

Celleporaria pilaefera (Canu & Bassler, 1929). Tilbrook, Hayward & Gordon, 2001, p.70, fig.13A-C.

CELLEPORARIA PILAEFERA (CANU & BASSLER)

(Fig. 13A-C)

Holoporella pilaefera Canu & Bassler, 1929: 422, pl. 60, figs 2-6.

Celleporaria pilaefera: Hayward, 1988: 343, pl. 16, figs e,f.

Description

Colony encrusting, forming a multilaminar sheet. Recumbent autozooids broad, rectangular to irregularly polygonal; frontal shield convex, with a single series of large, conspicuous marginal pores, coarsely nodular in later ontogeny. Primary orifice wider than long, distal border almost straight but arched frontally; short, bluntly tapered condyles present in proximalateral corners; no oral spines, no peristome. A small adventitious avicularium present medially on the proximal edge of the orifice, rostrum elliptical, orientated perpendicular to frontal plane, facing laterally; cystid developing a short apical spike, or sometimes a more substantial column, especially prominent in some autozooids. Vicarious avicularia sparse, distinctive: rostrum narrowest at the crossbar, spoon-shaped and deeply cupped distally. Ovicell asymmetrically developed, typically occupying the distal and one lateral border of the orifice, elongate and projecting high above the orifice; frontal surface flat and membranous, the cap-like calcified portion thick and finely granular. Vertical walls with small uniporous septula.

Measurements

(1997.10.6.30), means and standard deviations, mm ($n=20$).

Autozooid length 0.45 ± 0.04 , width 0.36 ± 0.05 .

Orifice length 0.12 ± 0.007 , width 0.15 ± 0.01 .

Remarks

Small colonies of this species were found in samples from Erakor and Iririki Islands, Port Vila Harbour, and Poanangisu, encrusting dead *Acropora* and fragments of tile. It is identical to the Mauritian species attributed to *Celleporaria pilaefera* by Hayward (1988), but it should be noted that *C. pilaefera* (Canu & Bassler) remains to be adequately redescribed and figured. Harmer (1957) described *C. pilaefera* from three Siboga stations and listed further material from the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. However, his account differs in some points from that of Canu & Bassler (1929) and consequently is excluded from the present synonymy until all specimens have been re-examined.

Celleporaria pilaefera is similar to *C. columnaris* (Busk, 1881) but may be distinguished from that species by its proportionately wider orifice, smaller condyles, and conspicuous marginal pores. Further, it lacks the variety of small frontal adventitious avicularia so numerous in *C. columnaris*.

