

***Celleporaria fusca* (Busk)
(Fig. 15a-d)**

Cellepora fusca Busk, 1854: 88, pl. 119, fig. 2; pl. 120, fig. 6.

Celleporaria fusca: Harmer, 1957: 680, pl. 43, figs 1-7.

DESCRIPTION

Colony forming massive, nodulated, multi-laminar sheets, often exceeding 25cm²; less frequently, developing erect, irregularly branching growths; deep purplish-brown in colour. Aperture about as wide as long, more or less D-shaped, the proximal border slightly concave, and arched frontally. No oral spines. Peristomial thickening most pronounced proximally, incorporating a single medio-proximal avicularium, vertically orientated with respect to the aperture, its cystid produced apically as a stout, pointed umbo; rostrum facing laterally, small and oval (0.05mm long), or longer (0.15-0.30mm), with a strongly denticulate distal edge. Vicarious avicularia generally infrequent, but characteristic: rostrum slender, lanceolate, rounded distally and often with a slight lateral curve; 0.2-0.6mm long. Ovicell spherical, imperforate, its orifice rim with an asymmetrical thickening which may include a small adventitious avicularium. Immediately below the avicularium the peristome rim bears a narrow notch, on the other side of which the rim is slightly thickened.

REMARKS

Winston & Heimberg (1986) indicated that Harmer's (1957) account of *C. fusca* was founded on a number of similar, deeply pigmented species. Harmer's figures, however, appear to represent true *C. fusca*. The type specimen (BMNH reg. no. 1854.11.15.180) is labelled 'pl. 119. Cape Capricorn' in Busk's hand, although the published type locality was given as Bass' Strait. A second Busk collection specimen (BMNH 1899.7.1.4867A) is labelled 'Bass' Strait'; both this and the type specimen are labelled 'R', for HMS Rattlesnake. A Hincks collection specimen from Bass' Strait (BMNH 1899.5.1.1316), Torres Strait specimen figured by Harmer (1957)(BMNH 1963.9.8.11), and a Siboga specimen from Makassar (BMNH 1963.9.8.14 part) have all been compared with the two Busk collection specimens, and with the present series from Heron Island, and it is clear that they all represent a single species. On the basis of these specimens, *C. fusca* can be said to range along the entire east coast of Australia, from Bass Strait to Torres Strait, and into the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago. In view of Winston & Heimberg's (1986) account, the synonymy constructed by Harmer should be viewed with caution, until records from the Indian Ocean can be re-examined.

