

Branchial Sac with four rows of long stigmata.

Dorsal Lamina represented by short languets.

Alimentary Canal posterior to the branchial sac. Stomach ovate, smooth-walled.

Reproductive Organs placed on the right side of the intestinal loop. The ova develop in an incubatory pouch formed as a diverticulum from the atrial cavity. The larva is of large size, and is gemmiparous.

This genus was founded in 1881 by Della Valle¹ for two species of Compound Ascidians from the Mediterranean which he named *Distaplia magnilarva* and *Distaplia rosea*. He pointed out at the same time that Oscar Schmidt's *Cellulophana pileata*,² which F. E. Schulze had shown in 1877³ to be not a Sponge but an Ascidian, and Kowalevsky's *Didemnum styliiferum*,⁴ which is certainly not one of the Didemnidæ, would probably find their proper places in the new genus.

In external appearance, as Della Valle pointed out, *Distaplia* resembles colonies of the genus *Aplidium*, but there the resemblance ends, and its true affinities are with *Cystodytes* and *Distoma*. It is therefore placed quite correctly by von Drasche in the family Distomidæ, but it is also allied with his family Chondrostachyidæ, being united to *Chondrostachys* and *Oxycorynia* by the new Challenger genus *Colella*.

A new species, *Distaplia lubrica*, from the Gulf of Rovigno, was added to the genus by von Drasche in 1883, and in the same year I found in the collection of Tunicata obtained during the "Porcupine" and "Lightning" expeditions a specimen of *Distaplia*, which in my Report⁵ upon that collection I referred provisionally to *Distaplia rosea*, Della Valle. This specimen, which was dredged in Tangier Bay, Morocco, from a depth of 35 fathoms, is discussed further on. Finally, in the Challenger collection there occur several small colonies obtained from Station 212, near the Philippine Islands, which undoubtedly belong to the genus *Distaplia*, and closely resemble the specimen from Tangier Bay. They do not, however, agree well with any of the previously described species. They differ entirely from von Drasche's *Distaplia lubrica* in the form of the colony, and they differ in certain characters from each of Della Valle's species while agreeing with each of them in other features. Consequently it is necessary to consider these "Porcupine" and Challenger specimens as belonging to an independent species, which may be regarded as occupying a position between *Distaplia magnilarva* and *Distaplia rosea*. I have named it *Distaplia vallii* in honour of the founder of the genus.

The four known species of the genus may be distinguished briefly by the following characters :—

¹ Nuove Contribuzioni, &c., Roma, 1881.

² Spongien des Adriat. Meeres, 1862.

³ Zeitschr. f. wiss. Zool., Bd. xxix. p. 119.

⁴ Ueber die Knospung der Ascidien, Archiv f. mikrosk. Anat., Bd. x., 1874.

⁵ Trans. Roy. Soc. Edin., vol. xxxii., part ii., p. 219, 1884.