Zoological Studies

The First *in situ* and Shallow-Water Observation of the Genus *Pseudothelogorgia* (Octocorallia: Keroeididae)

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Ofwegen (1990) described the species Lignella hartogi based on material from the Arabian Sea (22°32'N, 68°07'E) from a depth of 57 m, collected by the R/V Anton Bruun expedition in the Indian Ocean in 1963-1964. At the time, he compared those samples with fragmentary material of L. richardii (Lamouroux, 1816) present in the Netherlands Centre for Biodiversity Naturalis (NCB Naturalis; Leiden, the Netherlands) and assigned the new species to the genus Lignella. Later, Bayer (1992: 506) concluded that the identity of the L. richardii could not be determined with any degree of certainty. Therefore, he established a new genus, Thelogorgia, and referred material previously identified as L. richardii to 1 of his 4 Thelogorgia species. However, Bayer did not reexamine L. hartogi. Subsequently, Ofwegen (1994) compared L. hartogi with species belonging to Thelogorgia and described a new genus Pseudothelogorgia, which included L. hartogi, based on differences in sclerites. Later P. hartogi was reported again by Dr. S.D. Cairns of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (Washington DC, USA) who determined that material collected in Palau from a depth of 207 m belonged to this species (pers. comm.). Since then, it has not been reported until surprisingly the 1st author collected it at the Daymaniyat Is., Gulf of Oman (23°51'43.22"N, 58°6'15.16"E) at a depth of 18 m where it was photographed underwater, the 1st live photograph taken of Pseudothelogorgia (Fig. 1). The material is deposited in the NCB Naturalis (RMNH Coel. 39634). http://zoolstud.sinica.edu.tw/Journals/50.2/265.pdf

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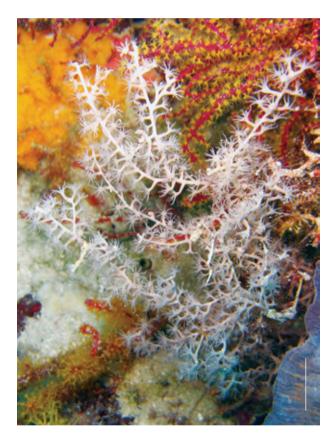


Fig. 1. Underwater photograph of *Pseudothelogorgia hartogi*, Gulf of Oman, 18 m in depth. Scale bar = 2 cm.

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