

SALPA

Salpa is common free swimming pelagic urochordate found at a depth of 200 meters in all seas. It belongs to class Thaliacea, order Salpida and family Salpidae.

STRUCTURE:

Salpa is small, oval and transparent. The body remains covered by a gelatinous test which is completely attached to the mantle. The body is prism shaped or cylindrical and is greatly variable in length.

Salpa occurs in two forms

- ① Solitary or Oozoid form
- ② Aggregate or blastozoid form.

① Solitary or Oozoid form:

It is bilateral symmetrical asexual form of Salpa with atrial and branchial aperture on opposite end of the body. The body is covered with thin and soft test. Several muscular bands which are C-shaped encircle the body. Bands are incomplete on the ventral side and transversely gives striated appearance. Anterior band surrounds the lip and when it contracts the mouth closed forcing water through the atrial aperture and thus it moves forward.

The oral aperture opens into the prebranchial part of the pharynx at the dorsal surface of which lies a tentacle or dorsal languet behind which is the peribranchial band, pharyngeal and

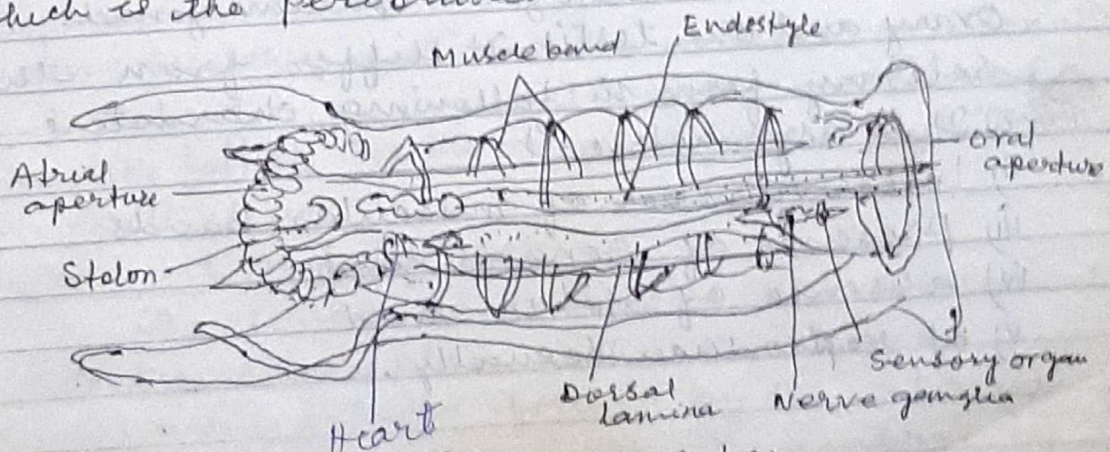


Fig - Asexual form (oozoid) of Salpa.

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atrial cavities are separated incompletely by an oblique bar. lateral wall of pharynx are absent. A pair of apertures represent gill aperture which are separated by a median gill bar. Thus pharynx and atrium form a large cavity. The alimentary canal behind pharynx is distinguished into oesophagus, stomach and intestine. Stomach is associated with pyloric gland which extends upto the intestine. All these structure together form intestine nucleus of the animal. Behind endostyle between 5th and 6th muscular bands lies the heart.

The ganglion is situated near the anterior end of ^{the} gill. It give rise to many nerves which innervates various organs. A sense organ on the dorsal surface of the ganglion and below the ectoderm of the body in form of U-shaped pigmented ridge is known as the eye. In solitary Salpa ^{form} Stolon arises from between the heart and endostyle.

The heart is situated near the stomach and gives rise to many important vessels leading to various organs such as the branchial sac, test, the eye and atrial chamber.

The solitary form reproduces asexually. The Stolon gets divided into segments, each of which forms the sexual blastozoids. These get detached from parent forming aggregate form.

② Aggregate or Blastozoid form:

Each blastozoid contains gonads - one ovary and one testis. It differ from the solitary form in following characters -

- i) It is asymmetrical
- ii) lesser number of muscular bands
- iii) presence of gonads and
- iv) absence of Stolon. and
- v) It reproduce sexually.