

Synnotum aegyptiacum (Audouin, 1826). Tilbrook, 2006, p.65, pl.8E-F.

Synnotum aegyptiacum (Audouin, 1826)
Plate 8E-F

Loricaria aegyptiaca Audouin, 1826: 243; Savigny, [1817]: Fig. 13, figs 4¹-4⁵.

Gemellaria (?) *avicularis* Pieper, 1881: 43, 47, Fig. 2, figs 5-7.

Synnotum aegyptiacum: Harmer, 1926: 398, Fig. 27, figs 3, 4 (cum syn.); Lagaaij, 1968: 351, Fig. 2; Rho & Song, 1980: 155, Fig. 3, figs 5,6; Winston, 1982: 127, Fig. 53 (cum syn.); Gordon, 1984: 43, Fig. 10, figs E, F; Rho & Seo, 1985: 11; Franssen, 1986: 57, figs 19a-g; Tilbrook, Hayward & Gordon, 2001: 52, Fig. 6A, C; Liu, Yin & Ma, 2001: 500, Fig. 31, figs 1-3.

Material examined SBMNH 365115, **401-84**; NHM 1928.3.6.220, Makassar, SW Celebes.

Description Colony erect, proximal areas repent and attached by rhizoids. Autozooids paired, distal portion (part 1 of Harmer's (1926) annotations) constituting an internode (pt. 1 = ca 0.25 x 0.10 mm), frontal area long and narrow, wider distally, tapering proximally to a point, entirely membranous, opercular sclerite completely distal, located in notch on distal wall; zooidal walls smooth, with mid-section (Harmer's part 2) of autozoid running through preceding internode between membranous areas of autozooids there; most proximal part of autozoid (Harmer's part 3) terminating at distal end of next preceding internode at level of autozooidal opercular notch. Two types of avicularia present: short-stalked pedunculate avicularia frontally on an internode between frontal areas (part 1) of autozooids below their opercula from mid-section (part 2) of a succeeding internodal autozoid; globular, flattened laterally, rostrum hooked distally with a pair of pronounced protrusions laterally, mandible acutely triangular and hooked; a single sessile avicularium basally, adjacent to opercula, covering proximal portion (part 3) of autozoid, rostrum raised, triangular, slightly hooked distally, with small pair of lateral protrusions, mandible triangular, proximolaterally orientated. Gonozooids appearing proximal to growing tip, replacing an autozoid in a pair, with extremely swollen frontal membrane. Rhizoids produced from lateral walls of part 1 of older zooids; production of rhizoids often associated with closure of frontal areas of these autozooids by secondary calcification. A single circular hole remains in these closure plates distally.

Remarks *Synnotum aegyptiacum* is characterised by its erect colony form of slender jointed bifurcating branches. It is distinguished from the other species within the genus by its single sessile and single pedunculate avicularia per internode.

The examination of Canada Balsam prepared specimens shows that only the most distal three or four internodes of a branch contain evidence of tentacles, i.e. a functioning polypide, those internodes more proximal contain reduced polypides or brown bodies (e.g. NHM 1928.3.6.220). Gonozooids are produced in this growing area, one of a pair of autozooids inflating to accommodate a developing embryo (also evident in the above specimen).

Lagaaij (1968) illustrates the known Recent distribution of this species as well as its fossil distribution, which extends back to the Miocene of Indonesia, Central America and northern South America.

Distribution *Synnotum aegyptiacum* has been recorded circum-globally in warm temperate and tropical waters at depths down to 82 m. In the Solomon Islands it was found encrusting a piece of coral debris from Mbokona Bay, Honiara, Guadalcanal.

