

Subject - ZOOLOGY

Class - BSc Part-I

TOPIC - MEDUSAE OR SEXUAL ZOOIDS.

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Introduction :- The medusae are the sexual zooids of obelia colony. These are saucer-shaped bodies attached to the root of blastostyle. These are produced as hollow buds from the coenosarc of the blastostyle during spring and summer. These attain a diameter of about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch.

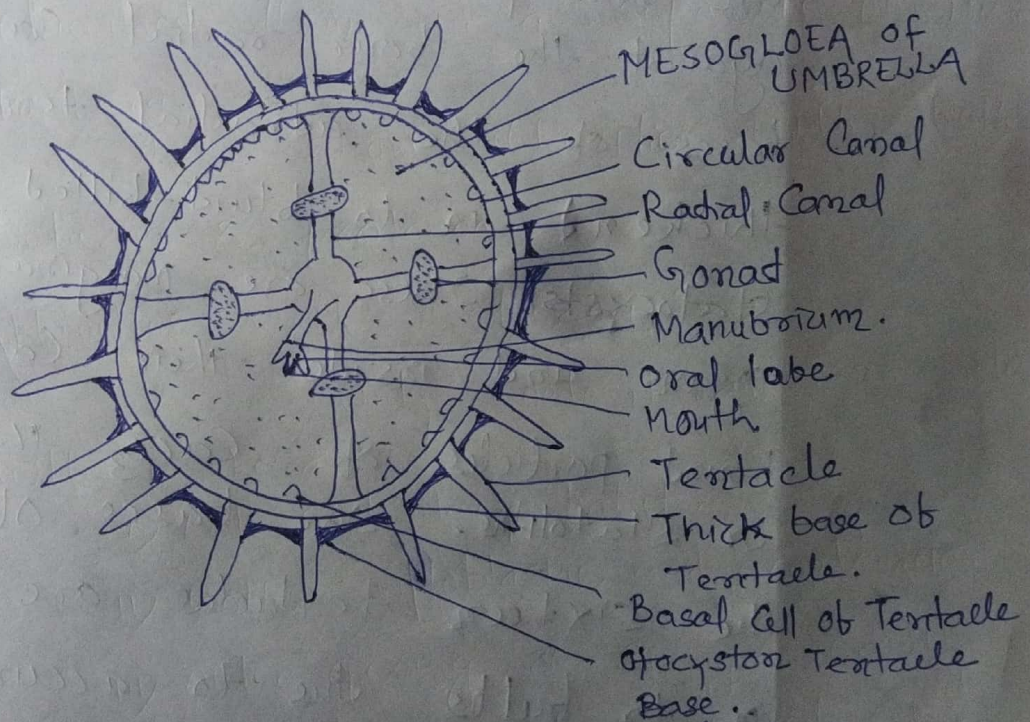


Fig - Medusa of obelia in oral view.

The Medusa is a saucer-shaped, bell-shaped or umbrella shaped structure with outer convex and inner concave surfaces. The former is known as the exumbrella surface and the latter subumbrella surface. From the centre of surface arise a short, hollow manubrium. The distal free end of

the manubrium opens to the exterior by a terminal, four sided mouth. The free edge of the umbrella is produced inwards as a thin fold, which is known as velum. It is bound in rudimentary condition. Its rim is produced into numerous short, solid and highly contractile tentacles. In a young medusa their number is sixteen but this increases with the age of medusa. These sixteen tentacles are arranged in definite groups. There are four per-radial tentacles situated against the four radial canals. The bases of the adradial tentacles are thickened into fluid-filled sacs. The statocysts. These are marginal sense organs and inside their cavities are bound particles of CaCO_3 the lithocysts or statoliths. The bases of all the sixteen tentacles are swollen into bulbs due to accumulation of interstitial cells.

The mouth leads internally into the gastric cavity or stomach, situated inside the manubrium and the central part of Umbrella.

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