitic rocks, were identified to genus and/or species. Numbers of tardigrades in the top and bottom samples were compared, and greater numbers were found in the bottom samples. Representatives of five genera were found, four of which were Eutardigrada: *Adorybiotus*, *Hypsibius*, *Macrobiotus*, and *Ramazzottius*. Specimens of Heterotardigrada collected were exclusively members of the genus *Echiniscus*. These specimens were identified to species and included one previously described species, *Echiniscus blumi* (one specimen), and two previously uncharacterized species, *Echiniscus* sp. A (86 specimens) and *E.* sp. B (three specimens).

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May 2004