

LXVII.—Notes on British Sponges, with a Description of a new Genus and Species. By MAURICE BURTON, M.Sc., Department of Zoology, British Museum (Natural History).

A COLLECTION of sponges made by Dr. J. A. Kitching on the West Coast of Scotland (on the coast of Argyllshire) in 1933 contains representatives of the following species:—*Sycon ciliatum* (Fabricius), *Leuconia nivea* (Grant), *Oscarella lobularis* (Schmidt), *Haliclona macandrewii* (Bowerbank), *Amphilectus fucorum* (Esper), *Myxilla incrustans* (Johnston), *Halichondria panicea* (Pallas), *Hymeniacion sanguinea* (Grant), *Cliona labyrinthica* Hancock, and *Tethya aurantium* Pallas. Two specimens, one of *Halichondria panicea* and one of *Hymeniacion sanguinea* contained embryos; but the chief interest in the collection concerns the presence of five sponges belonging to a new genus and species, *Rhaphidostyla kitchingi*, gen. et sp. n.

RHAPHIDOSTYLA, gen. nov.

*Genotype*.—*A. kitchingi*, sp. n.

*Diagnosis*.—Axinellidæ with skeleton composed of unusually slender styli, arranged mainly in an irregular (sub-halichondroid) manner, but frequently forming wisp-like bundles running towards the surface; spicules characterised by a series of abrupt narrowings, ending in a point, at the distal end.

*Remarks*.—The characteristic features of the genus are the extreme slenderness of the styli, their arrangement in wisp-like bundles running vertically to the surface, and the shape of their distal ends, where a series of abrupt narrowings give an appearance comparable with the extended portions of a telescope. These features are also found in the genus *Anacantha* Row (with which *Rhaphoxya* Hallmann and *Tedanione* Wilson appear to be synonymous), but in that genus the spicules are a mixture of oxea, styli, or strongyla.

The genus probably includes *Phakellia incisa* Schmidt, *P. plicata* Schmidt, *Stylotella marsillii* Topsent, and *Clathria pelligera* Schmidt, as suggested by Topsent (1925, p. 638), but not *Desmacidon columella* Bowerbank (see

Burton, 1934, p. 556). The genus *Stylotella* cannot be used for these species, as Topsent (*l. c.*) has done, since it is a synonym of *Hymeniacidon* (see Burton, 1934, p. 39).

*Rhaphidostyla kitchingi*, sp. n.

*Holotype*.—B.M. 34.9.26.79.

*Diagnosis*.—Sponge typically pyramidal, but may be encrusting or irregularly massive (typically growing at the base of *Laminaria saccharina*); largest specimen measuring 2 cm. high and 3 cm. by 2 cm. at base; texture soft, compressible, friable; surface glabrous, but uneven; oscules not apparent; colour, in spirit, yellow or yellowish green; skeleton composed of styli varying but slightly in dimensions, on an average  $\cdot 22$  by  $\cdot 003$  mm.

*Remarks*.—The salient characters of the four earlier species here assigned provisionally to the genus *Rhaphidostyla* are as follows:—

- (1) *Phakellia incisa*: massive, with spicules measuring 1.2–1.4 by  $\cdot 012$ – $\cdot 015$  mm.
- (2) *Phakellia plicata*: foliose, usually stipitate, with spicules measuring 1.6–2.2 by  $\cdot 017$ – $\cdot 023$  mm.
- (3) *Clathria pelligera*: branching, with spicules measuring  $\cdot 58$ – $\cdot 665$  by  $\cdot 013$  mm.
- (4) *Stylotella marsillii*: massive, conulose, with spicules measuring 1.5–2.13 by  $\cdot 012$  mm.

The new species agrees closely with the first and fourth in external form, but differs from all in the small size of the spicules.

The shape of the spicules in the *Rhaphidostyla kitchingi*, sp. n., can be best described by reference to fig. 6 in Topsent (1925, p. 641). The distal ends agree with that figured for *Stylotella marsillii* (fig. 6, *m*) and the proximal ends with those for *Phakellia incisa* (fig. 6, *i*).

*Occurrence*.—The five specimens were all obtained from Loch Swen on the coast of Argyllshire (West Coast of Scotland) on July 27, 1933, at Kyle Scotnish, in 6 inches to 1 foot of water just below the low-tide mark of the spring-tides.

It is interesting to remark that the only other representatives of the genus are exclusively Mediterranean, and in connection with this it may be noted that the Loch Swen sponges were collected from the northern tongue

of the Loch, in a very sheltered position, where the temperature of the water is appreciably higher than that in the rest of the Loch and the summer temperatures of the Loch itself are considerably above those of the surrounding coastal waters.

## LIST OF LITERATURE REFERRED TO.

- BURTON, M. 1934. "Sponges" [in] Gr. Barrier Reef Exped. 1928-29, iv. (14) pp. 513-521, 2 pls., 33 figs.  
 —. 1934. "Sponges" [in] Further Zool. Res. Swedish Antarctic Exped. iii. (2) pp. 1-58, 8 p's., 16 figs.  
 TOPSENT, E. 1929. "Étude de Spongiaires du Golfe de Naples." Arch. Zool. expér. gen. lxiii. (5) pp. 623-725, 1 pl., 27 figs.

LXVIII.—*A new Hispine Beetle from the Solomon Islands.*

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THE following description is drawn up from material sent by Mr. R. J. A. W. Lever from the Solomon Islands. The illustration is by Miss Barbara Hopkins.

*Promecotheca ptychospermæ*, sp. n.

Body oblong, parallel-sided, abruptly narrowed at the apex, which has longish hairs, sutural apical angles of elytra very acute. Each elytron with eight rows of punctures. Only the hind femur with a curved spinule on the underside, longer than the other femora but not very long, as in *P. cumingi* Baby. General colour shining brown; third to ninth segments of antenna black, first segment having the general body-colour, second and tenth sometimes pitch-brown otherwise black, eleventh yellow; apical three-fourths of elytra bluish black, the colour begins from before the middle covering the whole of the elytral surface except the extreme lateral and apical margins and also a little portion of the suture near the apex; legs sparsely and indistinctly mottled with reddish patches; abdominal segments with indistinct darker patches. In my opinion these are accidental.

*Head* together with the eyes as broad as the prothorax; somewhat constricted behind the eyes; interocular area with a faint longitudinal median line and with its surface impunctate. Antennæ covered with longish stiff bristly hairs; first segment thick, convex on the inner side,