

The Nephthyidæ appear to have originated in lowly organised Alcyonidæ, like *Belonella*, Gray, and *Iphethyrus*, W. Koch, which exhibit an analogous relation of the polyps.

The relationship of the genera *Spongodes* and *Nephthya* was first recognised by Milne-Edwards (*loc. cit.*). He united both genera with *Paralcyonium*, and contrasted them, under the name "Alcyoniens armés," with the "Alcyoniens nus," in which latter *Alcyonium* and *Ammothea* were comprised.

Later on, Verrill (*loc. cit.*) created the family Nephthyidæ for *Nephthya* and *Spongodes*, and for the new genus *Eunephthya*.

Klunzinger (*loc. cit.*) includes these genera, together with *Ammothea*, under his *Alcyoninæ capituliferæ*. We owe to him at the same time well-defined generic distinctions between the genera *Ammothea*, *Nephthya*, and *Spongodes*.

Kölliker's subfamily Siphonogorgiaceæ is also to be united with the Nephthyidæ, in that it is connected with *Spongodes* and *Nephthya* through certain transitional forms to be described later on.

Marenzeller's¹ genus *Gersemia* must also be placed here. Koren and Danielssen in their splendid monograph of the Norwegian Alcyonaria² describe several species of a new genus, *Duva*, while Danielssen, in the Zoology of the North Sea Expedition,³ describes numerous species belonging to the following new genera—*Fulla*, *Væringia*, *Barathrobius*, *Gersemiopsis*, and *Drifa*; these would fall into the first division of the Nephthyidæ.

We can divide the family of the Nephthyidæ as above characterised into two sub-families :—

1. *Spongodinæ*, in which the thin walls bounding the canals of the stem and branches are soft and contain few or no spicules. To this subfamily belong the genera :—

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| <i>Voeringia</i> , Danielssen. | <i>Drifa</i> , Danielssen. |
| <i>Fulla</i> , Danielssen. | <i>Duva</i> , Koren and Danielssen. |
| <i>Barathrobius</i> , Danielssen. | <i>Eunephthya</i> , Verrill. |
| <i>Gersemia</i> , Marenzeller. | <i>Nephthya</i> , Savigny. |
| <i>Gersemiopsis</i> , Danielssen. | <i>Spongodes</i> , Lesson. |

2. *Siphonogorginæ*, in which the divisions between the canals of the stem and branches are rigid and filled with spicules, the canals themselves being relatively narrow. Here belong the genera :—

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| <i>Paranephthya</i> , n. gen. | <i>Chironephthya</i> , n. gen. |
| <i>Scleronephthya</i> , n. gen. | <i>Siphonogorgia</i> , Kölliker. |

¹ *Denkschr. d. math.-nat. Cl. k. Akad. Wiss. Wien*, Bd. xxxv., 1877; Reprint, p. 18.

² *Nye Alcyonider tilhørende Norges Fauna*, 1883.

³ *Den Norske Nordhavs-Expedition, 1876-78*, xvii., *Zoologi. Alcyonida*, 1887.