



Shallow-water species of the genus *Aplidium* (Asciidiacea) from Kamchatka and Commander Islands

KAREN SANAMYAN & NADYA SANAMYAN

Kamchatka Branch of the Pacific Institute of Geography, Far-Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Partizanskaya 6, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, 683000, Russia. E-mail: ascidiacea@sanamyan.com

Abstract

Four shallow-water colonial ascidians of the genus *Aplidium* (Aplousobranchia: Polyclinidae) are identified in the material collected by SCUBA divers off the coast of East Kamchatka and Commander Islands. Three species from Kamchatka were previously known from this region but were wrongly identified and two of them (*A. dissectum* n. sp. and *A. eborinum* n. sp.) are now redescribed as new species. *Aplidium redikorzevi* nom nov. (for *Amaroucium fragile* Redikorzev, 1927) is recorded on Commander Islands first time from its original description.

Key words: *Aplidium*, Kamchatka, Commander Islands, NW Pacific

Introduction

The samples were collected by SCUBA divers down to 35 m depth and preserved in 4% formalin upon surfacing. Nearly all collected colonies were photographed in vivo to document colour, form and structure of colonies, especially the shape of the systems and position of zooids, a feature clearly seen on living colonies but often difficult to observe on preserved material. The shape of systems and the form of colonies appear to be more stable and therefore more important species specific features than was thought previously. Certain records of species with very wide geographic distribution and nearly identical zooids actually may belong to several different species. Careful hand collecting of undamaged colonies and quality macrophotographs of living specimens may be very helpful to sort out some problematic colonial ascidians.

All described specimens are deposited in the Kamchatka Branch of the Pacific Institute of Geography (KBPIG). All underwater photos were taken by N. Sanamyan.

Descriptions

Aplidium oculatum (Beniaminson, 1974)

(Figure 1)

Amaroucium oculatum Beniaminson, 1974: 318.

Aplidium pliciferum: Sanamyan, 1998: 121 (part, specimens with massive colonies and white spots on thoraxes); Sanamyan, Sanamyan, 2010: 241.

Material examined. Kamchatka, Avacha Bay, Starichkov Island, 7 m, 15.10.2006, one colony (Figure 1 A,B); 7m, 28.07.2004, one colony (Figure 1 C), and many other colonies from Avacha Bay.

Description. The species forms large thick cushions not divided to lobes. The largest available colony is about 15x10 cm in extent and 6 cm high. The test is always clear, without sand on surface or in internal layers, gelatinous, moderately soft and muddy translucent. Zooids are not visible through the test on living specimens. Colour varies from yellowish-orange to reddish.