

## **Species richness and distribution of subtidal sponges from the Persian Gulf ( Kish Island, Larak Island and Nayband Bay)**

Project Manager: **Abdolvahab Maghsoudlou**

Contributor: **Peyman Eghtesadi Araghi, Mahshid Jalili**

### **Abstract:**

During the present contribution subtidal marine sponges of the Persian Gulf were taxonomically studied. Sampling was carried out by scuba diving from: Kish Island, Larak Island and Nayband Bay during 2003 and 2009. Whenever possible, specimens were photographed in situ. Identified species then were confirmed by Dr. Helmut Lehnert from Germany. 11 species belong to two classes and nine families were recorded: *Ircinia echinata*; *Hyrtios erectus*; *Spongia arabica*; *Dysidea cinerea*; *Terpios viridis*; *Callyspongia clavata*; *C. vasselli*; *Callyspongia* sp.; *Haliclona tuberosa*; *Gelliodes carnosus*; *Leucetta* sp. Four species are new records for the region: *Callyspongia* sp., *Gelliodes carnosus*, *Spongia arabica*, *Terpios viridis*. Our results show that Larak Island has highest  $\alpha$  diversity ( $\alpha=10$ ). In terms of  $\beta$  diversity, Kish and Nayband Bay show highest species composition.

### **Keywords:**

Sub tidal sponges, Persian Gulf, Iran