

A Malayan record of the fresh-water medusa *Craspedacusta sowerbyi* Lankester (Trachomedusae, Petasidae)

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THE OCCURRENCE OF MEDUSAE in a disused mining pool near Ampang, Selangor, was brought to the notice of the authors by Mr. Hoh Lian Yong and Mr. Wong Phui Weng of the Rubber Research Institute, Kuala Lumpur. The first 13 specimens were collected by Mr. Hoh on the evening of January 22nd 1961, and given to us, still alive, the following day. Subsequently it has been possible to collect several hundreds within a few minutes using a simple dip net. The medusae occurred in very large numbers at some points on the edge of the pool, but none were caught at other points even by throwing a plankton net.

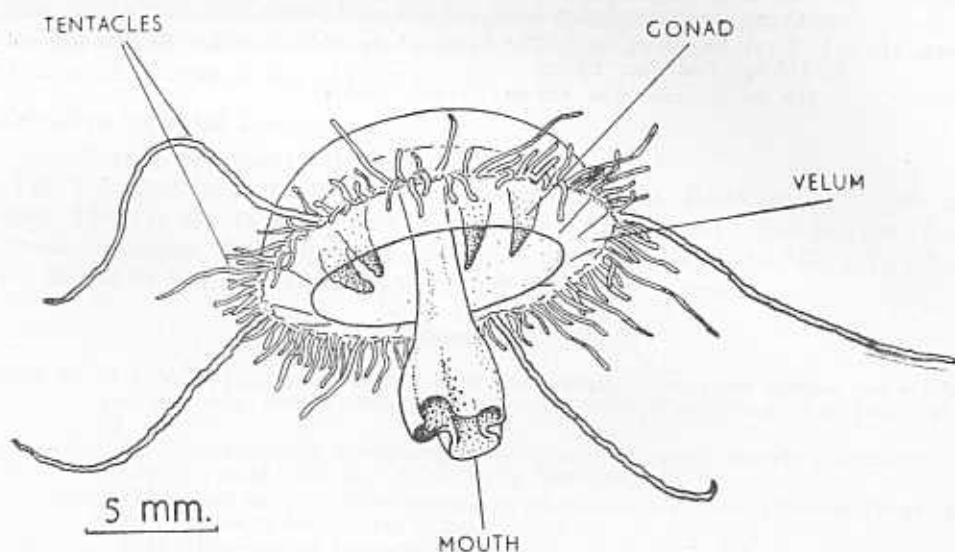


Fig. 1. *Craspedacusta sowerbyi* Lankester, from life.

The diameters of the live medusae ranged from 7 mm. to 20 mm. and shrank slightly on preservation. During movement the umbrella changes from almost flat to hemispherical in shape. There is a good marginal nematocyst ring and a broad velum. The mouth has four slightly folded lips which hang below the level of the umbrella margin. Four straight radial canals pass from the central stomach to the large ring canal, and four large, pouch-like gonads hang from the junction of the radial canals and stomach. There are up to 400 marginal tentacles in 3 main series:— long, medium, and short. The

longest are the four per-radials which are up to 2.5 cm. long in life, and which are inserted highest on the umbrella edge. The tentacles are covered with papillae bearing nematocysts. Up to 200 marginal vesicles are situated around the base of the velum, each containing a concretion and having a centripetal tube passing into the velum. (see Figure 1).

C. sowerbyi was first described by Lankester (1880), when it was found in water-lily tanks in London. It has since been found in aquaria, reservoirs, canals, and other standing bodies of water in many European countries, Russia, China, Japan, Australia, U.S.A., Panama, South America, and Hawaii. The present authors are unable to find any previous record of its occurrence in Malaya, although its known distribution indicates that it might be expected from almost any part of the world. A related genus, *Limnocnida* (Limnocnididae), occurs in Africa and India.

C. sowerbyi has also been known as *Limnocodium victoria* Allman (1880). It has a small hydroid stage of several polyps without tentacles which was named *Microhydra ryderi* Potts, 1885. A complete bibliography of *Craspedacusta* is given by Russel (1953).

So far only adult medusae have been found in one pool, but it is likely that *Craspedacusta* occurs in similar situations elsewhere in Malaya, and that the hydroid phase and young medusae will become available in time.

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