

NOTE ON OPHIOCONIS FORBESI (HELLER 1862)
(ECHINODERMATA, OPHIUROIDEA) FROM THE ADRIATIC SEA

Dušan ZAVODNIK
Center for Marine Research, "Rudjer Bošković" Institute
Rovinj, Yugoslavia

ABSTRACT: New findings of O. forbesi in the Adriatic sea are reported. The ecology and morphological variations of the species are discussed.

RÉSUMÉ: Localités nouvelles d' O. forbesi dans la Mer Adriatique, son écologie et variations morphologiques sont discutés.

Although the Island of Vis is the type locality for Ophioconis forbesi, it was not found in the Adriatic since Heller (1862, 1868) and Grube (1864). Only recently, twelve specimens were sampled in the North Adriatic by the author in the vicinity of Rovinj and Rijeka, in the Channel of Uniže and near the Island of Lošinj. This species is reported also from the western Mediterranean and eastern Atlantic (Koehler 1924, Cherbonnier 1958, Tortonese 1965, Cherbonnier & Sibuet 1972, Fredj 1974).

It seems that in the Adriatic Sea, O. forbesi prefers sandy and detritic bottoms with less sedimentation, in the depth of about 30-50 meters. Our specimens were caught at the temperatures of 11.0 - 15.9°C and the salinity of 37.18 - 38.33 ‰. Population densities could not be established.

The live specimens are usually clay-yellowish, with dark brown or red-brown spots and rings on aboral side of the disc and the arms. The d.d. of the specimens studied measure between 5-7.5 mm. Proximally, there are three to four tentacular scales, which number reduces to typically two scales only on fourth or fifth arm article. Proximal 6-13 articles carry 6 (exceptionally 7) brachial spines, while distally only five spines are present. Similar variations of tentacular scales and brachial spines were noted also in specimens taken in other localities (A.M. Clark, G. Cherbonnier, E. Tortonese - private communications).

Table I.: New findings of Ophioconis forbesi in the North Adriatic

Locality	Station	Date	Depth (m)	Bottom	O.forbesi (No.spm.)
Rovinj	253	14.04.1960	27	Coastal detritic partly mixed with ooze	1
Rovinj	11	22.05.1961	32	Coastal detritic	2
Unije	43/1	24.07.1971	47	Sandy	1
Unije	44/1	24.07.1971	52	Sandy	1
Lošinj	L 1	23.02.1974	28	Sandy	5
Lošinj	L 1	22.05.1974	28	Sandy	1
Rijeka	17	24.11.1976	38	Coastal detritic	1

Bibliography

- Cherbonnier, G. (1958): Echinodermes. Faune marine des Pyrénées-Orientales, 2:67 pp.
- Cherbonnier, G. et Sibuet, M. (1972): Résultats scientifiques de la campagne Noratlante: Astérides et Ophiurides. Bull. Mus. Hist. Nat. Paris, 3^e sér., 102 (Zool. 76): 1333-1394.
- Fredj, G. (1974): Stockage et exploitation des données en écologie marine - C. Mem. Inst. Océanogr. Monaco, 7:52
- Grube, A.E. (1864): Die Insel Lussin und ihre Meeresfauna. Breslau.
- Heller, C. (1862): Untersuchungen über die Litoralfauna des Adriatischen Meeres. Sitzungsver. Akad. Wiss. Wien, 46:422
- Heller, C. (1868): Die Zoophyten und Echinodermen des Adriatischen Meeres, Wien
- Koehler, R. (1924): Les Echinodermes des mers d'Europe - I. Paris.
- Tortonese, E. (1965): Fauna d'Italia - VI: Echinodermata. Bologna.