

Sigmata about 0·04 by 0·0015. It is needless to give further details concerning an already well-known species; the reasons for uniting *Halichondria varia*, Bowerbank, and *Isodictya virgata*, Bowerbank, have already been given by Ridley in the "Alert" Report (*loc. cit.*).

*Locality*.—Station 208, January 17, 1875; lat. 11° 37' N., long. 123° 31' E.; Philippine Islands; depth, 18 fathoms; bottom, blue mud. A number of fragments.

*Habitat*.—Strait of Malacca (Bowerbank); Port Darwin (Ridley); Philippines (Challenger).

*Gellius carduus*, Ridley and Dendy (Pl. VIII. fig. 3; Pl. XIII. fig. 7).

1886. *Gellius carduus*, Ridley and Dendy, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5, vol. xviii. p. 333.

Sponge (Pl. VIII. fig. 3) sessile, more or less oval, or egg-shaped. *Size* of the two most perfect specimens about 33 mm. long by 20 mm. broad. *Colour* in spirit pale greyish-yellow. *Texture* loose but firm. Interior of the sponge cavernous, owing to the numerous wide canals by which it is traversed. *Surface* raised into numerous angular prominences, many of which have oscula at their summits. *Dermal membrane* distinct, hyaline, covering large subdermal cavities, and pierced by numerous scattered pores, about 0·052 mm. in diameter. *Oscula* scattered singly on the summits of angular prominences.

*Skeleton*.—(a) *Dermal*; consisting of a very beautiful unispicular reticulation of large, stout, blunted oxeote spicules (exhibiting occasionally a tendency to form loose, long fibres). (b) *Main*; consisting of a loose reticulation of similar spicules, not united to form definite fibres. Hence the firmness of the sponge is due rather to the large amount of tough membranes present, supported by loose spicules, than to the presence of any definite spiculo-fibre.

*Spicules*.—(a) *Megasclera*; of one kind only, viz., blunted oxea (Pl. XIII. fig. 7), slightly bent, and tapering to a rounded extremity at each end. Size 0·6 by 0·023 mm. (b) *Microsclera*; numerous small sigmata of the usual shape, measuring 0·02 by 0·0012 mm.

This species is readily distinguished by its very characteristic external form, the surface resembling that of a large thistle-leaf, whence the specific name. The shape of the skeleton spicules is also very characteristic; they might be described as strongyla, tapering slightly towards each end; but there can be no doubt that they are simply blunted oxea.

*Localities*.—Station 148A, January 3, 1874; lat. 46° 53' S., long. 51° 52' E.; depth, 240 to 550 fathoms; bottom, hard ground, gravel, shells. One specimen, attached to a pebble.

Off Prince Edward Island, December 27, 1873; depth, 85 to 150 fathoms. Three specimens.

Off Marion Island, 50 to 75 fathoms. One specimen.