

*Steginoporella mandibulata* Harmer, 1926. Tilbrook, 2006, p.83, pl.14B.

**Steginoporella mandibulata** Harmer, 1926  
Plate 14B

*Steginoporella mandibulata* Harmer, 1926: 279, Fig. 16, Fig. 20; Fig. 17, Fig. 4.

*Steginoporella mandibulata*: Canu & Bassler, 1929: 145, Fig. 15, figs 3, 4; Pouyet & David, 1979b: 786, text-Fig. 2; Fig. 2, figs 5, 9.

**Material examined** SBMNH 365163-164, **515-87**; SBMNH 365165-169, **501-87**; SBMNH 365170-171, **403-84**; SBMNH 365172, **411-84**; SBMNH 365173, **514-87**; SBMNH 365174, **506-87**; NHM 1882.10.18.123, Darros Island, Amirante Islands, 22 fms.

**Description** Colony forming flat, encrusting sheets. Autozooids large (0.75 x 0.55 mm) domed distally, concave proximally, distinct. Frontal area covered by thick, opaque membrane, horn-coloured, bordered by a thin, raised mural rim with obvious suture. A-zooids with domed operculum, as wide as zooid, over half as long, dark-brown arching sclerite and a submarginal series of four to eight small teeth on inner surface. Cryptocyst occupying less than half total length of autozooid; central portion flat, coarsely granular, with numerous fine perforations, surrounded by a thick, raised, non-porous, tuberculate rim, particularly prominent proximally. Polypide tube rounded, situated centrally and vertically, not visible in frontal view. Distal edge of frontal cryptocyst, immediately above polypide tube, is flared as a concave process with a small pair of robust, marginal flanges. Gymnocyst most prominent as a smooth, raised distal margin surrounding and supporting operculum, ending at lateral opercular condyles, "oral shelf" lacking. B-zooids in form of recognisable vicarious avicularia, two-thirds size of autozooids, directed distally, distal rostrum smooth gymnocystal calcification, raised laterally, proximal cryptocyst flat and granular, opesia pear-shaped, mandible triangular, arched basally.

**Remarks** The most characteristic feature of *Steginoporella mandibulata* is that its B-zooids take the recognisable form of small vicarious avicularia. This has led some authors to comment on the nature of the B-zooids themselves, suggesting that they are a form of "proto-avicularia". Its A-zooids have opercula with crescentic sclerites. It also has a median process which varies in size.

The holotype specimen of this species was unavailable for examination.

**Distribution** Originally described from a single colony from Malaysia, six colonies of *Steginoporella mandibulata* were subsequently recorded by Canu & Bassler (1929) from the southern Philippines. The specimen from the Amirante Islands in the western Indian Ocean greatly extends the known range of this seemingly rare species. In the Solomon Islands ten colonies were found encrusting small pieces of coral from a number of localities within the Florida and Russell Islands groups.

