

*Bugula scaphula*. Tilbrook, Hayward & Gordon, 2001, p.45, fig.4A,B.

***BUGULA SCAPHULA* SP. NOV.**

(Fig. 4A,B)

*Bugula* cf. *scaphoides* Hayward, 1988: 289, fig. 4a.

*Material*

Holotype: NHM 1998.8.4.238, Erakor Island reef flat, Efate, Vanuatu, 11.11.1992.

Paratypes: NHM 1997.10.6.12, NHM 1998.8.4.105, 106, NHM 1998.8.4.190,191, NHM 1998.8.4.239–242, same locality and collection data as holotype.

Other material examined: NHM 1996.4.26.24,25 (as *Bugula* cf. *scaphoides*), Tamarin reef front, Mauritius, 5 m, 24.10.1985.

*Description*

Colony comprising delicate sparse tufts; autozooids in biserial rows, bifurcating infrequently. Bifurcation of Type 3 (Harmer, 1923), zooids E and F forming the axis of the dichotomy and linked at their proximal ends by a slender connecting process. Autozooids ( $\approx 0.45 \times 0.15$  mm) with broad distal portion constituting two-thirds of total length, frontal area entirely membranous, outer distal angle acute but not spinose, inner distal angle rounded; proximal portion narrow, cylindrical, fully calcified, with an apparent flexure just proximal to distal portion. Avicularia frequent, apparently attached at the proximal end of each autozooid, but actually borne on a short peduncle that originates from the basal wall of the preceding autozooid; its length almost equivalent to the width of the autozooid opesia; domed, the rostrum pointed and downcurved. Ovicell attached to inner distal angle, globular, pedunculate, the ectooecium appearing reticulate when dried.

*Etymology*

From *scapha*, L.—light boat, skiff. Alluding to the shape of the distal portion of the autozooid.

*Remarks*

*Bugula scaphula* from Erakor Island, Vanuatu, is undoubtedly conspecific with that described by Hayward (1988) from Mauritius as *Bugula* cf. *scaphoides* Kirkpatrick. Dried colonies appear very thin, translucent, and yellow-orange. The species occurs in cryptic habitats in coral rubble and may easily be overlooked. The present material was fragmentary, as was that from Mauritius (Hayward, 1988), but both have been compared with the type material of *B. scaphoides* (Kirkpatrick, 1890), which differs from *B. scaphula* particularly in its very small avicularia. *Bugula scaphoides* was redescribed by Harmer (1926) who noted its red coloration, small avicularia and white ovicells.

*Distribution*

*Bugula scaphula* has only been found at Tamarin reef, Mauritius and Erakor Island, Efate where it often co-occurred with *Catenicella triangulifera* Harmer, 1957.

