



Review of the bryozoan genus *Bryopesanser* Tilbrook, 2006 (Escharinidae: Cheilostomata) with the description of 11 new species

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Abstract

Geographically widespread material originally assigned to the Floridan species *Bryopesanser pesanseris* (Smitt, 1873) was thoroughly examined and found to mask a hitherto unknown diversity. Smitt's (1873) species has previously been noted as "well-known and widely distributed" but this is not the case. This paper reviews the species previously assigned to *Bryopesanser* Tilbrook, 2006 (*B. pesanseris*, *B. capitaneus*, *B. grandicella*, and *B. latesco*) and describes 11 new species (*B. tonsillorum* n. sp., *B. gardineri* n. sp., *B. puncturella* n. sp., *B. thricyng* n. sp., *B. ascendosolaris* n. sp., *B. ephymatotes* n. sp., *B. hebelomaia* n. sp., *B. lobiones* n. sp., *B. crebricollis* n. sp., *B. baderae* n. sp., *B. tiara* n. sp.). All the *Bryopesanser* species are, to a greater or lesser extent, geographically limited in their distribution. However, two species are more widespread than the rest and truly Indo-Pacific in their distribution: *B. latesco* is recorded from the Red Sea, across the Indo-Pacific to the Caribbean coast of Panama; *B. tonsillorum* n.sp. is even more broadly distributed, from Sri Lanka and Indonesia to the Pacific coast of Colombia and also West Africa.

Key words: Bryozoa, review, *Bryopesanser*, new species, Indo-Pacific, Atlantic, Caribbean

Introduction

Smitt (1873) introduced the species *Hippothoa pes anseris* for material collected from west of the Dry Tortugas, a small group of islands west of Key West, Florida Keys (24°37'42" N, 82°52'24" W). Since then, Smitt's (1873) species has been accorded a circumtropical distribution — Madeira (Norman 1909), Colombia (Hastings 1930), Brazil (Marcus 1939), South Africa (Hayward & Cook 1983), Mauritius (Hayward 1988), Red Sea (Waters 1909), Sri Lanka (Thornely 1905), Philippines (Scholz 1991), South China Sea (Lui *et al.* 2001), Vanuatu (Tilbrook *et al.* 2001), New Zealand, including the Kermadec Ridge (Powell 1967; Gordon 1984), Hawaiian Islands (Soule *et al.* 1987), and elsewhere. Subsequently, Canu & Bassler (1929) described *Mastigophora grandicella* (here reassigned to *Bryopesanser*) from the Philippines. This species has not been recorded since.

The perceived circumtropical distribution of Smitt's (1873) species remained until Tilbrook (2006) noted the presence of a complex of morphologically distinct species in material he examined in the collections of the Natural History Museum, London (NHMUK) during his work on the Solomon Islands cheilostome fauna. As part of this work Tilbrook (2006) erected the new family Escharinidae to accommodate his newly erected genus *Bryopesanser* (for *Hippothoa pes anseris* Smitt, 1873) and the genera *Bactridium* Reuss, 1848, *Chiastosella* Bassler, 1934, *Dightonia* Brown, 1948, *Escharina* Milne Edwards, 1836, *Herentia* Gray, 1848, *Phaeostachys* Hayward, 1979, *Schizobathysella* Canu & Bassler, 1917, *Therenia* David & Pouyet, 1978 and *Toretocheilum* Rogick, 1960. Tilbrook (2006) also described two new species of *Bryopesanser* (*B. capitaneus* from South China Sea, Indonesia and the Solomon Islands, and *B. latesco* from Indo-Malaysia, the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea), noting that he had distinguished eight further species in the material at the NHMUK. All of these species, whilst sharing morphological characters such as paired distal avicularia, a similar oral-spine number and orificial shape, were distinguished using several more-subtle characters, particularly pertaining to the primary orifice, avicularia, frontal pore morphology and overall zooid size.