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I. Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen.

1. A new species of *Echinaster*, with a note on the name *Othilia*.

By Walter K. Fisher, Stanford University, California.

eingeg. 12. April 1913.

The genus *Echinaster* Müller and Troschel (April, 1840) is usually understood to include *Othilia* and *Rhopia* Gray (December 1840). In a key to the genera of Echinasteridae in "Asteroidea of the North Pacific, etc.", 1911, page 259, I recognized *Othilia* for those species which have, in addition to abactinal papulae, also intermarginal papulae or both intermarginal and actinal papulae, while the name *Echinaster* by implication was reserved for *Echinaster sepositus* and allies, in which there are neither intermarginal nor actinal papulae.

Professor A. E. Verrill, in a letter, dissents from this course. He considers, moreover, that *Asterias spinosa*¹ Retzius (1805), which I made the type of *Othilia* Gray, is practically designated by Müller and

¹ Preoccupied by *Asterias spinosa* Pennant, 1777, [= *Asterias glacialis* Linnaeus, 1758. *Asterias echinophora* Lamarck, 1816, seems to be the next available name.

Troschel, System der Asteriden, 1842, page 22, footnote, as the type of their genus *Echinaster*.

The distinction between the restricted *Echinaster* and *Othilia* may seem a trifle subtle. In practice, however, it has not been difficult to use the two groups — at least so far as species which I have personally examined are concerned. It may be noted that the same difference separates *Henricia* and *Cribraster*, the latter corresponding to *Echinaster*. The following notes will present my reasons for retaining the name *Othilia* for the American species.

The original description² of *Echinaster* is not accessible but it was reprinted³ in September of the same year in the Archiv für Naturgeschichte, with the following enumeration of species: "4 Arten: *A. seposita* Lam. [= *A. seposita*], *A. echinophora* Lam. (*Pentadactylosaster spinosus* Linck), *E. spongiosus* Nob. (Linck, t. 36, n. 62) und eine neue Art". As a footnote is the following: "*Echinaster* ist der älteste von Luidius und Petiver für ein hierher gehöriges Tier gebrauchte Name." There was no designation of type. Two years later in the System der Asteriden, p. 22, the species of *Echinaster* are cited in different order, namely: *spinosus*, *brasiliensis*, *crassus*, *gracilis*, *sepositus*, *fallax*, *eridanella*, *serpentarius*, *oculatus*, *eschrichtii*, *solaris*. In a footnote referring to *Echinaster*, the note quoted above is somewhat amplified as follows: "Ein von Luidius, Petiver und Linck zur Bezeichnung eines hierhergehörigen Tieres, *Asterias echinophora* Lam., angewandter Name." This seems to me to be not a designation of type but an explanation of the derivation of the new generic name, employed previously by Petiver in the following polynomial: "*Echinaster* seu stella coriacea pentadactyla echinata". *Asterias seposita* was given first place in the original description of *Echinaster* and it is reasonable to consider the European species as the type.

Stellonia Nardo (De Asteriis, Oken's Isis, 1834, p. 716) included *Asterias rubens*, *seposita*, *glacialis*, and *spinosa* but without generic diagnosis. Lest the ghost of this name arise at some future time, it may be "laid" by definitely designating *Asterias rubens* as the type, making *Stellonia* a synonym of *Asterias*, s. s.

According to the view expressed in my key to the genera of Echinasteridae, the generic groups would stand as follows.

Echinaster Müller and Troschel, 1840.

Type *Echinaster sepositus*. Species examined: *E. sepositus*, *E. callosus* von Marenzeller, *E. stereosomus* Fisher.

² Monatsber. d. k. preuß. Akad. d. Wiss. Berlin, April 1840. p. 102.

³ Archiv f. Naturgesch. 6. Jahrg. Bd. 1. p. 321.

Othilia Gray, 1840.

Type *Othilia echinophora* [*Asterias spinosa* Retzius not Pennant = *Asterias echinophora* Lamarck]. Species examined: *O. echinophora*, *O. senta* (Say), *O. spinulosus* (Verrill), *O. purpurea* (Gray), *O. tenuispina* (Verrill); *O. eridanella* (M. and T.) seems to belong here also, but I have not seen it.

If I am mistaken in assigning *E. sepositus* as the type of *Echinaster*, then what is here called *Othilia* will become *Echinaster*, and *Echinaster* above will become *Rhopia* Gray, 1840, type *Rhopia seposita* Gray [= *Asterias seposita* Lam. and *Echinaster sepositus* Authors].

