



First record of *Cladocroce* (Porifera: Haplosclerida: Chalinidae) from the Eastern Pacific ocean with the description of *Cladocroce reina* sp. nov.

JOSE MARIA AGUILAR-CAMACHO¹ & JOSE LUIS CARBALLO

Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Estación Mazatlán). Avenida Joel Montes Camarena s/n, Mazatlán (SIN) 82000. México. PO box 811

¹Corresponding author. E-mail: ecologomarino@yahoo.com.mx

Chalinidae is a family of haplosclerid sponges with a delicate reticulated chaonosomal skeleton of uni-, pauci- or multispicular primary lines which are connected by unispicular secondary lines, and with an ectosomal skeleton, if present, formed by a regular hexagonal, unispicular, tangential reticulation (Weerdt 2002). Currently, the family harbors only five valid genera (*Chalinula*, *Cladocroce*, *Dendrectilla*, *Dendroxea* and *Haliclona*; Soest *et al.* 2008), although recent molecular studies suggest that a new rearrangement of the present classification is needed (Redmond *et al.* 2007). *Cladocroce* was described by Topsent (1892) from specimens collected in the Atlantic Ocean. The principal characteristic of this genus is the presence of multispicular fiber tracts with a rather dense subisotropic reticulation in between (Weerdt 2002). After that, 10 species have been described, most of them from deep waters and cold climates (Putchakarn *et al.* 2004). Only three species have been found living in shallow waters: *C. aculeata* Pulitzer-Finali, 1982 from the Great Barrier Reef, *C. burapha* Putchakarn *et al.*, 2004 from the Gulf of Thailand, and *C. tubulosa* Pulitzer-Finali, 1993 from the port of Mombasa, in Kenya. Sponge taxonomy studies in the Mexican Pacific coast have been focused mainly on hadromerids, and particularly on boring sponges (Carballo *et al.* 2008), and the current knowledge of haplosclerids is very scarce (Cruz-Barraza & Carballo 2006). In this paper, a new species of *Cladocroce* is described and compared with the other species recorded worldwide. With this contribution the genus *Cladocroce* increases to 12 species.

Order Haplosclerida Topsent, 1928

Suborder Haploclerina Topsent, 1928

Family Chalinidae Gray, 1867

Genus *Cladocroce* Topsent, 1892

Cladocroce reina sp. nov

Holotype: MNCN 1.01/630. 23/10/2007, Parque de la Reina (Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico), 3 m 16°50'56.97"N, 99°54'62.43"W. **Paratype:** LEB-ICML-UNAM-1818 23/10/2007, Palao Isla La Roqueta (Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico), 3 m 16°49'24.49"N, 99°54'22.58"W.

Description: The holotype is a cushion-shaped sponge about 6 cm in diameter and 2 cm thick. The surface is smooth. Ostial orifices are 60–340 µm in diameter. Oscules are circular, 3–9 mm in diameter. They are elevated 1–2 mm and scattered. The consistency is compressible and somewhat fragile. Color in life is sky blue, and after preservation it becomes pale. The paratype is thinly-encrusting, 1–5 cm long and 1–2 cm thick (Fig. 1A). Ostial orifices measurements are as in the holotype, but in some cases the oscules are not so abundant; in contrast, the color in life is greenish.

Spicules and skeleton: Spicules are robust almost fusiform oxeas, sometimes slightly curved. Spicules with acerated tips and styloid are commonly present. Spicule measurements: 130–(151.7)–175 µm × 5–(6.6)–7.5 µm (Fig. 1B). The ectosomal skeleton is a tangential isotropic unispicular reticulation (Fig. 1C). The choanosomal skeleton is an irregular, isotropic unispicular reticulation, reinforced by ascending multispicular tracts that support the ectosome. The tracts form triangular or hexagonal meshes that delimit choanosomal spaces 150–350 µm wide. The ascending tracts are