

Schizoporella gibsonensis new species
Plate 43C

Type material Holotype: SBMNH 365573, **407-84**.
Paratype: SBMNH 365574, **407-84**.

Description Colony encrusting, multilaminar. Autozooids irregularly polygonal, convex, distinct (ca 0.50 x 0.50 mm). Frontal shield evenly perforated by a number of round pores, each in a shallow depression, numerous marginal pores, lateral walls raised. Primary orifice longer than wide (ca 0.13 x 0.12 mm), arched distal border with a narrow calcified ledge below rim, proximal border with a wide saucer-shaped median sinus, one quarter the depth of the distal area, condyles broad, flat and rounded, at the junction of the proximal and distal areas. No oral spines. Single, large adventitious avicularium frontally, cystid off-set from midline, large and inflated, rostrum triangular, abruptly tapered distal to complete crossbar, with a slender, acuminate tip, arching basally, proximal area triangular in shape, mandible acutely triangular, proximomedially orientated. Ovicells prominent, globular, regularly perforated, recumbent on frontal shield of distal autozooid.

Etymology Named for the type locality, Gibson Island, in the Hamilton Passage, Choiseul.

Remarks *Schizoporella gibsonensis* is characterised by its primary orifice with its wide, saucer-shaped sinus and broad, flat condyles. The large, proximomedially directed frontal avicularium appears to be unique within species of this genus; most other species have distally or distolaterally directed avicularia. Some species however, do produce an inflated frontal avicularium which is more proximofrontally directed than proximomedially directed and all but covers the frontal shield of the zooid on which it is developed (pers. obs.; see also *S. erratoidea* Liu *et al.*, 2001: pl. 49, fig. 5). The distal-oral ledge, obvious in *S. gibsonensis*, has not been described in other species of this genus, even though they are apparent in a number of European species, such as those described and illustrated by Hayward & Ryland (1995b), e.g. *S. dunkeri* (Reuss, 1848), *S. patula* Hayward & Ryland, 1995b and *S. cornualis* Hayward & Ryland, 1995b.

Schizoporella gibsonensis differs from *S. dunkeri* and *S. errata* (Waters, 1878), which were both found from Vanuatu by Tilbrook *et al.* (2001), in having a wider proximal sinus; *S. dunkeri* has a narrow, slit-like median sinus and *S. errata* has a shallow U-shaped sinus. These latter two species also have distolaterally directed avicularia.

Schizoporella gibsonensis differs from *S. erratoidea* (from the South China Sea) in having a wider, shallower orificial sinus and larger articulatory condyles. *S. erratoidea* usually produces small triangular distally, or distolaterally, directed suboral avicularia, but on occasion large inflated cystids of a proximofrontally directed avicularium all but cover the zooidal frontal shield. These have a superficial resemblance to the avicularia developed in *S. gibsonensis*.

Distribution *Schizoporella gibsonensis* is known from only two small specimens, both from Gibson Island, Hamilton Passage, Choiseul.

Schizoporella gibsonensis Tilbrook, 2006. Tilbrook, 2006, p.188, pl.43C.

