

OTHER UNSEGMENTED WORMS

1. PHYLUM ASCHELMINTHES

Here are included a number of classes (sometimes regarded as phyla) of pseudo-coelomate types, most of which are either absent from the local marine fauna (Priapulida) or of such small size, diversity, and great number of species as to make their inclusion in these keys impractical (Rotifera, Gastrotricha, Kinorhyncha, Nematoda). The best general reference on aschelminth groups, and the first source of information when one encounters an unfamiliar member of them, is Hyman's "The Invertebrates", Vol. III: "Acanthocephala, Aschelminthes, and Entoprocta", 1951.

The remaining class, Nematomorpha or Gordiacea, has one marine order, Nectonematoidea, represented by the single genus Nectonema. N. agilis Verrill, 1879 can be taken at a night light near the breakwater at the U. S. Fish and Wildlife laboratory in Woods Hole. It resembles a whitish "horsehair snake" provided with a double row of fine natatory bristles (Plate 5, figs. 15-18) with a body up to one mm in diameter and 20 cm long, and swims with a remarkable rapid, undulatory motion. The young stages are reported to be parasitic in several species of true crabs and hermit crabs on the coast of France, but the life cycle at Woods Hole has never been observed. Hyman (loc. cit.) provides the most helpful general account of Nectonema.

2. PHYLUM SIPUNCULOIDEA

The unsegmented wormlike creatures formerly lumped as "Gephyreans" include three groups now commonly accorded phylum status: Priapulida, Sipunculoidea, and Echiuroidea (the last, however, is again joined to the annelids by Hyman). At Woods Hole, only the Sipunculoidea are represented, intertidally and in shallow water, by Golfingia gouldi (Pourtales, 1851) (Plate 5, fig. 13), and by Phascolion strombi (Montagu, 1804) (fig. 14), a very small worm from 10 meters and deeper off the Elizabeth Islands near Woods Hole, living in deserted gastropod shells or in tubes of Hydroides, Pectinaria, Hyalinoecia, or other worms.

Golfingia gouldi has long been known as Phascolosoma gouldi and since there is no question about the species, experimental biologists should be careful to use the specific name to avoid confusion with certain common sipunculids to which the generic name Phascolosoma has now been transferred (e.g. Phascolosoma agassizi, formerly Physcosoma, of the West Coast, a species far less euryhaline than the Woods Hole Golfingia gouldi). The reasons for the unfortunate shift of names are, in brief: Phascolosoma was established as a genus in 1828 by Leuckhart, with type species Phascolosoma granulatum of the Mediterranean. Later, in 1866, Quatrefages broke Leuckhart's genus into subgenera and used P. granulatum as the type of a new subgenus Phymosomum. This was amended to Phymosoma by Salenka, and raised to generic rank in 1883. Phymosoma, being found preoccupied, was changed in 1897 to Physcosoma. This whole procedure was in clear violation of nomenclatorial rules, according to which the type species of Phascolosoma should have retained its name. In 1952, Fisher put Physcosoma back into its proper category of Phascolosoma, but this left the group long known as Phascolosoma without a name. The "next available" name for Phascolosoma gouldi was Golfingia, and this solution seems to have been generally accepted.

REFERENCES ON SIPUNCULIDS

- Fisher, W. K., 1952. The Sipunculid Worms of California ... , Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 102: 371-450.
 Gerould, J. M., 1913. The sipunculids of the eastern coast of North America. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 44: 373-437.