PARASMITTINA HASTINGSAE SOULE & SOULE
(Fig. 14C,D)

Parasmittina hastingsae Soule & Soule, 1973: 417, fig. 9C,D.

Parasmittina hastingsae: Winston & Heimberg, 1986: 26, figs 59–63; Ryland & Hayward, 1992: 268, fig. 21a–c; Hayward & Parker, 1994: 63, fig. 4A–F.

Smittina trispinosa var. *spathulata* Hincks, 1884c: 284, pl. 9, fig. 4.

Description

Colony encrusting, multilaminar. Autozooids oval to irregularly polygonal, convex, separated by distinct sutures; 0.40–0.55 × 0.25–0.30 mm. Frontal shield coarsely nodular, with large and conspicuous marginal pores. Primary orifice rounded, about as wide as long; lyrula short, straight-edged, occupying about half proximal orifice width; condyles thin, acute, downcurved. Spines variable: 1–3, or often absent, present in early ontogeny only, bases later obscured. Peristome developed as prominent flared, lateral lappets, rim deeply embayed proximally, incomplete distally except in ovicelled zooids. Avicularia sporadic, infrequent in present material but displaying polymorphism characteristic of the species: most commonly with an acute triangular rostrum (of varying length), randomly directed, generally one lateral-oral with others found anywhere on frontal shield; the second, oval, shoe-shaped, generally proximally directed, lateral-oral; or gigantic, seemingly in place of the oval avicularium, with a swollen cystid, rostrum parallel-sided, linguiform, sharply serrated distally, proximally directed. Ovicell about as wide as long, with numerous irregular frontal pores; peristome forms a low ridge frontally, an ooecial cover develops distally.

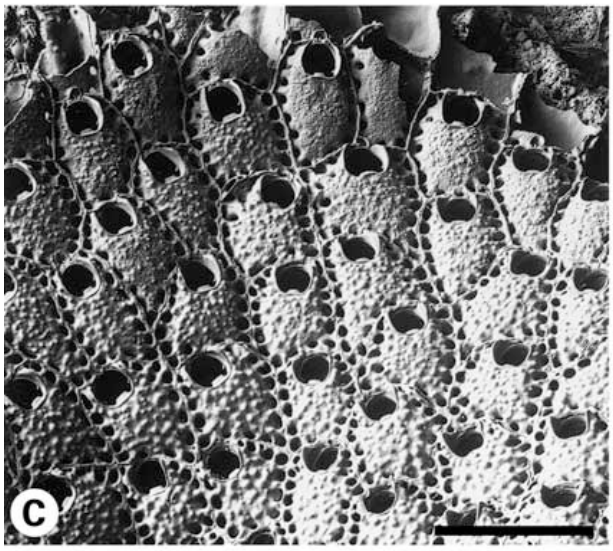
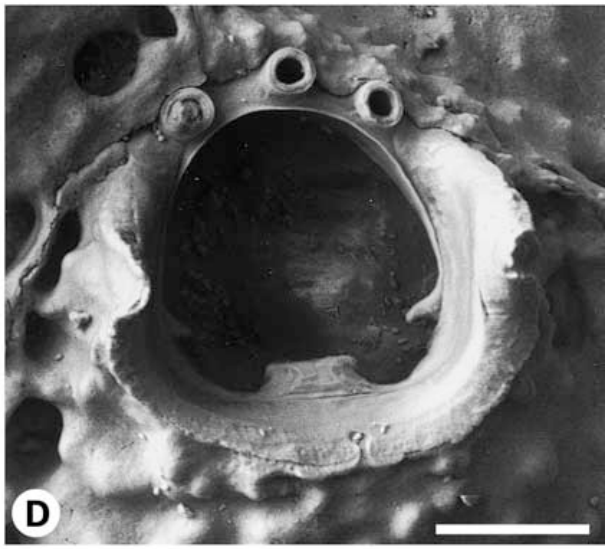
Remarks

Parasmittina hastingsae is characterized especially by its primary orifice, which has a shallow quadrate lyrula and very small, triangular, lateral condyles.

In some specimens, including part of the type series and material from Heron Island, a proportion of the autozooids in the colony develops obscure denticulation on the mid-distal portion of the orifice rim.

The only slight difference between the colony from Vanuatu and a paratype specimen of *Parasmittina hastingsae* (NHM 1992.4.27.2, Hawaii) is that the gigantic adventitious avicularia on the Vanuatu specimen are longer than those found on the paratype specimen from Hawaii.

Distribution

Described from Hawaii, where it was reportedly particularly common, this species has been found subsequently from Komodo, Indonesia (Winston & Heimberg, 1986), Victoria, Australia (Hincks, 1884b) and Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef (Ryland & Hayward, 1992), where again it was reported as occurring abundantly on the reef flat.

One small colony of *Parasmittina hastingsae* was found on a piece of coral rubble from Poanangisu, Efate.