

**Second record of *Thecacera pennigera* (Gastropoda: Opisthobranchia)
from the Dutch coast**

Rob DEKKER

Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (N.I.O.Z.),
P.O. Box 59, 1790 AB Den Burg, Texel, The Netherlands

On 13-X-1985, one specimen and spawn of the nudibranchiate mollusc *Thecacera pennigera* (Montagu, 1815) was collected in the Oosterschelde near Plompstroom, about 10 km west of Zierikzee (SW. Netherlands). The spawn and slug (fig. 1, specimen in author's collection) were found on tufts of the erect bryozoan *Bugula plumosa* (Pallas) at a depth of about 5 m below chart datum. The length of the animal was 30 mm. The day before, on 12-X-1985, at a site in the Oosterschelde about 2 km west of Zierikzee, spawn of a dorid nudibrach was found wrapped among tufts of *Bugula plumosa*, without any adult slug in the direct vicinity. This spawn was very much like that of *Thecacera pennigera* collected a day later.

In the laboratory the slug was attracted to *Bugula plumosa* colonies and feeding on these was actually observed. *Bugula* species are generally recorded as the preferred food of *Thecacera pennigera* (Giard, 1888: 501, 502; Todd, 1981: 154, 155; Thompson & Brown, 1984: 71).

So far there is only one record of *Thecacera pennigera* from the Dutch coast; on 9-X-1954, 3 specimens were collected near low tide level at Vlissingen (Swennen, 1961: 203). Of these specimens only two are deposited in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden (Reg. No. 5565, G. de Beer leg.). The third specimen is probably in the observer's collection.

Thecacera pennigera has a worldwide distribution and is generally found in temperate waters. The species is reported from the British Isles, the Netherlands, the French and Spanish Atlantic coasts, the Mediterranean (Sicily), Brazil, South Africa, Pakistan, Japan, Australia and New Zealand (Thompson & Brown, 1984: 71), and very recently (February 1986) from Mauritania (Swennen, personal communication). It is generally considered to be rare, but Thompson & Brown (1984) report the species being locally abundant.

Both Dutch records are from the first half of October. This is in accordance with the statement of Giard (1888: 501, 502) that *Thecacera pennigera* is an autumnal species near Wimereux (N. France). Cuénot (1927: 267), however, reports the species from the end of August near Arcachon (SW. France). This may be due to the earlier development of its favourite prey in more southern waters. In Dutch waters *Bugula plumosa* normally appears at the end of July, but only shows mass development in September and October.

REFERENCES

- CUÉNOT, L., 1927. Contribution à la faune du bassin d'Arcachon. IX: Revue générale de la faune et bibliographie. — Bull. stat. biol. Arcachon 24: 229-308.
GIARD, A., 1888. Le laboratoire de Wimereux en 1888. Recherches faunistiques. — Bull. Sci. Fr. Belg. (3) 19: 492-513.

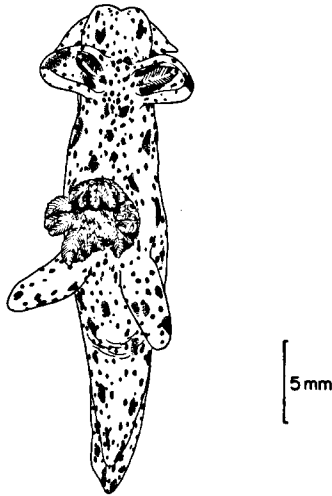


Fig. 1. *Thecacera pennigera*, dorsal aspect; Oosterschelde, 1985.

SWENNEN, C., 1961. Data on distribution, reproduction and ecology of the nudibranchiate molluscs occurring in the Netherlands. — *Neth. J. Sea Res.* 1: 191-240.

TODD, C. D., 1981. The ecology of nudibranch molluscs. — *Oceanogr. Mar. Biol. Ann. Rev.* 19: 141-234.

THOMPSON, T. E., & G. H. BROWN, 1984. *Biology of opisthobranch molluscs* 2: 1-229. London.

SAMENVATTING

Een tweede Nederlandse vondst van de zeenaaktslak *Thecacera pennigera* (Montagu, 1815) wordt bekend gemaakt. Op 13-X-1985 werd een exemplaar met een eisnoer aangetroffen in de Oosterschelde bij Plompetoren. Op voedselkeuze (mosdierpjes van het geslacht *Bugula*) en verspreiding wordt kort ingegaan.