

ON A SWARM OF SALPS, *PEGEA CONFOEDERATA* (FORSKAL),
FROM THE GUJARAT COAST

Pegea confoederata (Forsk.) has a wide range of distribution from Hawaii to the Gulf of Oman. Though the distribution and seasonal variation of *P. confoederata* from the Bay of Bengal is well understood, our knowledge of the same from the West Coast of India is very meagre, but for the information of Apstein (1906) and Metcalf (1918). From Bay of Bengal *P. confoederata* has been recorded from Preparis Channel (Bomford, 1913 ; Sewell, 1926), and from Madras Coast (Nair and Aiyar, 1943 ; Nair, 1949). However, no record of such an aggregate form is available from the Gujarat Coast.

On November 17th, 1963, close to the shore at Rupan on the Gujarat Coast (18°53'E, 22°15'N), a swarm of *P. confoederata* (Forsk.), solitary as well as aggregate forms was noticed. The swarm extended about three kilometers long and about a hundred meters wide with thousands of dead and living salps. The forms closer to the shore were dead while those in the sea were alive. It was interesting to note that the salps settled on the rocks and reefs due to the tidal influence were alive for more than three hours, which was evident from the pulsating movement of the siphons when released in the sea water. The salps were large and measured 30 mm. to 45 mm. in length. The occurrence of *P. confoederata* on the coast of Rupan was preceded by heavy rain and wind in the sea. Probably these were responsible for drifting large swarm of *P. confoederata* towards

the shore. The present report confirms the earlier observations on the presence of solitary forms of *P. confederata* from the tidal zones. This appears to be the first record of the occurrence of *P. confederata* (Forsk.) from the Gujarat Coast.

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