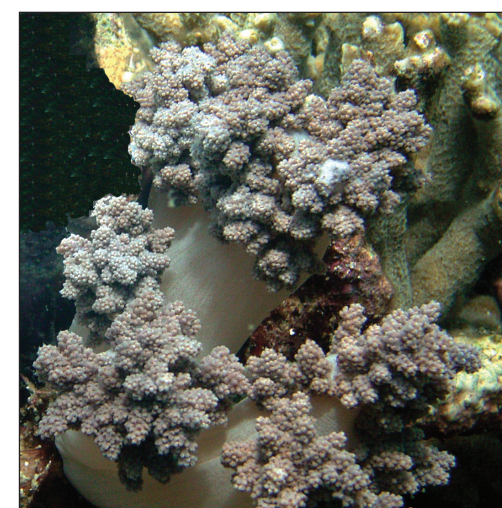




The Octocorallia (Cnidaria) are a poorly understood group of marine animals and most genera are badly in need of revision. This article represents the second revision of genera of the family Nephtheidae, that occurs throughout the world's oceans, primarily the shallow water tropical regions. In the article the species of the genus *Litophyton* from the Red Sea and the western Indian Ocean are treated, which includes species previously belonging to the genus *Nephthea*, here synonymized with *Litophyton*. A neotype for both *Litophyton arboreum*, the type species of *Litophyton*, and *Nephthea chabrolii*, the type species of *Nephthea*, are designated. The new species *L. curvum* sp. n. is described and depicted, and a key to all *Litophyton* species is provided. Of the 26 species previously described from the western Indian Ocean and Red Sea, 13 species are considered valid and 13 have been synonymized or placed in other genera.

THE GENUS *LITOPHYTON* FORSKÅL, 1775 (OCTOCORALLIA, ALCYONACEA, NEPHTHEIDAE) IN THE RED SEA AND THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

BY LEEN P. VAN OFWEGEN



Litophyton sp. (photo Leen P. van Ofwegen)

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