

NOTES

A NOTE ON THE OCCURRENCE OF THE ANTHOMEDUSA *CLADONEMA* IN THE INDIAN REGION

On 30-3-1961 while cleaning one of the experimental aquaria, which was partly filled with sea water and not used for nearly three weeks, the occurrence of a large number of small medusae was observed. These were readily identified as the

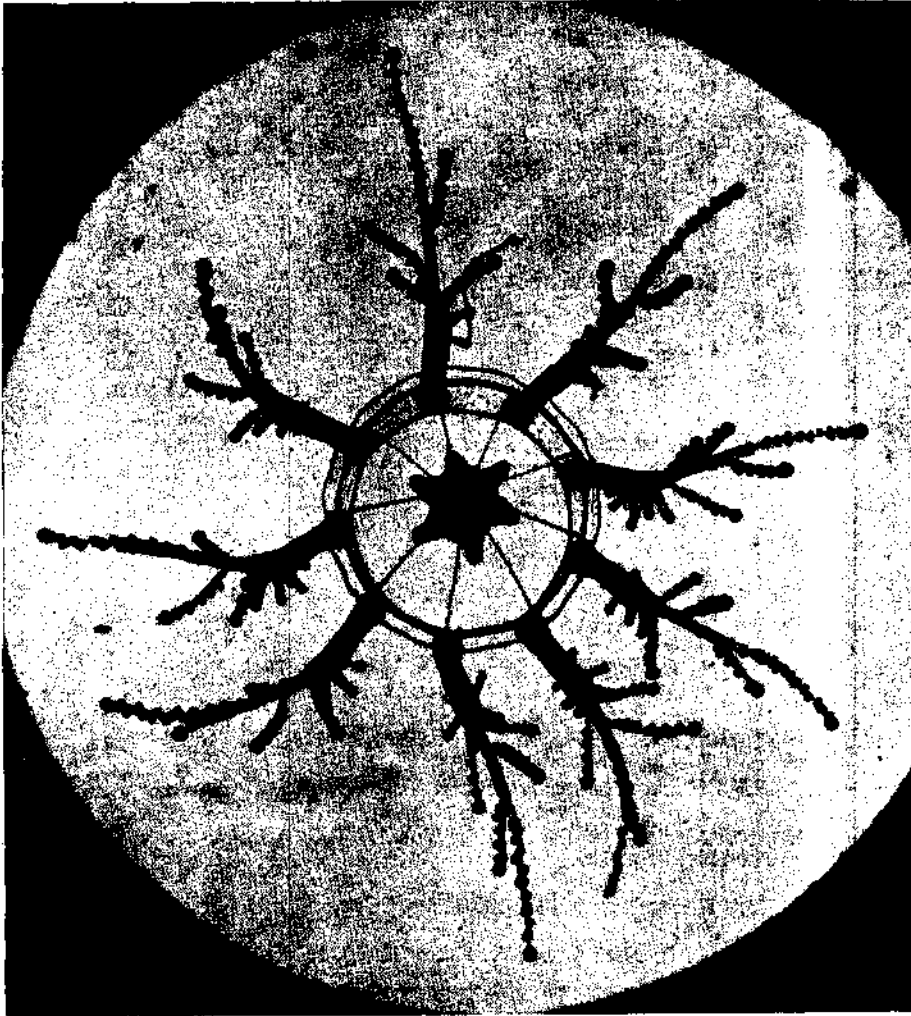


FIG. 1. *Cladonema radiatum* var. *mayeri*. ($\times 12$)

anthomedusa, *Cladonema* Dujardin. The identification of the species, however, has been more difficult because of slight variations in some of the characters from the available descriptions of the different species. After a critical study and comparison

of the specific characters of the present species with those already described, it became evident that the species obtained by us is *Cladonema radiatum* var. *mayeri* (Fig. 1). The species *mayeri* was originally described from Florida (see Kramp, 1928) but the present tendency is to regard the species as only a variety of *C. radiatum* (Russell, 1953). Prof. P. L. Kramp in a personal communication to one of us (R.R.P.) also agrees with the earlier authors who consider *C. mayeri* as a variety of *C. radiatum*. Except for some minor differences in a few specimens the present ones agree with the description given by Mayer (1910) for *C. mayeri*. The variations noticed are in the number of adhesive organs at the base of the marginal tentacles which goes up to 7 instead of the usual 6, and in the arrangement of the radial canals where 5 unbranched and two bifurcating ones make up the total of 9 as against 6 canals, every alternate one bifurcating. These characters are subject to variation (see Russell, 1953) and on account of the extreme variability of the species these are considered to be of no special significance.

Hitherto no species of *Cladonema* has been recorded from Indian waters. In the eastern hemisphere *C. radiatum* var. *mayeri* has so far been recorded only from Japan (Uchida, 1927 and Kramp, 1928) and from China (Chow and Huang, 1958). Since the record from China the species has not been reported from any other locality and as such the present finding is interesting.

Russell (1953) has remarked that the hydroid and the medusae of *C. radiatum* turn up occasionally in aquaria, having been found at the Zoological Gardens and the University College, London, and has discussed the habits of the medusa. In the sea the medusa is believed to live amongst seaweeds. The hydroid form of the species is a slender, simple or slightly branched colony of about 25 mm. in height. The hydroids must have been growing in the aquarium and would have escaped our notice when we first discovered the medusae in the tank. It is now certain that the species occurs in our waters and a careful search will reveal the presence of this at other places along the coast of India.

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