

The Rabbit-eared Barnacle, *Conchoderma auritum*, on the Teeth of the Dolphin *Stenella frontalis*

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During a stay in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to study Cetacea, I could collect two specimens of the species of dolphin *Stenella frontalis* (G. CUVIER, 1829). The animals were caught off Vridi, near Abidjan, at a distance of about 12 miles from the coast in May 1970. On the two dolphins as well as on other specimens belonging to the same species will be reported elsewhere. In this note only the stalked barnacles found attached on the teeth of one of the dolphins will be discussed briefly.

The barnacles were found on mandibular teeth near the tip of the snout (figs 1, 2). The crustaceans were detached, preserved and sent to Dr. WILLIAM A. NEWMAN (Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, California) for identification. Dr. NEWMAN, whom I thank hereby again for his kind help, studied the ectoparasites and reported that they belonged to the species commonly known as the Rabbit-eared Barnacle, *Conchoderma auritum* (LINNAEUS, 1767). These stalked barnacles are often found on baleen whales and on large toothed whales; for a detailed review of the occurrence of the species on Cetacea, see CLARKE (1966).

It seems that small odontocetes are only rarely infected with *Conchoderma*. MORRIS and MOWBRAY (1966) reported the occurrence of the Rabbit-eared Barnacle on the teeth of the dolphin *Stenella roseiventris* (WIEGMANN, 1846) (probably a junior synonym of *Stenella longirostris* [GRAY, 1828]), caught in Hawaiian waters. PERRIN (1969) recorded the barnacle on the teeth of a *Stenella graffmani* (LÖNNBERG, 1934) from the eastern central Pacific. As far is known to me, *Stenella frontalis* is the third species of small dolphin on which this barnacle has been found.



Fig. 1. Head of *Stenella frontalis* with stalked barnacles on the teeth (see arrow)



Fig. 2. Rabbit-eared Barnacles, *Conchoderma auritum*, fixed on some teeth of *Stenella frontalis*. (Photographs by A. L. VAN DER LAAN - ZMA)

Contrary to *Conchoderma auritum*, the ectoparasitic crustacean *Xenobalanus globicipitis* STEENSTRUP, 1852 is quite often found on small odontocetes living in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean (see e. g. RICHARD 1936 and PILLERI 1970). I collected some specimens from the tips of the flippers and flukes of a *Delphinus delphis* LINNAEUS, 1758, caught off Dakar, Sénégal, during December 1967. Although *Conchoderma auritum* and *Xenobalanus globicipitis* are generally called ectoparasites, the relation between these stalked barnacles and dolphins is actually an epizoic association or a kind of commensalism.

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