Life of the ctenostome bryozoan *Pherusella cf. brevituba*

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Bryozoans are colonial filter-feeders and inhabit predominantly marine benthic ecosystems. The most common and highly diverse groups of bryozoans are Stenolaemata and gymnolaemate cheilostome which almost exclusively calcifying, while the group of ctenostomes are uncalcified and comprises about 300 species. The ctenostome bryozoan *Pherusella brevituba* was first described in 1951 by Soule and was reported along the pacific coast of North America. The genus of *Pherusella* comprises three species *P. tubulosa*, *P. brevituba* and *P. flabellaris*. In 2005 *P. brevituba* was reported in the Mediterranean Sea for the first time, inhabiting seagrass leaves of *Posidonia oceanica* and were listed as invasive species. In the last couple years *P. brevituba* was regularly sampled along the Croatian coast of the North Adriatic Sea. Colonies rarely contained more than 4 to 6 zooids. Even in young colonies of two zooids the reproduction starts quite early and the maternal zooid produces up to five lecithotrophic pseudo-cyphonautes larvae. The free-swimming larvae settles short after releasing on new unvegetated parts of *P. oceanica*. So far this species is not reported on any other substrate in the Mediterranean Sea and with its short and peculiar lifecycle it seems perfectly adapted to the grows pattern of *P. oceanica*. In 2017, colonies were kept under laboratory condition for serval weeks until spawning while the metamorphosis of hatched larvae were documented. Additional morphological and molecular investigation will address the question whether this is an undescribed species or not.