

Microporella epihalimeda Tilbrook, 2006, p.213, pl.46C-E.

Microporella epihalimeda new species
Plate 46C-E

?*Microporella orientalis*: Liu, Yin & Ma 2001: 660, pl. 68, figs 1,2.

Type material Holotype: SBMNH 365641, **506-87**.

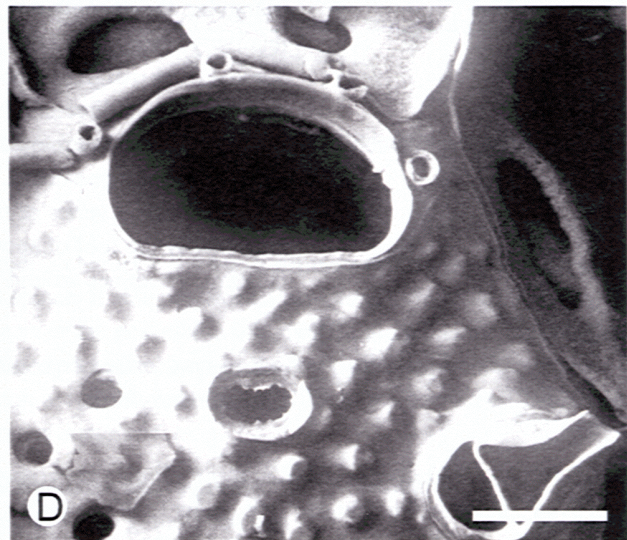
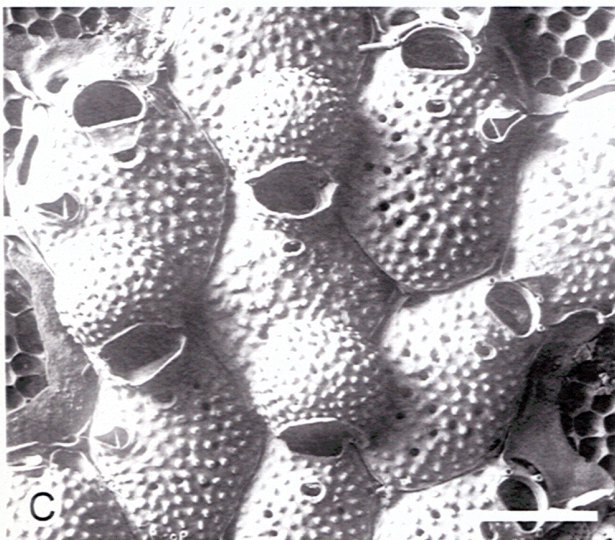
Description Colony encrusting, developing small colonies. Autozooids relatively small, roughly hexagonal (ca 0.45 x 0.35 mm). Primary orifice smooth, rounded, wider than long (ca 0.11 x 0.09 mm), no condyles visible. Three or four equally spaced spines, five in periancestrula zooids, none visible in ovicellate zooids. Ascopore half of one orifice length proximal to orifice itself, slightly raised, surrounded by a thin rim, its median process almost negligible, the opening bean-shaped. A single avicularium, relatively small, slightly proximolateral to ascopore, distolaterally directed, the rostrum abruptly tapered, crossbar complete, mandible setiform, length equal to zooid width, no lateral laminae or basal processes. Ovicell personate, perforate, globular, prominent, resting on frontal shield of distal zooid. Fertile zooids with a thick peristomial rim passing distal to ascopore, fusing with ovicell on either side. Ancestrula tatiform, eleven spines around opesia.

Etymology From *epi*-, Gr. upon, on. Named for its presence on *Halimeda* species of algae.

Remarks *Microporella epihalimeda* is characterised by its smooth rounded orifice, four oral spines and personate ovicell.

Microporella epihalimeda is superficially similar to *M. orientalis* but it lacks the denticulate distal oral rim found in the latter species. The species illustrated by Liu *et al.* (2001) as *Microporella orientalis* bears a striking similarity to *M. epihalimeda* but their figures, in particular the ability to determine whether the distal rim of the orifice is smooth or denticulate, is not adequate enough to determine their conspecificity.

Distribution Two small colonies and one large brooding colony of *Microporella epihalimeda* were found on a small piece of the alga *Halimeda* sp. from Anuha Reefs, Florida Islands, Solomon Islands. These were associated with a small colony of *M. pectinata* and a small *Bryopesanser* colony.



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