



## ***Axinyssa ambrosia* and *Axinyssa yumae* (Porifera, Halichondrida): two valid sponge species from the Caribbean Sea**

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Direct field observations often reveal distinct morphotypes within sponge species that had been described on the basis of preserved material from different locations. The genus *Axinyssa* von Lendefeld, 1897 was revised for the Caribbean by Diaz *et al.* (1993), defining a single species, *Axinyssa ambrosia* (de Laubenfels, 1936), with several junior synonyms, some of which varied in the predominant spicule complement. At Santa Marta, Colombia, we found two morphotypes of *Axinyssa* living sympatrically, with consistent differences in morphology and spiculation. Revision of types and part of Diaz *et al.* (1993) material confirmed these differences, leading to the distinction of two species whose valid names are *Axinyssa ambrosia* and *Axinyssa yumae* (Pulitzer-Finali, 1986). The purpose of this note is to redescribe these two species.

Material was deposited at Museo de Historia Natural Marina de Colombia (Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas y Costeras—INVEMAR, Santa Marta, INV—POR), and Instituto de Ciencias Naturales [Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, ICN—MHN(Po)] collections. Material from the U.S. National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, USNM), the Zoologisch Museum (Universiteit van Amsterdam, ZMA—POR), and the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale “Giacomo Doria” (Genoa, MSGN) was also examined. For each specimen, 25 spicules were measured. Terminology follows Boury-Esnault and Rützler (1997).

### **Phylum Porifera**

### **Class Demospongiae**

### **Order Halichondrida Gray, 1867**

### **Family Halichondriidae Gray, 1867**

### **Genus *Axinyssa* Lendefeld, 1897**

### ***Axinyssa ambrosia* (de Laubenfels, 1936)**

Figs. 1, 3A–C

*Rhaphisia ambrosia* de Laubenfels, 1936: 135.

*Axinyssa ambrosia*; van Soest *et al.*, 1990: 27, fig. 21 (in part, holotype and material from Curaçao); Diaz *et al.*, 1991: 146 (in part, holotype and material from Curaçao); Diaz *et al.*, 1993: 289, fig. 10 (in part, holotype and ZMA Por. 6895 from Curaçao); Zea, 1993: 87 (ecology); Lehnert and van Soest, 1999: 149; Rützler *et al.*, 2009: 302.

?*Axinyssa* sp; Moraes, 2011: 159.

[Non: *Dictyonella yumae* Pulitzer-Finali, 1986 (a valid species of *Axinyssa*; synonymy suggested by van Soest *et al.* 1990: 27 and Diaz *et al.* 1993: 289)].

[Non: *Leucophloeus lewisi* van Soest and Stentoft, 1988 (= *Axinyssa yumae* Pulitzer-Finali, 1986; synonymy suggested by van Soest *et al.* 1990: 27 and Diaz *et al.* 1993: 289)].