

Observation of natural spawning of *Bohadschia vitiensis*

Observer: Aymeric Desurmont¹

Date: 11 June 2005
 Observation time: 16:30–16:45
 Location: Baie des Citrons, Noumea, New Caledonia
 Depth: 2–5 m
 Tide: Low tide
 Moon phase: 4 days after new moon
 Species: *Bohadschia vitiensis* (2 specimens spawning)

Description

As already described in several past issues of this bulletin,² the Baie des Citrons in Noumea, New Caledonia is host to many species of sea cucumbers, including *Bohadschia vitiensis*, which is mostly found on the soft sandy-muddy bottom in the middle of the bay.

On the day of the observation, many sea cucumber tracks could be seen on the soft bottom, and all visible *B. vitiensis* specimens were clearly on top of the sediment and not half buried as they usually are. Two specimens were in the classical upright spawning position, releasing a very thin dribble of white gametes while slowly swaying. These were the only two *B. vitiensis* specimens showing signs of spawning activity among the 50+ individuals visible during 15 minutes of observation.

Other sea cucumber species visible in the surrounding area (*B. argus*, *H. atra*, *H. coluber*, *H. edulis*, *H. scabra*, *H. scabra versicolor*, *Stichopus chloronotus* and *S. hermanni*) showed no sign of spawning behaviour.

It is interesting to note that this observation was made in June during the austral winter while another observation of mass-spawning of the same species had been made³, in the same location, in November 2004 during the austral summer.



Bohadschia vitiensis

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 2. SPC Beche-de-mer Information Bulletin, Issues: #18, p. 38; #20, p. 37; and #21, p. 28. (<http://www.spc.int/coastfish/News/BDM/bdm.htm>)
 3. Desurmont, A. 2004. Observations of natural spawning of *Bohadschia vitiensis* and *Holothuria scabra versicolor*. SPC Beche-de-mer Information Bulletin 21:28. (<http://www.spc.int/coastfish/News/BDM/21/Desurmont.pdf>)