

# 34

[www.biodiversityjournal.com](http://www.biodiversityjournal.com)

ISSN 2039-0394 (Print Edition)  
ISSN 2039-0408 (Online Edition)

with the support of



# *Biodiversity Journal*

**MARCH 2019, 10 (1): 1-68**

FOR WILDLIFE RESEARCH  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



*Dendropoma cristatum* (Biondi, 1859) - The vermetid reef from Favignana Island (TP), Sicily, Italy



<https://doi.org./Biodiv.Journ.2019.10.1.I.II>

**The vermetid reefs.** Vermetid reefs are bioconstructions built up by the gastropod mollusc *Dendropoma cristatum* (Biondi, 1859) in association with some coralline algae such as *Neogoniolithon brassica-florida* (Harvey) Setchell et Mason. These bioconstructions are unique and highly diverse systems that play a fundamental structural role, as they protect coasts from erosion, regulate sediment transport and accumulation, serve as carbon sinks, make the habitat more complex and heterogeneous and provide numerous habitats for animal and vegetal species, thus increasing intertidal biodiversity. In Sicily, large and more or less continuous vermetid reefs are present along the north and northwestern coasts between Zafferano Cape and Trapani and within the Marine Protected Area (MPA) “Egadi Islands”. These biogenic constructions, enclosed in the SPA/BIO Protocol (Barcelona Convention) are now threatened by environmental changes and human activities (e.g., pollution, climate change, ocean acidification), thus experiencing high mortality in several areas of the Mediterranean Sea.

**Paolo Balistreri.** Marine Biologist, freelance. Via Vicolo Giotto 6, 91023 Favignana, Italy; e-mail: [requin.blanc@hotmail.it](mailto:requin.blanc@hotmail.it) (photos P. Balistreri).



*Dendropoma cristatum* and its external structure.