



## ***Narcissia ahearnae*, a new species of sea star from the Western Atlantic (Echinodermata: Asteroidea: Valvatida)**

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### **Abstract**

*Narcissia ahearnae*, new species, is described from off the east coast of Florida and the Bahamas, in depths of 53–135 m. It is distinctive in having conspicuous undulating carinal ridges extending from the center of the disc along the upper surfaces of the arms.

**Key words:** *Narcissia ahearnae*, Asteroidea, Valvatida, Ophidiasteridae

### **Introduction**

In the course of a submersible diving program in the Bahama Islands in April and August 1987, two specimens of a distinctive red sea star were collected by the *Johnson-Sea-Link* submersible. They were identified by John E. Miller, then of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, as a probable new species of the genus *Narcissia* (Family Ophidiasteridae). On a visit to the National Museum of Natural History in 1990, Mr. Miller found two additional specimens mixed in with catalogued lots of *Narcissia trigonaria* Sladen, a common western Atlantic species. A fifth specimen was found in the collection of the University of Miami Marine Laboratory. Finally, Mr. Miller recognized two live specimens, photographed *in situ* by Mr. Troy Engen in the British West Indies, as belonging to the same species. Upon taking another career path, Mr. Miller turned over to me his notes on this new species. In recent years, I have reviewed the holdings of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, and the Natural History Museum, London, and found no further specimens of this beautiful new species. Type material is deposited in the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Museum (HBOM); National Museum of Natural History, (USNM), Smithsonian Institution; and the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami (UM).

### **Order Valvatida Perrier, 1884**

### **Family Ophidiasteridae Verrill, 1870**

### **Genus *Narcissia* Gray, 1840**

Diagnosis: Disc high, more or less pyramidal, arms five, long, trigonal in cross-section, tapering; abactinal plates in 7–17 irregular series; papulae isolated, single or in pairs; mouth plates with large, blunt, compressed spines; alveolar pedicellariae small, with elongate, spoon-shaped valves, usually abundant but not found in *N. ahearnae*. (Partly after Clark and Downey, 1992).