

Turbicellepora ovioris new species
Plate 62A-C

Type material Holotype: NHM 2000.4.11.282, Square Reef, Great Barrier Reef, 10m.

Other material examined SBMNH 365759, **514-87**; SBMNH 365760-561, **407-84**; SBMNH 365762, **406-84**.

Description Colony multilaminar, forming nodular encrustations. Autozooids strongly convex, separated by deep grooves (ca 0.56 x 0.40 mm). Frontal shield smoothly calcified, with a few, large, conspicuous marginal pores. Primary orifice longer than wide (ca 0.23 x 0.19 mm), egg-shaped, boundary of the deeply rounded anter and broad, V-shaped poster highlighted by large, triangular, medially directed condyles, poster comprising about one-third orifice length. No peristome. No spines. No oral avicularia. Vicarious avicularia common, varying in size, rostrum broadly spatulate, narrow-waisted just distal of complete crossbar, large rostral palate with smooth, raised edges, cupped distally, opesia small, oval. Ovicell globular, as wide as long, with smooth calcification and numerous, large, irregularly shaped frontal pores, closed my maternal operculum. Basal pore chambers present.

Etymology From *ovum*, L. egg; *oris*, L. mouth. Named for the shape of the primary orifice.

Remarks *Turbicellepora ovioris* is characterised by its large, egg-shaped primary orifice, with large condyles, and the lack of the oral avicularia seen in most other *Turbicellepora* species.

In every other species of *Turbicellepora* examined, the shape of the primary orifice, especially the width and depth of the proximal sinus and the size, shape and orientation of the lateral condyles, is the most diagnostic of characters. The size and shape and position of the oral avicularia is also a key feature. *T. ovioris* does not produce oral avicularia which appears to be unique within the genus. It is unquestionably assigned to the correct genus from the overall shape of the orifice, the presence of vicarious avicularia and the globular and perforate morphology of the ovicell. Some species also produce a characteristic frontal shield, such as *T. ampla* (Kirkpatrick, 1888), which has distinct marginal folds.

Examination of part of the type material of *Turbicellepora megasoma* (MacGillivray, 1888) (NHM 1897.5.1.979, 980) from Port Phillip Heads, Victoria, shows a very similarly shaped orifice to *T. ovioris*. *T. megasoma* has a more distinct proximal sinus, however, and, although the vast majority of autozooids lack oral avicularia, a few autozooids bear them proximolaterally. The vicarious avicularia in *T. megasoma* are relatively small and egg-shaped, widest proximally at the complete crossbar, narrowing distally into a rounded tip.

One character worth noting is the presence of an expansion on the crossbar (ligula?) of the vicarious avicularia in *Turbicellepora ovioris*. This expansion is produced on the proximal side of the crossbar and supposedly acts in a similar way to the columella seen in other genera. In other, as yet, undescribed *Turbicellepora* species examined, this feature actually looks identical to a distally directed columella, i.e. a finger-like projection, but it is directed proximally rather than distally.

Distribution *Turbicellepora ovioris* is known from the Great Barrier Reef and the Solomon Islands. In the Solomon Islands it was found at Kokomu Tamba Island, Tulaghi Harbour, Nggela Sule, Florida Islands, Gibson Island, Hamilton Passage, Choiseul and Ilailon, Mbanika Island, Russell Islands.

