

THE STATUS OF *NARDOA* (*ANDORA*) A. M. CLARK, 1967
(ASTEROIDEA: OPHIDIASTERIDAE), WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF
TWO NEW SUBGENERA AND THREE NEW SPECIES

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SUMMARY

The diagnosis of *Nardoa* (*Andora*) A. M. Clark is expanded and this subgenus of *Nardoa* is elevated to generic rank. Two new subgenera of *Andora* and three new species are described, extending the distribution of the genus from the Arabian Sea to the Mozambique Channel, Heron Island (east coast of Australia) and the Philippine Islands.

INTRODUCTION

Macan (1938) described the species *Nardoa faouzii* from a single specimen collected in shallow-water from off the Arabian coast during the John Murray Expedition (1933-4). The species has not been re-encountered. A. M. Clark (1967) re-examined the holotype and concluded that the regular arrangement of the abactinal plates on the proximal one third of the arms was a character of sufficient weight to distinguish *faouzii* subgenerically from *variolata* (type-species of *Nardoa*; designated by H. L. Clark, 1921) and other species included in the genus *Nardoa* in the same paper. She accordingly defined *Andora* as a subgenus of *Nardoa*.

While preparing a revision of the genus *Nardoa*, I have had the opportunity of examining the holotype of *Nardoa* (*Andora*) *faouzii* Macan as well as undescribed specimens from Mozambique Channel (Western Indian Ocean), the Philippine Islands, and from Heron Island (Queensland coast, Australia). The combination of characters exhibited by these five specimens shows them not only to represent four distinct species (three of them new) but that the species are clearly related within the common supra-specific taxon *Andora*. I believe that the taxon *Andora* is sufficiently distinguishable from other related ophiasterid genera to be elevated to generic level, and that within this taxon two subgeneric taxa should be recognised.