



## *Loxosomella almugnecarensis* n. sp. (Entoprocta: Loxosomatidae)—a new sponge epizoite from the Iberian Mediterranean Sea

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The Loxosomatidae is the most species-rich of the four families belonging to the phylum Entoprocta, comprising more than two-thirds of the total number of entoprocts worldwide (Iseto *et al.* 2008). It comprises solitary forms, usually commensal, whereas the species of the other three families are colonial (Nielsen 2001). Members of this family and of the colonial family Loxokalypodidae can be distinguished from other entoprocts because they lack a star-cell complex at the transition between stalk and body (Nielsen 1989). Although loxosomatids can be found on a range of living and non-living substrata, sponges are common hosts for these animals and 17 entoproct species have been found inhabiting them (Iseto *et al.* 2008; Sánchez-Tocino & Tierno de Figueroa 2009b). Until now, only five valid species have been reported from sponges from the Mediterranean Sea: *Loxosomella raja* (Schmidt), *L. cochlear* (Schmidt), *L. tethyae* (Salensky), *L. pes* (Schmidt) and *L. ameliae* Sánchez-Tocino & Tierno de Figueroa (Prenant and Bobin 1956; Nielsen 2008; Sánchez-Tocino & Tierno de Figueroa 2009b). In the present paper, we describe a new *Loxosomella* species that lives on the sponge *Hyrtios collectrix* (Schulze) in the Alboran Sea (West Mediterranean Sea), where *L. tethyae*, *L. pes* and *L. ameliae* have been reported (Sánchez-Tocino & Tierno de Figueroa 2009a, b).

### Material and methods

Specimens were collected by scuba diving at 6 metres depth in Punta del Vapor (3°43'41.474 W, 36°43'27.127 N) (Almuñécar, Granada, Spain) on 10 May 2005. Sponges with entoprocts (in low numbers, around 10 individuals on each sponge) were found on the underside of a stone in a community of calcareous algae and echinoids. The sponges were identified as *Hyrtios collectrix* (Schulze) (Dictyoceratida: Thorectidae). Sponge samples of approximately 2 cm<sup>2</sup> with loxosomatids were collected and transported in a refrigerator to the laboratory, where they were photographed *in vivo* and studied further. Following photography, the material was kept in seawater with magnesium chloride for approximately 2 hours in order for the entoprocts to relax, and subsequently it was fixed in 4% formalin in sea water.

### Systematics

#### *Loxosomella almugnecarensis* n. sp.

(Figs 1A, B; 2A)

**Material examined.** *Holotype*: 26.01/5 and *paratype* 26.01/6, deposited in the Invertebrate Collection of Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Madrid, Spain. A second paratype is deposited in the Departamento de Biología Animal, Universidad de Granada (Granada, Spain). All individuals of the new species were collected on *Hyrtios collectrix* at Punta del Vapor, Almuñécar (Granada, Spain) on 10 May 2005.

**Type locality.** Punta del Vapor, Almuñécar, Granada, Spain.

**Etymology.** The species is named for the locality, Almuñécar, where it was collected.

**Description.** Individuals small (Fig. 1); holotype 400 µm long in life, comprising calyx length of 250 µm (calyx width 200 µm) and peduncle length 150 µm (peduncle width 55 µm); foot length 152 µm, foot width (including lateral expansions) 105 µm. Peduncle length was measured as distance between basal end of calyx (at minimum width) and basal end of foot. Holotype and paratype biometry data given in Table 1.