Cristatella mucedo / G.J. Allman.

Contributors

Allman, George James, 1812-1898.

Publication/Creation

Birmingham : Thomas Bolton, [Between 1856 and 1859?] (Birmingham : Watson Bros & Douglas)

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CRISTATELLA MUCEDO.

A more interesting and beautiful Animal than a fully developed specimen of *Cristatella mucedo* can scarcely be imagined. The entire colony is of an oval shape, convex above and flat below, where it attaches itself to neighbouring objects. Upon the convex surface are arranged the orifices through which the polypides emerge, they are placed near the margin, and run round the entire cœnœcium in three regular concentric series, which alternate with one another, and leave an oval space in the centre where no orifices exist.

In the middle of the flattened under surface is an oval disc, resembling the foot of a gasteropodous mollusk. On this disc, which is contractile, and admits of frequent change of shape, the colony adheres to neighbouring objects, or creeps about on the submerged leaves and stems of aquatic plants. From the edges of the disc a flat space extends outwards, passing beyond the external series of orifices in the form of a projecting margin, whose interior is occupied by a series of tubular cells or chambers, visible through the translucent skin, and extending in a radiating direction from the disc outwards, but possessing no external opening.

The statoblasts are very characteristic. They are about 1-35th of an inch in diameter, exclusive of the marginal spines, and, with the exception of the statoblasts of *Pectinatella*, which they closely resemble, are larger than those of any other Fresh-water Polyzoon. They are also, with the same exception, the only ones having an orbicular shape. One face is a little more convex than the other. The annulus is wide, very distinctly cellular, and of a light yellow colour. The disc is deep reddish-brown, and elegantly mamillated. The spines spring from both faces of the disc, just within the annulus, and thence radiate outward, extending for some distance beyond the margin. The spines springing from the more convex face are somewhat longer and more numerous than the others, and alternate with them. All the spines are terminated by two, three, or four curved hooks resembling grappling irons. Towards the end of summer, the statoblasts occur in considerable numbers in the interior of full-grown specimens, and are visible through the transparent tissues of the animal. On the death or decay of the cœnœcium they are liberated, when they become attached, by means of their hooked spines, to various aquatic plants, and ultimately open for the escape of the young, by the separation of the two faces, at the commencement of the following summer. The young, on its escape from the statoblast, is at first solitary, but is rapidly multiplied by the production of gennuæ.

Fresh-water Polyzoa, by Prof. G. J. Allman.

LIVING SPECIMEN IN TUBE, POST FREE, TWO SHILLINGS.
Mounted Specimen of Statoblast, Post Free, 1s. 8d.

THOMAS BOLTON, ~~57, NEWHALL STREET~~, BIRMINGHAM.
25, BALSALL HEATH ROAD,

Fig 1

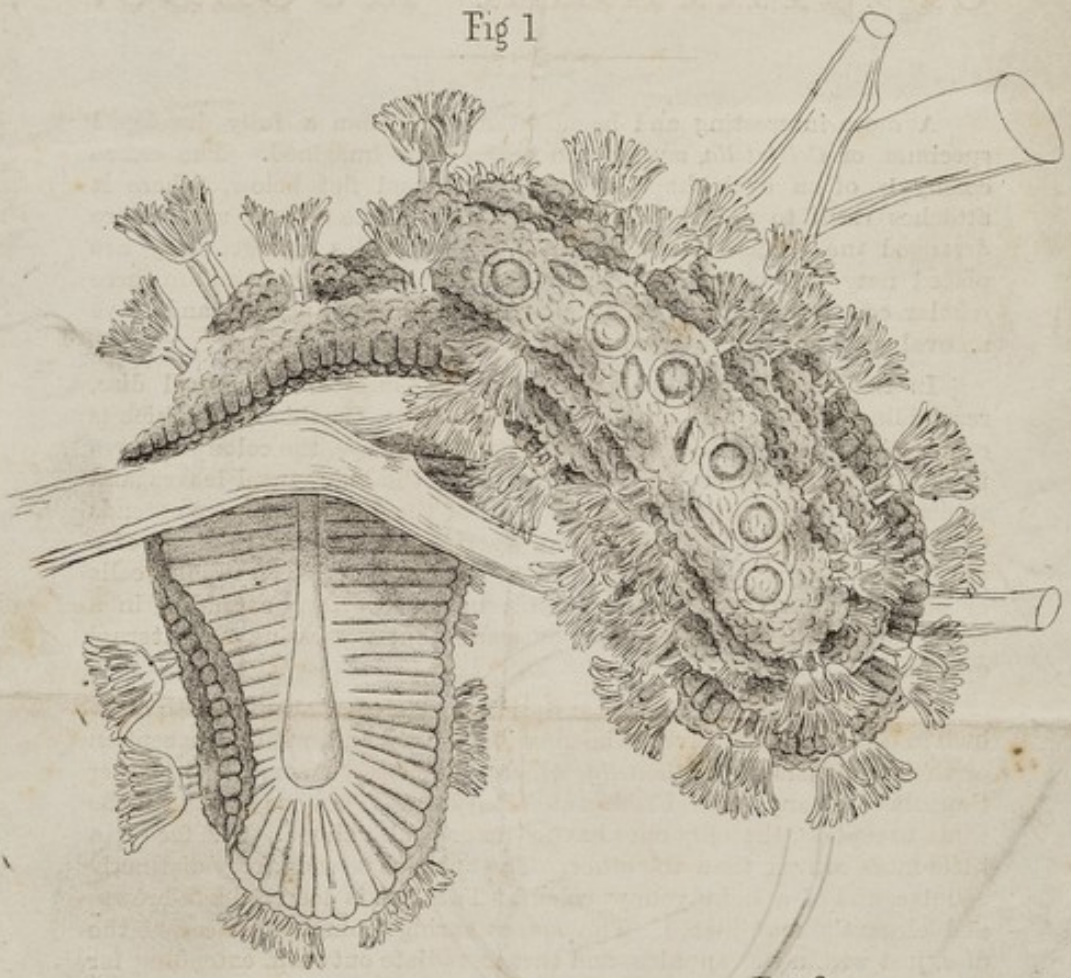

Fig 2

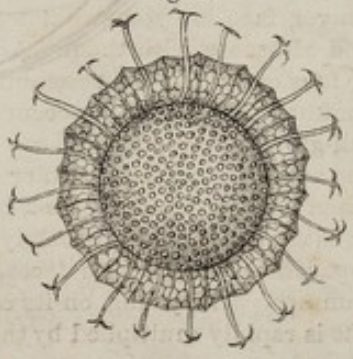

Fig 3.

Watson Bro^s & Douglas lith. Edin^r

Mter G. J. Allman.

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