

Observations of natural spawning of *Bohadschia vitiensis* and *Holothuria scabra versicolor*

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Date: 24 November 2004
 Observation time: 15:45–17:45
 Location: Baie des Citrons, Noumea, New Caledonia
 Tide: 3–1 hours before high tide
 Moon phase: 3 days before full moon
 Species: *Bohadschia vitiensis* (mass spawning)
Holothuria scabra versicolor (1 specimen spawning)

Description

Bohadschia vitiensis are found in high density on the soft sandy-muddy bottom (approx. 30 ind. 100 m⁻²) in the middle of the bay. During the time of the observation, about half of the visible individuals were in classical upright spawning posture. One isolated specimen of *Holothuria scabra versicolor* (see picture) was also spawning.

Other sea cucumber species in the same location (*Stichopus hermanni*, *H. atra*, *H. coluber* and one specimen of *H. scabra*) showed no sign of spawning behaviour.

Concerning the “solitary” spawning of the *H. scabra versicolor*, it is interesting to note that animals can and do spawn alone. This confirms observations made before at the same location and elsewhere (see past issues of this bulletin). Was this spawning triggered by the massive *B. vitiensis* spawning, or did this individual simply react to the same environmental factors (i.e. tide, moon, water temperature) that triggered the *B. vitiensis* spawning? It would be an interesting question to investigate with tank experiments and further field observations.



Bohadschia vitiensis



Holothuria scabra versicolor

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