FICHES D'IDENTIFICATION DU ZOOPLANCTON

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FICHE NO. 158

SCYPHOMEDUSAE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC (2)

Families: Pelagiidae
Cyaneidae
Ulmaridae
Rhizostomatidae

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Order SEMAEOSTOMAE

Gastrovascular sinus divided by radial septa into separate rhopalar and tentacular pouches; without ring-canal.

**Family Pelagiidae**

Rhopalar and tentacular pouches simple and unbranched.

**Genus Pelagia** Péron & Lesueur

Pelagiidae with eight marginal tentacles alternating with eight marginal sense organs.

1. *Pelagia noctiluca* (Forskål). Exumbrella with medium-sized warts of various shapes; marginal tentacles with longitudinal muscle furrows embedded in mesogloea; up to 100 mm in diameter.

**Genus Chrysaora** Péron & Lesueur

Pelagiidae with groups of three or more marginal tentacles alternating with eight marginal sense organs.

2. *Chrysaora hysoscella* (L.). Exumbrella typically with 16 V-shaped radial brown markings with varying degrees of pigmentation between them; with dark brown apical circle or spot; with brown marginal lappets; 24 marginal tentacles in groups of three alternating with eight marginal sense organs.

**Family Cyaneidae**

Gastrovascular pouches branched; marginal tentacles arising from subumbrella surface at a distance from umbrella margin.

**Genus Cyanea** Péron & Lesueur

Cyaneidae with radial and circular muscles on subumbrella; with eight adradial groups of marginal tentacles arranged in more than one row; with eight marginal sense organs.

3. *Cyanea capillata* (L.). Coronal and radial muscle folds with pit-like intrusions from gastrovascular sinus; 13–15 coronal folds between radial septa; average numbers of marginal tentacles in each group 70–150 or more; terminal ramifications of gastrovascular sinus pouches without anastomoses; colour usually yellowish brown or reddish; diameter of umbrella usually 300–500 mm, up to 2000 mm.

4. *Cyanea lamarckii* Péron & Lesueur. Coronal and radial muscle folds without, or occasionally with only few, pit-like intrusions from gastrovascular sinus; 16–20 coronal folds between radial septa; average numbers of marginal tentacles in each group 40–60; terminal ramifications of gastrovascular sinus pouches without anastomoses; colour pale yellow to bright blue; diameter of umbrella 60–150 mm, up to 300 mm.

**Family Ulmaridae**

With gastrovascular system of unbranched and branched radial canals with varying degrees of anastomosis; with or without subgenital pits.

**Subfamily Aureliinae**

Ulmaridae with small marginal tentacles and lappet-like structures arising from exumbrella slightly above umbrella margin; with simple and branched radial canals with little or much anastomosis; with ring-canal; with subgenital pits.

**Genus Aurelia** Lamarck

Aureliinae with umbrella margin divided by 8 or 16 marginal clefts; with four unbranched oral arms; with anastomosis between a few or all of the radial canal branches.

5. *Aurelia aurita* (L.). Umbrella with eight simple marginal lobes; oral arms as long as umbrella radius, with thick firm mesogloea and much-crenulated lips with many small tentacle-like processes along their margins; adradial canals unbranched; perradial and interradial canals with primary canals unbranched, but with branches from their bases which branch successively towards umbrella margin having only few anastomoses; diameter of umbrella usually up to 250–400 mm.
Order RHIZOSTOMEAE

Without marginal tentacles; manubrium with lips branched to form eight oral arms each with numerous mouth openings.

Family Rhizostomatidae

Rhizostomid medusae with “scapulettes” or “epaulettes” on manubrium; with single terminal club on each of eight oral arms.

Genus Rhizostoma Cuvier

With small epaulettes on base of manubrium; each oral arm with single club-shaped terminal appendage; usually with clearly defined main ring-canal from which arise intracircular coarse-meshed arcade networks of canals.

6. Rhizostoma octopus (L.). With usually an average of ten velar marginal lappets in each octant; terminal clubs of oral arms without thin basal stalks.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON IDENTIFICATION


DISTRIBUTION

Pelagia is a warm temperate oceanic species with direct development and only occurs in coastal areas when drifted in. Aurelia is a cosmopolitan coastal and estuarine species. The other four species are coastal, Cyanea capillata extending farthest north.

REFERENCES