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OSTRACODS AND FORAMINIFERA LIVING ON CORALLIGENOUS BIOCONSTRUCTIONS OFFSHORE

MARZAMEMI (WESTERN IONIAN SEA SOUTHERN ITALY).

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Abstract

Within the project “CRESCIBLUREEF - Grown in the blue: new technologies for knowledge and conservation of Mediterranean reefs”, ostracod and foraminifera associations living on coralligenous bioconstructions, mainly generated by calcareous red algae, are analysed for the first time along the Ionian coast of SE Sicily offshore Marzamemi (SR, Italy). A total of seven samples were collected between 35 and 37 m depth using the sorbona sampling device: three samples were taken from the top and the body of the bioconstructions, and four from the surrounding sediment at the base of the bioconstructions. Ostracod associations include 20 living species. Clearly dominant are the specimens belonging to the genus *Xestoleberis*, followed by the

genera *Bairdia*, *Tenedocythere*, *Aurila*, *Loxoconcha*, *Urocythereis*; poorly represented are the genera *Carinocythereis*, *Paradoxostoma* and *Polycope*. Forams associations are almost exclusively represented by benthic phytal taxa and include over 3000 specimens belonging to 130 different taxa. The families quantitatively prevalent, both in terms of richness of species and abundance, are Elphidiidae, followed by Hauerinidae, Cibicididae, Ammoniidae, Homotrematidae, Planorbulinidae, Textulariidae, Cribrolinoididae, Asterigerinatidae, Rosalinidae. Spiroloculinidae and Globigerinidae are subordinate, while little represented are Astrononionidae, Haplophragmoididae, Polymorphinidae, Ammodiscidae, Ellipsolagenidae, Spirillinidae etc..

The analysis performed showed substantial differences between samples taken at the base and on the body of the algal bioconstructions, allowing to expand knowledge of the ecology of the groups studied.