

***Eutheama forrestensis* n. sp.**
(Acotylea, Polycladida, Plathelminthes) from Australia

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Abstract

A new species, *Eutheama forrestensis* n. sp., Acotylea, Polycladida, is described from sandy beaches of the eastern coastline of the tropic region of Australia. The species lives both in surface layers and deeper in the sediment down to the coastal groundwater table.

Key words: Plathelminthes, Polycladida, Acotylea, taxonomy, ecology

Introduction

Most of the known marine polyclads live dominantly on hard and soft bottoms, among shells and seaweeds, as well as on colonial animals, especially Tunicata. Generally, tropical and subtropical sandy sediments are less settled with polyclads, especially interstitial habitats, than boreal ones. From a total of 976 valid polyclad species only a few species are known to be living obligately in interstitial habitats. Marcus (1949) collected *Theama evelinae* Marcus, 1949 from Brazilian sandy beaches. Later on, Sopott-Ehlers and Schmidt (1975) described 8 species from the interstitium of sandy beaches of the Galapagos Islands. In 1983, Faubel collected *Didangia mactanensis* Faubel, 1983 from sand mixed with coral breccia on Mactan Island, Philippines.

During the last 15 years, intensive taxonomical studies were undertaken on Polycladida distributed along the Great Barrier Reef of Australia (Newman & Cannon 1994a,b, 1996a,b, 1997a,b, 1998, 2000). As a result many new cotylean species were found, dominantly members of the taxa Pseudocerotidae Lang, 1884 and Euryleptidae Stimpson, 1857. Of the suborder Acotylea only *Myoramyxa pardalota* Newman & Cannon 1997, Plehniidae Bock, 1913 and 7 species of Stylochidae Stimpson, 1857 could be detected (Newman