

PARASMITTINA GALERITA RYLAND & HAYWARD
(Fig. 14A,B)

Parasmittina galerita: Ryland & Hayward 1992: 270, fig. 21d–f.

Parasmittina latiavicularia: Ryland & Hayward 1992: 270, fig. 22a–c.

Description

Colony encrusting, multilaminar. Autozooids rectangular to irregularly polygonal, convex, separated by thickened sutures; $0.55\text{--}0.70 \times 0.30\text{--}0.45$ mm. Frontal shield coarsely nodular, with a single series of large marginal pores. Primary orifice longer than wide; lyrula short, rectangular, with straight distal edge and cusped corners, occupying about half proximal orifice width; condyles rounded, downcurved, finely denticulate. 1–2 distal oral spines present in early ontogeny only. Peristome consisting mostly of prominent paired lateral lappets, deeply concave proximally. Avicularia polymorphic, numerous, mostly lateral-oral, single or paired, with acutely triangular, finely denticulate rostrum, this directed medially and ascending the side of the peristomial lappet; similar avicularia often present distal to ovicell; similar-sized avicularia with parallel-sided, distally rounded rostrum typically developed along margins of zooids, proximolateral to peristome and proximally directed. Enlarged avicularia frequent: proximal portion lateral to orifice, rostrum proximally directed, extending along most or all of the margin of the zooid, broadly and asymmetrically spatulate, with upturned, irregularly toothed rim. Ovicell about as wide as long, with numerous small frontal pores; peristome forms a thin rim curving above the ovicell aperture.

Remarks

Parasmittina galerita is very similar to *Parasmittina latiavicularia* (Kirkpatrick, 1888) with which it has been confused previously. Examination of Kirkpatrick's holotype specimen, however, shows that the two species differ in several aspects: autozooids in *P. latiavicularia* are 50% larger than in *P. galerita*; while the primary orifices are almost identical in size and shape, the denticulate condyles seen in both species are smaller in *P. galerita*; the characteristic paired lateral-oral avicularia of *P. latiavicularia* are more acute and constant whereas in *P. galerita* they are shorter and often paired with an oval, shoe-shaped avicularium; consequently the peristome is larger in *P. latiavicularia* and entire. *Parasmittina galerita* has large spatulate avicularia, not seen in *P. latiavicularia*. The frontal shield in *P. latiavicularia* is finely granular, in *P. galerita* coarsely nodular; finally, the ovicells differ, with *P. latiavicularia* having smaller, more separated pores compared to the larger more closely packed pores of *P. galerita*. *Parasmittina latiavicularia* is thus restricted to Mauritius. Another very similar species, *P. leviavicularia* Soule & Soule, 1973, may prove to be synonymous with *P. galerita* but the type material has not been examined. If the two species are found to be the same then the known range of *P. galerita* is extended but the Soules' name has taxonomic precedence.

Distribution

Described from Heron Island, off Queensland, Australia, Ryland & Hayward (1992) noted that one of Harmer's (1957) specimens of *Smittina parsevalii* (Audouin, 1826) from Makassar Strait was the same as their new species. Several colonies of *Parasmittina galerita* were found on coral rubble at Iririki Island, reinforcing its presence in the western Pacific.

