

Case 2657

Marssonopora Lang, 1914 (Bryozoa, Cheilostomata): proposed designation of *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925 as the type species

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is the designation of the nominal species *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925 as the type species of the Cretaceous bryozoan genus *Marssonopora* Lang, 1914, since the original type species (by monotypy), *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow, 1839, was based on misidentified material. The proposed designation is in accordance with usage of the last 75 years.

1. Lang (1914b, p. 438) established the nominal genus *Marssonopora* to which he referred a single species, *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow, 1839, which he gave as the 'genotype'. *Cellepora dispersa* had been first briefly described by v. Hagenow (1839, p. 280) without figure, and later redescribed and figured by v. Hagenow (in Geinitz, 1846, p. 629, pl. 23b, fig. 55). Although v. Hagenow's type material of this species is known to have been destroyed (Voigt, 1959), the species is clearly not the same as that identified as *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow by Lang (1914b) when describing *Marssonopora*. This misidentification was originally pointed out by Voigt (1930, p. 412).

2. The material of *Cellepora dispersa* studied by v. Hagenow (1839, p. 280) and also by v. Hagenow in Geinitz (1846) came from the Baltic island of Rügen (now in the German Democratic Republic), from deposits regarded as Lower Maastrichtian. V. Hagenow's original and subsequent descriptions both made clear the runner-like form of the colony and long autozooids with thread-like proximal parts (caudae). The large size of colonies encrusting 'Gryphaea' shells was noted by v. Hagenow in Geinitz (1846). Spine bases, avicularia and ovicells were not mentioned in either of v. Hagenow's descriptions of *Cellepora dispersa*, or in a later redescription by Marsson (1887, p. 91, pl. 9, fig. 9).

3. The '*Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow' described by Lang (1914b) was also from Rügen. Lang's only figured specimen (pl. 34, fig. 3), registered in the collections of the British Museum (Natural History) as D. 11498, has the same runner-like form and long, caudate autozooids as v. Hagenow's species. However, Lang's figured specimen

and other specimens cited by him as '*Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow' differ from v. Hagenow's species in four important respects:

(a) a large number of spine bases occur on the mural rim surrounding the opesia of the autozooids (described by Lang as beads on the termen). In well-described specimens the spines from these bases are seen to overarch the opesia (see Voigt, 1987, figs. 2H, J);

(b) ovicells are present;

(c) small heterozooids (?avicularia) are often present between successive autozooids;

(d) all known colonies are small in size.

4. Whereas *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow in lacking ovicells appears to belong to the suborder Malacostegina Levinsen, 1902 (see d'Hondt, 1985; Taylor, 1987), the ovicellate *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow sensu Lang, 1914 belongs to the order Neocheilostomina d'Hondt, 1985. Voigt (1930, p. 409, pl. 1, fig. 1) described specimens of *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow, including topotypes from Rügen, and assigned the species to the malacostegine genus *Herpetopora* Lang, 1914, the type species of which is *Herpetopora anglica* Lang (1914a, p. 6) from the Upper Cretaceous. Thomas & Larwood (1960, p. 371) revised the type and several other species of *Herpetopora*, and placed the genus in subjective synonymy with *Pyripora* d'Orbigny, 1849 (type species *Criserpia pyriformis* Michelin, 1847 from the Neogene). However, Voigt (1982, p. 51) and Taylor (1988, p. 519) have given reasons for rejecting this synonymy and retaining *Herpetopora* as a separate genus.

5. *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow sensu Lang, 1914 was redescribed by Voigt (1930, p. 412, pl. 1, fig. 18) as '*Marssonopora dispersa* Lang (non v. Hagenow)'. Voigt (1930) assigned two further species to *Marssonopora*: *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925 from the Lower Maastrichtian of Moen, and *Marssonopora catenularia* Voigt, 1930 from the Danian of Faxé. Although Levinsen (1925, p. 316) failed to observe heterozooids in *Membranipora densispina*, the occurrence of approximately 18 spine bases and similar sized autozooids suggests that this Lower Maastrichtian species is the same as *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow sensu Lang, 1914. Two Recent species have also been referred to *Marssonopora*: *Marssonopora uncifera* Canu & Bassler, 1928 and *Marssonopora kermadecensis* Gordon, 1984.

6. Article 70 b of the Code specifies that misidentified type species should be referred to the Commission. In order to maintain nomenclatural stability, it is recommended that *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925 be designated as the type species of *Marssonopora* Lang, 1914. This is apparently the earliest available name for the species misidentified as *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow, 1839 by Lang when originally proposing *Marssonopora*. The alternative choice of *Cellepora dispersa* v. Hagenow, 1839 would not only contravene current usage (e.g. Gordon, 1984) of *Marssonopora* for ovicellate runner-like cheilostomes with spinose autozooids and small heterozooids, but would place *Marssonopora* Lang, 1914 in subjective synonymy with *Herpetopora* Lang, 1914.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all designations of type species for the nominal genus *Marssonopora* Lang, 1914 and to designate *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925 as the type species;

- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Marssonopora* Lang, 1914 (gender; feminine), type species by designation in (1) above *Membranipora densispina* Levinsen, 1925;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *densispina* Levinsen, 1925, as published in the binomen *Membranipora densispina* (specific name of the type species of *Marssonopora* Levinsen, 1925).

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