

Description of *Chone usticensis* sp. nov. (Polychaeta, Sabellidae) from the Mediterranean Sea

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Abstract

A new species of *Chone* (Sabellidae) from the coast of Ustica Island (Mediterranean Sea, north of Sicily) is described. The species, named *Chone usticensis* sp. nov., is similar to another Mediterranean species, *C. filicaudata*, in having a long pygidial filiform appendage, but is distinct from this species especially in the peristomium, collar, and in thoracic paleate chaetae shape. A discussion on the presence of the radiolar appendages within the genus *Chone* is also given.

Key words: Polychaeta, *Chone usticensis*, new species, Sabellidae, Mediterranean Sea

Introduction

The genus *Chone*, together with the closely related genera *Amphicorina*, *Euchone* and *Jasmineira* represents one of the least understood groups within the subfamily Sabellinae. Recently a cladistic analysis was performed on this group of sabellids in order to reveal some relationships among genera (Cochrane 2003). In her analysis, conducted on several species belonging to seven genera, Cochrane considered seven species of *Chone*, and concluded that the genus appeared monophyletic, although the relationships among species remains unsolved. However, according to Fitzhugh (1989), the genus *Chone* is characterized by a combination of features of which none are unique, and it lacks a defining synapomorphy. Fitzhugh (1989) pointed out that dorsal radiolar appendages can be present in some *Chone* species, but absent in others. Recently, a great number of new taxa (11) were added to *Chone* genus, mostly as unnamed *Chone* sp. (Fitzhugh 2002; Tovar-Hernández, 2005). Some of these taxa have dorsal radiolar appendages developed.