

*Body* attached, sessile, usually oblong or ovate in shape. Branchial aperture eight-lobed, atrial six-lobed.

*Test* cartilaginous, but soft and flexible, sometimes thin and membranous; rarely prolonged into hair-like processes, or covered with sand.

*Branchial Sac* never folded, sometimes minutely plicated. Internal longitudinal bars present, and usually papillated; stigmata straight.

*Dorsal Lamina* in the form of a plain, or more or less ribbed and pectinated membrane.

*Tentacles* simple.

*Viscera* placed upon the left side of the branchial sac.

*Genitalia* in the intestinal loop.

Whether the present genus should be called *Ascidia* or *Phallusia* is now a matter of individual opinion, and it makes little difference which name is finally adopted. *Ascidia* seems preferable for two reasons:—(1), it was the name first given, although in a wider sense than as at present used; (2), it has been more generally employed than *Phallusia*.

Baster, in 1762 (*Opuscula subseciva*, vol. i.), gave the name *Ascidium* to a species of Simple Ascidian. This was afterwards changed by Linnæus to *Ascidia*, and under that name all the Simple Ascidians are grouped in the 12th edition of the “*Systema Naturæ*,” and in O. F. Müller’s “*Zoologia Danica*.”

Savigny, in 1816, divided Linnæus’s *Ascidia* into the four genera—*Phallusia*, *Cynthia*, *Boltenia* and *Clavelina*. Of these *Phallusia* most nearly corresponds with the present genus, but had wider limits, including the entire family Ascidiidæ. Since Savigny’s time *Ascidia* has been used by some authors and *Phallusia* by others.

The main objection to using *Ascidia* is, that when first proposed it included more than what we now include in the genus, but this same objection holds in regard to *Phallusia* also; as used by Savigny, the latter term comprised *Ciona* and *Corella*, and was exactly equivalent to *Ascidia* as used by Forbes in his “*British Mollusca*” (1853). In precisely the same sense, *Ascidia* has been used since by Alder in 1863, and by Claus in 1876, and *Phallusia* by van der Hoeven in 1856, and by Kupffer in 1870.

Hancock (1870) employed *Ascidia* in the restricted sense in which it is used here, and has been used by Heller and others; while *Phallusia* in the same restricted sense (*i.e.*, not including *Ciona* and *Corella*) has been employed by Kupffer in his “*Jahresber. der Commiss., &c.*,” 1875, and by Traustedt in 1880.

Hence it appears that whether we take the name first applied without regarding the limits of the genus, or merely the name that was first used in the present restricted sense, we find that *Ascidia* has the priority over, and has been rather more generally accepted than, *Phallusia*.