Mucropetraliella bennetti (Livingstone, 1926). Tilbrook & Cook, 2004, p. 332, fig. 8A,B

Mucropetraliella bennetti (Livingstone, 1926)

Figs 8A, B

Petralia vultur var. *bennetti* Livingstone, 1926: 96, pl. 6, figs 3–6.
Petralia vultur var. *bennetti*: Harmer, 1957: 720.
Mucropetraliella bennetti: Stach, 1936: 372.

Material examined

HOLOTYPE: AM U.2294, Ellison's Reef, Great Barrier Reef, 8 fathoms (15 m).

PARATYPE: BMNH 1931.10.12.5, Ellison's Reef, Great Barrier Reef, 15 m, Paradise Coll. [Presented by the Australian Museum; part of Livingstone's material].

OTHER MATERIAL EXAMINED: BMNH 2000.4.11.25, Tideaway Reef, Great Barrier Reef, 10 m, 22.07.73; BMNH 2000.4.11.27, Carter Reef, Great Barrier Reef, 16 m, 25.06.73.

Description

Colony encrusting. Autozooids polygonal (*c*. 1.20 × 0.80 mm); frontal shields flat, uniformly perforate; marginal pores indistinct, lateral walls distinct. Primary orifice longer than wide; short, narrow shelf-like condyles laterally; small, paired lateral denticles and a moderately wide median denticle (approximately one-third width of orifice); seven to nine oral spines (most commonly eight). Suboral mucro small, associated avicularium small, oval; rostrum minutely serrated distally, mandible semicircular. Very long lateral avicularium, with raised, serrated, parallel-sided rostrum, directed laterally and proximally; mandible long, parallel-sided, curving basally; complete crossbar with a columella. Ovicells prominent, minutely perforate, smooth. Single, small radicular chamber distally, often accompanied by one or more minute chambers.

Remarks

The very long lateral avicularia, and the minute suboral mucro distinguish *Mucropetraliella bennetti* from *M. serrata* and *M. tuberosa*. These characters, in conjunction with the large number of oral spines, distinguish this species from all other species of *Mucropetraliella*. *M. vultur* (Hincks, 1882) and *M. serrata* have six spines, *M. magnifica* (Busk, 1884), *M. neozelanica* (Livingstone, 1929), *M. capricornensis* (Tilbrook *et al.*, 2001) and *M. tuberosa* have four spines, and *M. loculifera* has two to four spines. In other species of *Mucropetraliella* spines are absent.

Mucropetraliella bennetti is known only from the Great Barrier Reef.

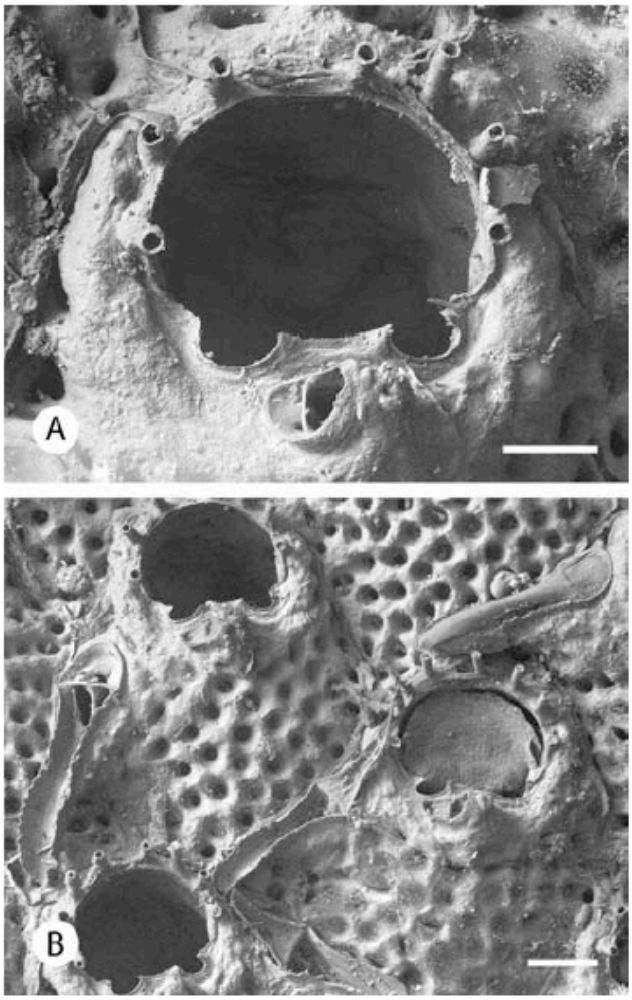

Figure 8 A, B, *Mucropetraliella bennetti* (Livingstone, 1926), Holotype AM U.2294, Ellison's Reef, Great Barrier Reef. A, primary orifice with suboral mucro and suboral avicularium, note the median denticle, associated lateral sinuses, and lateral denticles. B, two autozooids, note the large proximolaterally directed frontal avicularia. A, scale bar 100 μm; B, scale bar 200 μm.