



# Spaghetti bryozoan

*Amathia verticillata* (delle Chiaje, 1822)

## KEY FEATURES



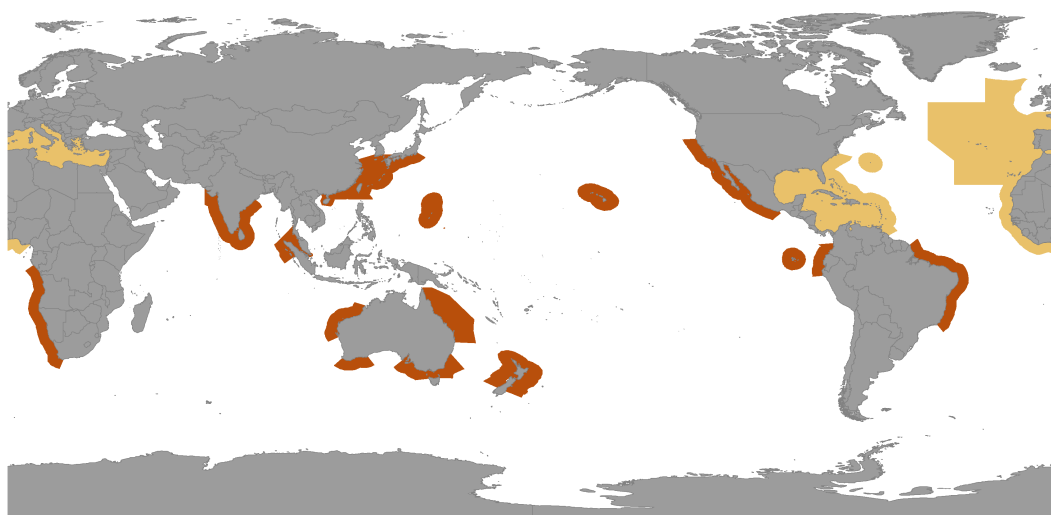
- Large, bushy, repeatedly branching colonies, up to 1 m long, appearing as thin, stringy, gelatinous noodles
- Immature colonies usually transparent; older, larger colonies dirty white
- Colonies deciduous, branches falling off in winter, new branches regenerating in spring
- Subtidal, mostly on hard surfaces such as rocks, pontoons, pilings, boat hulls, or epibiont on shells or carapaces
- Large bushes are formed only when water warms over 22°C
- Tolerates a wide range of salinities but found in the greatest abundance where salinity is above 30
- Elevated temperature and salinity have been suggested to enhance outbreaks of this bryozoan

## PATHWAY

✓ ballast water

✓ biofouling

✓ aquaculture transfer





# Spaghetti bryozoan

*Amathia verticillata* (delle Chiaje, 1822)

REPUBLIC OF THE  
MARSHALL ISLANDS

## IMPACTS



### Environmental impacts

Known to kill eelgrass in San Diego Bay, by epiphytic smothering, creating gaps in the seagrass canopy, exposing sediment which is then colonised by adult bryozoans. Large masses drift and entangle submerged surfaces with significant impacts on the settlement and survival of hard-bottom sessile invertebrates



### Human health impacts

None known



### Social & cultural impacts

Can clog and foul fishing gear and modify habitats, with social impact on food gathering and recreational enjoyment



### Economic impacts

Causes problems for vessels and marinas. Has been known to clog fishing gear in Texas and power plant intakes in Israel. Drift mats have been sucked into cooling water intakes causing operational difficulties. Fouls cultured pearls on the south coast of Korea

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- In contrast to most other bryozoans, calcium carbonate is absent in exoskeletons of this species
- Fragmentation may be an important dispersal mechanism for this species
- The nudibranch *Okenia pellucida* has been found exclusively with the spaghetti bryozoan on which it feeds and lays its egg masses. This nudibranch has likely been spread in association with this species

## DISTRIBUTION

**Not present in the Republic of the Marshall Islands**

### Native range

Uncertain. Type locality is in the Mediterranean Sea, but it has been suggested that it originated in the Caribbean. Both areas are classified as cryptogenic

### Non-indigenous range

Australia, New Zealand, Hawai'i, South America, Galapagos, Ecuador, Mexico, North America West Coast, West Africa, India, Pakistan, and Malaysia

## CREDITS AND REFERENCES (click reference for more information)

### Images

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### References

[Gordon and Matawari 1992](#), [McCann et al. \(2015\)](#), [Jeba Kumar et al. \(2017\)](#), [dos Santos et al. \(2016\)](#)