

Metacleidochasma planulata (Canu & Bassler, 1929). Tilbrook, Hayward & Gordon, 2001, p.97, fig.21C-E.

METACLEIDOCHASMA PLANULATA (CANU & BASSLER)
(Fig. 21C-E)

Hippoporina planulata Canu & Bassler, 1929: 321.
Metacleidochasma ovale Soule, Soule & Chaney, 1991:
480, pl. 1, fig. 7, pl. 4, figs 1-2.

Metacleidochasma planulata: Gordon & d'Hondt, 1997:
59.

Description

Autozooids in early ontogeny generally bear 4 (but can vary from 3-5) oral spines which are soon obscured by succeeding autozooids. Only 2 frontal pores appear, situated near the margin on either side of the autozooid at its widest point. Soule *et al.* (1991) describe the rare presence of a large, orifice-sized, broadly oval, adventitious avicularium, proximal to the orifice. Ovicell globose, imperforate, with a slit-like opening and completely fused labellum; ovicells become immersed, indistinct, only the slit above the labellum visible. Tatiform ancestrula with 9 spines around a large, distally positioned, rounded, membranous frontal area; 3 spines evenly spaced around the proximal half of the frontal membrane, the remainder around the distal half.

Remarks

None of the specimens of *Metacleidochasma planulata* found in Vanuatu had the frontal avicularia described by Soule *et al.* (1991), and noted by Gordon & d'Hondt (1997) in the type specimen, but not noted by Canu & Bassler (1929).

Distribution

Originally described from the Philippines by Canu & Bassler (1929), the species was redescribed from Hawaii as *Metacleidochasma ovale* by Soule *et al.* (1991), who noted its further distribution in the Maldives, Thailand, Tonga, and French Polynesia. Its occurrence in Port Vila Harbour and at Iririki Island, is thus not surprising.

