

Pachyseris inattesa sp. n. (Cnidaria, Anthozoa, Scleractinia): A new reef coral species from the red sea and its phylogenetic relationships

Abstract

A new scleractinian coral species, *Pachyseris inattesa* sp. n., is described from the Red Sea. Despite a superficial resemblance with some species in the agariciid genus *Leptoseris* with which it has been previously confused, *P. inattesa* sp. n. has micro-morphological characters typical of the genus *Pachyseris*. This genus, once part of the Agariciidae, is comprised of five extant species and is widely distributed throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific. It is currently incertae sedis as a result of recent molecular analysis and appears to be closely related to the Euphylliidae. A molecular phylogenetic reconstruction including *P. inattesa* sp. n., the genus type species *P. rugosa*, and *P. speciosa*, all present in the Red Sea, was performed using the mitochondrial intergenic spacer between COI and 16S-rRNA. The results confirm that *P. inattesa* sp. n. is a monophyletic lineage closely related to the other *Pachyseris* species examined. © Tullia I. Terraneo et al.