



Additional shallow-water thecate hydroids (Cnidaria: Hydrozoa) from Guadeloupe and Les Saintes, French Lesser Antilles

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Abstract

This report supplements an earlier account on the hydroids of the Guadeloupe archipelago, and records 31 additional species of thecates. Among them, *Halecium calderi* **sp. nov.**, *Antennella armata* **sp. nov.**, and *Antennella incerta* **sp. nov.**, are described. *Laomedea tottoni* Leloup, 1935 is redescribed and reassigned to the genus *Clytia* Lamouroux, 1812. Its synonymy is broadened upon inclusion of *Clytia laxa* Fraser, 1937. *Hebella venusta* (Allman, 1877) is considered valid based on comparison with related species, and its gonotheca is described for the first time. Two sympatric varieties of *Sertularella diaphana* (Allman, 1885), easily separable morphologically and by their cnidome composition, are discussed. *Sertularella ornata* Fraser, 1937 is recorded for the second time and is fully redescribed. Its name is actually a junior synonym of *S. fusiformis* (Hincks, 1861) f. *ornata* Broch, 1933, and it is here referred to as *S. fraseri* **nom. nov.** *Sertularia thecocarpa* Jarvis, 1922, *Sertularella minuscula* Billard, 1924, *Sertularella parvula* Mammen, 1965, and *Sertularia stehowi* Hirohito, 1995 are placed in the synonymy of *Sertularella tongensis* Stechow, 1919, the latter being transferred to the genus *Sertularia* Linnaeus, 1758. *Sertularia ephemera* **nom. nov.** is proposed as a replacement name for *Sertularia tongensis* Stechow, 1919. *Aglaophenia postdentata* Billard, 1913 is confidently recorded from the Atlantic for the first time. *Dentitheca dendritica* (Nutting, 1900) is redescribed, and additional notes on *Macrorhynchia clarkei* (Nutting, 1900) are provided. All the species discussed herein are new records for the study area. Illustrations are given for each species and data on the nematocyst complement and size of capsules are given when necessary. The number of hydroid species reported from the study area is raised to more than eighty. Hydroids of the Caribbean are moderately well known faunistically, though continuous discovery of new species is likely, the species composition being certainly richer than currently reported.

Key words: Cnidaria, Hydrozoa, Caribbean Sea, tropical western Atlantic, reef environment

Introduction

This is the second report on the hydroids collected from the Guadeloupe archipelago, in the eastern Caribbean Sea. The first account dealt with both athecate and thecate hydroids (Galea 2008), while the present paper describes additional species of thecates collected during a second campaign of sampling undertaken in November-December 2009.

The objective of this study was to complement our knowledge of the diversity and species composition of hydroids inhabiting the reefs of Guadeloupe in particular, and to expand our knowledge of the Caribbean hydroid fauna in general.

While previous collections focused exclusively on sub-surface habitats, the present survey was based on sampling using SCUBA, at depths of 6–25 m. The bulk of the collection was obtained by exploring the fringing reef between Port-Louis and Anse-Bertrand, on Grande-Terre, Guadeloupe. Additional collections were undertaken on the northern side of the pass of Grand Cul-de-Sac Marin, the mangrove off Petit-Canal, and the northern and eastern sides of Terre-de-Haut, Les Saintes.

The collecting efforts resulted in a total of 48 thecate hydroids obtained at thirteen out of fourteen stations inspected. Of these, 17 species were previously reported from the study area in an earlier publication (Galea 2008), while the 31 remaining represent new records, and are discussed in the present account. Well known species are simply mentioned or listed together with brief remarks supplementing earlier descriptions, lesser known species are redescribed, and new and uncertain species are fully described.