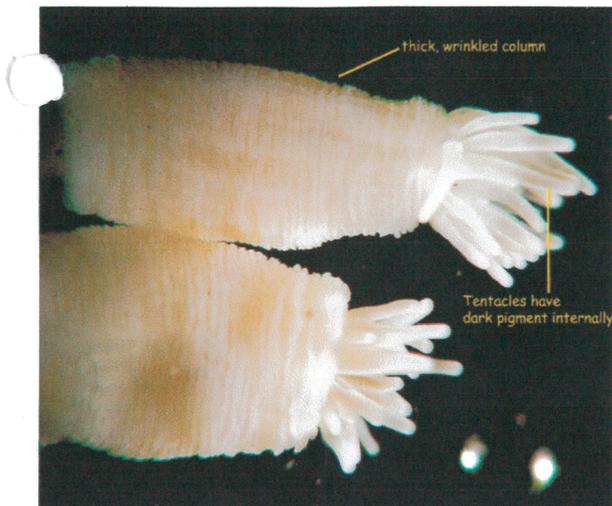


# Zaolutus actius Hand 1955



**Zaolutus actius** - from Hand 1955: specimens up to 7 cm long; the base is circular and adherent with strong musculature; tentacles are up to 1.2 cm long, pointed and gently tapering; they are hexamerous in arrangement with up to 6 cycles; numbering more than 96 but fewer than 192; they are generally transparent with opaque grey tips and black base; the inner cycle are longer than the outer.

**Personal notes:** the column is thick and wrinkled in appearance with no adherent sediment. There are usually 20+ tentacles (although I've seen as few as 14 in juveniles) which have a dark (purplish/grey) pigmented area internally and taper evenly to the tip.

*Zaolutus* is predominantly (but not exclusively) being seen in the southern stations (ITP/ITP regional) and its depth range, to date, is 30m - 60m. However, it is my strong belief that we have been misidentifying *Zaolutus* as *Anemonactis* and vice versa, so I wouldn't rely heavily on occurrence data.

**Similar species (in gestalt only; no implication of systematic relationship):**

***Anemonactis* sp (*Anemonactis* sp A in J. Ljubenkov's hand-out)**

These two species look superficially similar, however, *Anemonactis* tentacles terminate with a capitate tip and should number 12 (this may not be exact, I've seen notes indicating a possibility of 16, but there should be 12 mesenteries).

***Flosmeris grandis* Hand 1967** - we have not reported this species but in drawings and description, it appears similar to *Zaolutus*. Differences with regards to tentacle and mesentary counts seem few. However, *Flosmeris* tentacles are fully retractile which is not the case with *Zaolutus*. There is also no mention of any color associated with the tentacles. *Flosmeris* was described from shallow water in bays and possesses acontia which *Zaolutus* does not.

***Harenactis attenuata* Torrey 1902** - up to 16 inches total length, with 24 tentacles. In contraction there are up to 24 longitudinal furrows marking the base of the mesenteries. The tentacles are retractile. (from Johnson and Snook 1955, p. 98). I'm going to try to get the original description and gather more information on this animal.

In closing: I'm not sure that the above animal is the true *Zaolutus actius*. Our anemone taxonomy is sadly lacking in many ways. However, that is the assigned name for the moment and hopefully this sheet will at least help with consistent identification.

