



***Botrylloides crystallinus* A. Bay-Nouailhat, W. Bay-Nouailhat, Gasparini & Brunetti, 2020**

Crystal-ball sea squirt

Description

Botrylloides crystallinus is a colonial sea squirt of globular to massive form which measures 3 to 8 cm in diameter. It lives fixed to the substrate by a narrow base. The transparent, crystalline tunic is white to straw yellow in color. It sometimes agglomerates some impurities on its surface. The zooids are arranged in rows around large common cloacal siphons. The oral siphon of each zooid is underlined by a white border which extends around atrial tongues which draws on the surface of the colony fine circles and geometric lines. The transparency of the colony also makes it possible to see fine white lines over the entire height of the zooids. Seasonal species, mainly present in winter and spring, the colonies take the end of their cycle as a globular and cartilaginous mass traversed by regressed zooids which draw 'zipper' systems on their surface. The colonies live in shaded areas, fixed on vertical rock walls or overhangs between 4 and more than 30 meters deep.

Distribution

Botrylloides crystallinus is present in the Mediterranean from the east of the Rhône delta to Italy.

Classification

Biota (Superdomain)
Animalia (Kingdom)
Chordata (Phylum)
Tunicata (Subphylum)
Ascidiacea (Class)
Stolidobranchia (Order)
Styelidae (Family)
Botrylloides (Genus)
Botrylloides crystallinus (Species)

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