The marine barrel sponge *Xestospongia testudinaria* (Lamarck, 1815; Demospongiae; Haplosclerida) has a wide distribution in the Indo-Pacific according to the World Porifera database (van Soest 2008). Its size and oftentimes exposed habitus makes it a prominent member of the benthic communities. In Indonesian waters, a mass spawning event of this species has been previously described for the Banda Sea (Sarano 1990). The author described a synchronized event in the morning hours of 29th of August 1989 (one day before new moon) in which *X. testudinaria* specimens released clouds of gametes into the water column. Further spawning has been observed early in the year 2012, but no details have been reported (Swierts et al. 2013). Another species from the same genus, *Xestospongia muta* has been observed to release eggs and sperm from 8.00h to 9.00h on March 30, 2004 in Belize (Ritson-Williams et al. 2005).

Similarly, a synchronous mass spawning event took place at Gili Lawa Darat (8°28′30″S, 119°33′0″E) in the Northern Komodo National Park. Conversely to previous reports, we observed onset of a spawning event starting at dusk on the...
8th of July 2015, 6 days after full moon. We found numerous specimens of *X. testudinaria* releasing milky clouds of positively buoyant male gametes between 18.30h and 19.30h at depths between 10 to 20 m. There was a mild current and water temperatures were 28°C. We identified different morphotypes to spawn at the same time in close proximity (Fig. 1A, 1B). We could not find any signs of sponge spawning in the previous or following days.

Swierts et al. (2013) hypothesized that stable water temperatures may allow the sponge to spawn during the whole year, but differences in spawning need to be identified. Comparison of the observations reported in here and in Sarano (1990) may indicate a similar spawning rhythm as reported for the same species in the Great Barrier Reef, where Fromont and Bergquit (1994) found a semilunar periodicity. They reported spawning in two consecutive years two days after full moon and in the third year one day before new moon.

**Acknowledgments**

We thank Mermaid Liveaboards (Bali, Indonesia) for field support. We are grateful for the photo contribution from Alex Lindbloom.

**References**


Received: 1 October 2015/Accepted: 29 January 2016

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