A NEW *MEDIASTER* FROM QUEENSLAND.

By

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(Plate vi.)

The genus *Mediaster* was first recorded from Australian waters by Dr. H. L. Clark[1] when the species *australiensis* and *monacanthus* were described. Fisher[2] believes *monacanthus* to be referable to the genus *Nectria*. No other species of *Mediaster* has been recorded from Australia since 1916.

Mediaster praestans sp. nov.

Description.—Rays five; R. = 29.5 mm., r. = 11.5 mm. R. = 2.5 r. Disc comparatively small, depressed interradially and slightly raised radially. Rays regular, comparatively narrow at base, each tapering rapidly towards a small rounded extremity. Interbrachial arcs fairly narrow and rounded. Abactinal paxillae on plates of disc, the first half of the median radial series, and on the three series lying on either side of this latter widely spaced. Those paxillae placed interradially are crowded, squarish in outline, and separated by shallow channels. The plates near the ends of the rays are not tabulate but simply covered by a coarse granulation. The paxillae on the centre of the disc and radial regions are the largest on the abactinal surface. Each paxilla is stellate; two to six nodular granules form a central group on the upper surface, while from six to seventeen slightly flattened granules form a peripheral series. Interradially, the paxillae are crowded; no peripheral series of granules is present, the granulation being more or less even and uniform, and merging into that covering the superomarginal plates. The median radial plates, which lose their specialized tabulate character before half the length of the ray is reached, terminate at the fourth last superomarginal plate. The series lying next to the median radials end at a point between the ninth and tenth last superomarginals.

The papulae are confined to the disc and radial regions where the paxillae are widely spaced. They occur in sixes around each plate and lie between the internal connecting ossicles. These ossicles are short and very regular; six radiate outwards from each plate, each ossicle being common to two plates. No ossicles occur in the inter-radial areas where papulae are absent.

The superomarginal plates are fifteen in number counting from the middle of the interbrachial arc to the terminal plate. They are noticeably wider than high on the rays, almost wafer-like, while in the interbrachial arcs they are almost as high as broad. This is the reverse of what is seen in *M. ornatus* Fisher. The superomarginals are fairly conspicuous and encroach somewhat noticeably upon the paxillar area. They are covered by small, well-spaced roundish granules of varying sizes. These granules, when rubbed off, leave stout bases in the form of shiny, glass-like bosses.

The inferomarginal plates are also fifteen in number, and correspond both in size and position to the superomarginals. They are covered by a granulation similar in character to that on the superomarginals. The terminal plate is not prominent; it is similar in character to the superomarginals.

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[1] Clark.—Biol. Results, F.I.S. "Endeavour," 4, i, 1916, pp. 39-43, figs. 1-4.
[2] Fisher.—Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (8), xx, 1917, p. 167.