The following new species of *Echinaster* was collected by the U.S. Fisheries steamer "Albatross" at station 5483, Surigao Strait, off Cabugan Grande Island, Philippine Islands, 74 fathoms, sand, broken shells.

Echinaster stereosomus new species.

Diagnosis. — Rays 5; R = 52 mm, r = 10 mm, R = 5,2 r; breadth of ray at base, 12 mm. Disk fairly large; rays tapering at first rather rapidly, then very gradually, the distal two-thirds being attenuate; abactinal surface of rays well arched, actinal surface slightly convex. Spines short, conical, sharp, spaced 2 to 4 times their length, forming 2 marginal and proximally 5 (distally 3) abactinal, longitudinal series; papulae 1 to 5 to each of the conspicuous, roundish, or more or less quadrate (and distally elongate) areas; skin fairly thick, glandular, covering whole surface of body except tips of the sharp spines, and crowded with very numerous, minute, perforated plates and rods; an odd interradi al spiniferous actinal intermediate plate, with 2 or 3 rudimentary plates on either side, is wedged between mouth plates and the proximal inferomarginals; inferomarginals adjacent to adambulacral plates; no intermarginal or actinal papulae; adambulacral armature a vertical series of 3 spines, the uppermost, on border of furrow, the largest, the other 2 smaller, the lowest, strongly compressed, slender and bent at base; uppermost spines with their membrane investment form a continuous serrate web closing furrow. Related to *E. callosus* von Marenzeller, but with larger disk, shorter rays broader at base (not slightly constricted as in *callosus*); spines less prominent, and skin thinner, especially around the spines; papulae fewer, skeleton more regular; there are usually 3 adambulacral spines in a vertical series (2 in *callosus*), and the deposits of the skin are very numerous, fairly evenly distributed, and in the form of perforated plates rather than branched rods or rather open plates, unevenly distributed.

The larger abactinal plates are three- or four-lobed and are con-

nected by 1 or 2 secondary ossicles, three lobed or subtriangular, oblong or roundish in form. On the outer part of the ray 3 or 4 small overlapping secondary plates may stand in a longitudinal series between 2 of the spine-bearing plates which are convex, while the connecting plates are not. The marginal plates form perfectly regular series. The inferomarginals have 4 rounded corners, and are not separated from one another nor from the superomarginals by intermediate plates. Intermarginal skeletal spaces small. First 4 or 5 inferomarginals usually each bear a spine; beyond this point every third or fourth plate is spiniferous; on proximal third of ray usually every third superomarginal bears a spine; beyond this about every fourth. Near the base of the ray the superomarginal series turns upward leaving a triangular space filled with about 3 series of small intermarginal plates. Over the greater part of ray, however, the 2 series of marginal plates are in contact.

The deposits in the skin are so crowded that they always overlap, and sometimes occur 2 deep or even 4 deep. They vary in form from dumb-bell shaped rods with 1 or 2 perforations to roundish or oblong smooth plates having an irregular border and 4 to 8 perforations. The medium sized plates measure 0,04 mm and the largest 0,05 mm in diameter.

2. Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse einer Reise von S. Awerinzew in die Tropen Afrikas.

I. Einige Befunde zur Kenntnis von *Ariodes polystaphylodon*.

Von X. Fermor.

(Mit 3 Figuren.)

eingeg. 15. April 1913.

Das Material zur vorliegenden Arbeit ergaben einige Exemplare von *Ariodes polystaphylodon*, die Herr Prof. S. Awerinzew auf seiner wissenschaftlichen Reise in Afrika gesammelt hatte; dieselben waren in Alkohol konserviert. Diese Fische waren im Indischen Ozean in der Nähe von Port Beira im portugiesischen Ostafrika gefangen worden; späterhin hat Herr Prof. Awerinzew Vertreter derselben Art auch im Atlantischen Ozean an den Ufern von Deutsch-Südwestafrika angetroffen. *Ariodes polystaphylodon* gehört zu den Fischen, bei denen die vorderen Strahlen der Rücken- und Brustflossen zu Giftstacheln umgewandelt sind. Die Einwohner, welche *Ariodes* zur Nahrung benutzen, fangen diesen Fisch während der Ebbe und bemühen sich hierbei ihm so rasch wie möglich den Rückenstachel abzubrechen, da sie den Stich dieses Stachels sehr fürchten; die gleichfalls giftigen Bruststacheln sind nach ihren Beobachtungen weniger gefährlich.

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