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A new species of *Metrarabdotos* (Bryozoa, Ascophora) from Brazil

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Abstract

Worldwide there are approximately 40 species of *Metrarabdotos*, only six of which are extant. Among the living species, three were previously recorded from the Brazilian coast: *M. unguiculatum*, *M. tuberosum*, and *M. gulo*, collected from Bahia and Espírito Santo States. There are no records of fossil species of *Metrarabdotos* from Brazil. This study reports two living *Metrarabdotos* species, collected from three states in Brazil—Sergipe, Bahia and Espírito Santo. One of the species, *M. sergipensis*, is new to science. Its morphological features, such as extreme tuberculation of the zooidal frontal shield, add appreciably to the range of morphological disparity known in the genus.

Key-words: Brazil, Bryozoa, Metrarabdotosidae, new species, Southwestern Atlantic, taxonomy

Introduction

Metrarabdotos Canu, 1914 is an important genus among cheilostome bryozoans owing to its diversity and abundance in the fossil record, permitting the study of its mode and time of evolution through time (Cheetham *et al*. 2007). There are far fewer Recent than fossil species of *Metrarabdotos*; of the estimated 40 or more species of *Metrarabdotos*, only six are extant—*M. unguiculatum* Canu & Bassler, 1928a; *M. tuberosum* Canu & Bassler, 1928b; *M. pacificum* (Osburn, 1952); *M. cookae* Cheetham, 1968*; M. auriculatum* Canu and Bassler, 1923 and *M. gulo* (Marcus, 1955). *Metrarabdotos tenuis* (Busk, 1884) may be synonymous with either *M. tuberosum* or *M. auriculatum* or recognized as distinct, thus increasing the number of extant species. The holotype specimen is poorly preserved, however, and Cheetham *et al*. (2007) were unable to include it in their analysis.

The high diversity and skeletal complexity of *Metrarabdotos* species have been extensively studied (Canu 1914; Buge & Galopim de Carvalho 1963; Cheetham 1968; Saunders *et al*. 1986; Collins & Coates 1999; Rosso 2005; Cheetham *et al*. 2007). Two large taxonomic reviews have been published (Cheetham 1968; Cheetham *et al*. 2007), the second of which is a taxonomic and phylogenetic study that discussed 28 species from the tropical Atlantic and compared the genus with *Escharoides*, Milne Edwards, 1836, *Adeonellopsis* MacGillivray, 1886 and *Reptadeonella* Busk, 1884.

Species of *Metrarabdotos* have rigidly erect or encrusting colonies. The frontal skeletal wall of the zooids is umbonuloid, and imperforate except for areolar pores around the proximal and lateral margins. The primary orifice has a distal shelf; the secondary orifice has denticles (one to three) on or below the proximal rim. Articulated oral spines are absent. Adventitious avicularia are located lateral to the orifice, are ordinary and/or special, paired or single, and can be present on maternal zooids. Ovicells are finely perforated between their ribs, with areolar pores around the margins; the orifice of the maternal zooid is crescentic without a distal

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