

B R E V I O R A

Museum of Comparative Zoology



US ISSN 0006-9698

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

16 JANUARY 2015

NUMBER 540

REDESCRIPTION OF *STICHOPATHES POURTALESI* BROOK, 1889 (CNIDARIA: ANTHOZOA: ANTIPATHARIA: ANTIPATHIDAE)

MARZIA BO¹ AND DENNIS M. OPRESKO²

ABSTRACT. *Stichopathes pourtalesi* Brook, 1889, the type species of the genus *Stichopathes* Brook, is redescribed on the basis of an examination of the type material originally identified by de Pourtalès as *Antipathes desbonni* Duchassaing and Michelotti and as *Antipathes spiralis* Pallas. Because the type series consists of multiple species, it was necessary to select a lectotype to clearly define the species. The species is characterized by a spiral, unbranched corallum; triangular, compressed spines, some of which have one or more lobes at the apex; very faint elongate papillae on the surface of the spines extending from near the apex to as much as one-half the distance to the base; and large polyps with long tentacles (in preserved specimens). The species is similar to *Stichopathes gracilis* (Gray); however, scanning electron microscopy indicates that there are distinct differences between the two species in the microscopic surface ornamentation of the spines.

KEY WORDS: black corals; morphology; taxonomy; syntypes; lectotype; paralectotypes

INTRODUCTION

In 1889 Brook established the genus *Stichopathes* and included within it seven species: *S. pourtalesi* Brook, 1889, *S. gracilis* (Gray, 1857), *S. echinulata* Brook, 1889, *S. desbonni* (Duchassaing and Michelotti, 1864), *S. occidentalis* (Gray, 1860), *S. filiformis* (Gray, 1868) and *S. luetkeni* Brook, 1889

(original spelling *lütkeni*). Brook did not specifically state which of the seven species he considered the type species of the genus; however, in his description of the genus he refers to information provided by de Pourtalès on the polyps of specimens that de Pourtalès had identified in 1872 and 1874 as *Antipathes desbonni* Duchassaing and Michelotti and also those he identified in 1880 as *Antipathes spiralis* Pallas, 1766. Brook (1889: 88) notes that he established the genus “in consequence of what Pourtalès says about his *Cirrhopathes spiralis* (Pourt. non Pall.), and in order to distinguish those unbranched

¹ Università degli Studi di Genova, Genova, Italy; e-mail: marzia.bo@unige.it.

² U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.; e-mail: dmopresko@hotmail.com.

