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***Margelopsis gibbesii* (McCrary, 1859) (Cnidaria, Hydrozoa): taxonomic review, and conservation of usage by designation of a lectotype**

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Abstract

The binomen *Nemopsis gibbesii* McCrary, 1859, originally applied to a species of hydromedusa and its supposed hydroid from South Carolina, USA, has been known for more than a century to encompass two species. The medusa stage is conspecific with that of *Nemopsis bachei* L. Agassiz, 1849, while the hydroid stage is referable to the genus *Margelopsis* Hartlaub, 1897. Both that hydroid, and the medusa stage now subjectively linked to it, are commonly assigned to *M. gibbesii*. With no type having ever been designated for McCrary's species, a lectotype is designated to stabilize nomenclature of the species and serve as the standard for application of the name. In the absence of type specimens, an illustration of the hydroid of *N. gibbesii* by McCrary is chosen as lectotype, thereby conserving the name *Margelopsis gibbesii* in its accustomed usage. Hydroids and medusae of the species are re-described from new material, the cnidome of both stages is characterized, and a taxonomic review is given. The hydroid stage is reported for the first time since its original description in the mid-19th century. Medusae of *M. gibbesii* are also seen infrequently, having been reported only six times earlier.

Key words: Anthoathecata, Aplanulata, Hydroidolina, hydroids, hydromedusae, invertebrates, Medusozoa, taxonomy, zoological nomenclature, zoology

Introduction

In a classic paper on Hydrozoa and hydrozoan life cycles, McCrary (1859) described and named several widely familiar families, genera and species of hydroids and hydromedusae from Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, USA. Taxonomic instability currently exists over *Nemopsis gibbesii* McCrary, 1859, one of the species he described. For more than 130 years, the binomen has been known to have originally included the medusa stage of one species and the hydroid of another. The two species are so different that they have been assigned to different genera (*Nemopsis* L. Agassiz, 1849; *Margelopsis* Hartlaub, 1897) and even families (Bougainvilliidae Lütken, 1850; Margelopsidae Mayer, 1910). No name-bearing type has ever been designated to fix a standard of reference for application of the name *N. gibbesii*.

In the interests of nomenclatural stability, a lectotype is officially designated herein to objectively define the taxon. The identity of the species is thereby stabilized in conformity with the taxonomic concept of *Margelopsis gibbesii*, rather than as a synonym of *Nemopsis bachei* L. Agassiz, 1849. Prevailing usage of the name in literature on Hydrozoa is thus upheld. Both hydroid and medusa stages of the species are described from new material in collections at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Systematic account

Phylum Cnidaria Verrill, 1865