

*Cosciniopsis lonchaea* (Busk, 1884). Tilbrook, Hayward & Gordon, 2001, p.87, fig.17C,D.

*COSCINIOPSIS LONCHAEA* (BUSK)

(Fig. 17C,D)

*Lepralia lonchaea* Busk, 1884: 146, text-fig. 43.

*Lepralia vestita* Hincks, 1885: 256, pl. 9, fig. 9.

*Cosciniopsis fusca* Canu & Bassler, 1927: 22, pl. 4, figs 3, 4.

*Gephyrophora rostrigera* Canu & Bassler, 1929: 278, text-fig. 114J–O, pl. 29, figs 6–8.

*Cosciniopsis lonchaea*: Harmer, 1957: 1083, pl. 72, figs 16, 17, 19, 20; Ryland & Hayward, 1992: 258, fig. 17b.

*Hippaliosina auriculata* Hayward, 1988: 321, pl. 9, figs e,f.

*Description*

Colony encrusting, forming small unilaminar patches; light to dark brown when dried. Autozooids oval to irregularly polygonal, strongly convex, distinct, separated by deep grooves;  $0.8\text{--}1.0 \times 0.4\text{--}0.5$  mm. Primary orifice oval, longer than wide, deep anter separated from shallow poster by small triangular condyles, surrounded by a peristome. Frontal shield tuberculate, perforated by numerous tiny pores. Adventitious avicularia single or paired, lateral-oral, very close to peristome, the raised rostrum directed distomedially towards orifice. Ovicell globular with tuberculate calcification and pores identical to those of the frontal shield. Autozoid vertical walls with basal series of septula.

*Remarks*

Ryland & Hayward (1992) stated that most autozooids in colonies from Heron Island had a single, lateral-oral avicularium, although in some zooids this was paired, on each side of the orifice, and in others an identical avicularium occurred on the distal edge of the peristome. Many colonies from Vanuatu have very few autozooids with lateral-oral avicularia whereas some may have autozooids with one, two, or even three. In some instances the distal avicularium appears on the distal edge of the ovicell.

Having examined and compared the type specimens of *Cosciniopsis lonchaea* and *Hippaliosina auriculata* Hayward, 1988, there is no doubt as to the conspecificity of the two specimens.

Winston (1986) illustrated a species she described as *Gephyrophora rubra* Osburn, 1940, from Jamaica. Her material appears, however, not to be *Gephyrophora* Busk, 1884, as it lacks the characteristic proximal peristomial spiramen. It is extremely similar to *C. lonchaea* and, if not conspecific, is at least congeneric. However, Cook (1985) synonymises *Gephyrophora rubra* Osburn, 1940 with *Aptonella violacea* Canu & Bassler, 1928b from Brazil, going on to discuss problems associated with these genera. Having examined the material she assigned to *A. violacea* it is obvious that it differs from that illustrated by Winston (1986) as *G. rubra*, which also lacks the peristomial spiramen. *Aptonella violacea* differs from *C. lonchaea* in a number of ways: it is purple in colour when dried, *C. lonchaea*

is brown; the poster of the primary orifice is wider and the condyles more proximally positioned than in *C. lonchaea*; and the lateral oral avicularia (when present) in *A. violacea* are more proximal and often proximomedially directed, unlike those seen in *C. lonchaea* which are positioned lateral to the centre of the orifice and disto-medially directed. Despite these differences it is felt that these two species may be congeneric with *Cosciniopsis*, a genus known for its strikingly pigmented species, taking precedence over *Aptonella*.

*Distribution*

*Cosciniopsis lonchaea* has a known distribution in the tropical shallow seas of the Indo–West Pacific, from the Red Sea in the west to Tahiti and Hawaii in the east. Although uncommon, the occurrence of *C. lonchaea* on coral rubble, from Erakor Island and Port Vila Harbour, was not unexpected.

