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GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENTION OF THE RANGE OF THE FUNGID CORAL
GENUS ZOOPIILUS DANA 1846 TO THE INDIAN OCEAN

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The free-living, colonial, light-weight and perforate fungid coral genus Zoopilus Dana 1846 is relatively uncommon and has been recorded upto now only from the Pacific Ocean^{1,2}. Zoopilus echinatus was collected during a

reef survey by NARA funded by the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority, at a depth of 14 meters from a deep sandstone reef off Kandakuliya in Northwest Sri Lanka. Of the three specimens collected the largest measured 18.4 cm in length and 14.3 cm in width. The corallum of the larger specimen was slightly domed. The septal arrangement was distinctive. In the smaller specimens the central septa started off-center and swept in a widening arch giving the appearance of a distinct large triangle at the center of the corallum. From lateral secondary corallites situated at the lateral edges of the 'septal triangle' septa extended laterally and obliquely to make up the more or less circular nature seen in the adult corallum. In the larger specimen the 'septal triangle' though present was not distinctly outstanding. Synapticulae present.

The distinctive characters and the habitat of the coral are discussed.

References

1. Ditlev, H. (1980). A field-guide to the reef-building corals of the Indo-Pacific. Scandinavian Science Press Ltd.
2. Wood, E.M. (1983). Corals of the World. T.F.H. Publications Inc.