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The Scientific proceedings of the Royal Dublin Society.

Dublin :The Society,1877-[1957]

<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/44062>

new ser. v. 5 (1886-87): <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/95828>

Article/Chapter Title: A Classification of the Sponges

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Subject(s): sponges, Porifera

Page(s): Page 112

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XVI.—A CLASSIFICATION OF THE SPONGES. BY PROFESSOR SOLLAS, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., &c.

[Read, June 15, 1885.]

THE Porifera are a phylum, divisible into the two classes—

- I. ¹Plethospongiæ. II. Calcispongiæ.

The Plethospongiæ may be subdivided into three sub-classes—

- i. Hexactinellida. ii. ²Demospongiæ. iii. Myxospongiæ.

The Demospongiæ embrace the great majority of sponges, and are divisible into the two tribes—the Monaxonida and Tetractinellida.

The Monaxonida include as orders—(1) the Monaxona (Monactinellida, Auct.) and the Ceratosa, the latter clearly of polyphylitic origin, and derived from several families of the former; (2) the Tetractinellida include the orders Choristida (Sollas) and Lithistida.

The Myxospongiæ are not degenerate, but persistent askeletal forms, and include two orders—Halisarcosa and Chondrosiosa (excluding Corticium and its allies).

The classification, as far as the orders, may stand thus:—

PORIFERA (PHYLUM).

CLASS I.—Plethospongiæ.

SUB-CLASS i.—Hexactinellida.

- { ORDER 1.—Lyssakina (Zittel).
 ,, 2.—Dictyonina (Zittel).

,, ii.—Demospongiæ

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|---|------------------|---|----|---------------------------|
| { | TRIBE a. | { | ,, | 1.—Monaxona. |
| | Monaxonida. | | ,, | 2.—Ceratosa (Grant). |
| { | TRIBE b. | { | ,, | 1.—Choristida (Sollas). |
| | Tetractinellida. | | ,, | 2.—Lithistida (O. Scdt.). |

,, iii.—Myxospongiæ.

- { ,, 1.—Halisarcosa (O. Scdt.).
 ,, 2.—Chondrosiosa.

CLASS II.—Calcispongiæ.

¹ πλῆθος : a great number or crowd.

² δεμότιμος : common.