

Stylaster joriskoehni
mediterranea,
Ashkelon, Israel,
Holotype MT2252
Royal Belgian
Institute of
Natural Sciences
(RBINS). Size; 77mm.



Paratype 1 MT2253, RBINS



Paratype 2 MT2254, RBINS



Gloria Maris	49 (3-4)	93 - 95	Antwerpen, September 2010
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**Colour variability of *Murex forskoehlii mediterranea*
Kovalis & Korkos, 2009**

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Keywords: MURICIDAE, *Murex forskoehlii mediterranea*, colour variability.

Abstract: The Mediterranean subspecies population of the spiny *Murex* that migrated from the Red Sea, *Murex forskoehlii* Röding, 1798, has developed a wide spectrum of colour forms.

Discussion: The separated population of *Murex forskoehlii mediterranea* has developed different colour forms that are not present in the Red Sea population. It is still unclear whether the sea conditions and the pollution existing in the Mediterranean Sea have a direct impact on the spectrum of the colour forms of this *Murex*.

The study of this *Murex* heavily relied on specimens collected in the Ashkelon and Ashdod area. Two historical biblical cities (Samson and Delilah's playground) where industrial development has an influence on marine life. Ashkelon has a huge oil terminal and an electricity station (based on kohl) and 10km north, Ashdod city has a huge port and an electricity station. The pollution of these industrial projects and the Egyptian delta, the different food supply and water temperature have developed the colour variability.

Murex forskoehlii in the Red Sea has one colour form: white greyish. In contrast, the leading colour form in the Mediterranean Sea population is creamy brown. Yet, the spectrum of colour forms ranges from dark brown (almost black) to white. In the following pictures the spectrum of the different colours forms is easy to see.

References

Kovalis, M., 2010. Remarks concerning the description and status of *Murex forskoehlIIi mediterranea* Kovalis & Korkos 2009. *GloriaMaris* 49(2-3).

Kovalis, M. & Korkos, D., 2009. *Murex forskoehlIIi mediterranea*: a new subspecies from the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea. *GloriaMaris* 48 (6): 145-154.



Fig 1. brown/orange



Fig 2. black (dark brown)



Fig 3. white creamish



Fig 4. bi colour



Fig 5. brown/yellow



Fig 6. brown
(the common colour)



Fig 7. bi colour



Fig 8. black blotches.