

***Robertsonidra praecipua* sp.nov.**
(Fig. 10C,D)

TYPE MATERIAL

HOLOTYPE: QMG304955, Stn. 5.

DESCRIPTION

Colony an encrusting, unilaminar sheet. Autozooids oval to hexagonal, convex, separated by distinct sutures. Primary orifice wider than long; with a short, U-shaped sinus occupying about one-half its proximal width, flanked by short, sharply pointed condyles. Two delicate evanescent spines on distal border, persisting in ovicelled autozooids. Frontal shield with glistening, smoothly nodular calcification typical of the genus, bordered by a single series of large, round, marginal pores. An adventitious avicularium present on a minority (<10%) of autozooids, lateral suboral in position, directed proximo-laterally; opesia triangular, rostrum strongly tapered to a rounded distal tip; crossbar slender, complete. Ovicell recumbent on distally succeeding autozoooid, about as wide as long, globular; calcification more finely nodular than that of frontal shield.

Measurements (means and standard deviations of 20 values, mm): autozoooid length 0.65 ± 0.05 ; width 0.43 ± 0.04 ; orifice length 0.14 ± 0.006 ; width 0.18 ± 0.009 ; avicularium length 0.37 ± 0.04 .

REMARKS

This species is very similar to *R. novella* Ryland & Hayward 1992, a colony of which was growing adjacent to the unique holotype of *R. praecipua*. Apart from an obvious difference in size, the autozooids also differ in the size and shape of the primary orifice, which in *R. novella* is almost as long as wide (*R. novella*: autozoooid length 0.54 ± 0.06 ; width 0.38 ± 0.03 ; orifice length 0.13 ± 0.002 ; width 0.14 ± 0.003 ; avicularium length 0.23 ± 0.04). *R. praecipua* lacks the suboral umbo seen in *R. novella* and also the disto-laterally directed, lateral suboral avicularium characteristic of that species. The enlarged, proximo-laterally directed avicularium which occurs in some autozooids of *R. novella* is very much smaller than that of *R. praecipua*.

ETYMOLOGY

Latin, *praecipuus*, extraordinary.

