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NOTES ON THE IDENTIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE EXOTIC WESTERN HEMISPHERE MUSSEL, *MYTELLA CHARRUANA* D'ORBIGNY 1846, IN THE ESTUARIES OF PANGASINAN, PHILIPPINES. Michael A. Rice,1 Paul D. Rawson,2 and Westly R. Rosario.3

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In February 2015, mussels were found in Pangasinan different from native mytilids, *Perna viridis*, *Modiolus philippinarum* and *M. modulaides (=M. metcalfei)*. These mussels with a thick black periostracum were first reported in the Calmay River 16.0272°N, 120.3147°E near the village of Tucok (Dagupan City). Samples of ~50 mussels were preserved in 95% ethanol and sent to Maine for genetic evaluation using amplified mtDNA sequences coding for cytochrome oxidase 1 (mtCO1) using universal LCO and HCO primers, and then sequenced with LCO primers. *P. viridis* and *Modiolus brasiliensis* are the closest cladistic outgroups to the *Mytella* phylogeny, with the latter showing the closest sequences. Comparison was made to sequences from deSouza et al. (2015) of two divergent sequences of female mtCO1 lineages in *Mytella* that are distinct from another divergent male lineage using *M. brasiliensis* as the outgroup. Using Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST), there is a 100% identity match over ~600 bases to Haplotype B of *Mytella charruana*, the Charru mussel, with a native range on the Pacific coast of the Americas from Guaymas, Mexico to Ecuador, and introduced to the Atlantic coast of Florida in 2009. Mussels are spreading rapidly in Pangasinan. In July 2015 freshly set mussels were found in Western Tambac Bay (approx 16.28°N, 119.92°E), and in September, mussels were found in the Limahong Channel near Lingayen (approx 16.01°N, 120.23°E), an estuary contiguous with the original Tucok site. All sites with Charru have considerable seasonal salinity fluctuations and stratification during the dry season, but are primarily within the polyhaline salinity regime. Charru mussels are now fished and sold, and they set on traditional mussel spat collectors, suggesting good potential for aquaculture.