

SOME RECENT ADVANCES IN STUDIES ON THE BIOLOGY OF GIANT CLAMS (TRIDACNIDAE)

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ABSTRACT

During the past 15 years an increasing number of publications on the biology of *Tridacna* have appeared in international journals. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the development of mariculture to counteract the heavy exploitation of natural populations and secondly, the uniqueness of these clams which depend on symbiosis with the zooxanthella *Symbiodinium microadriaticum*. Earlier studies focused on evolutionary explanations of the extraordinary size of giant clams and the function of the symbiotic relationship with zooxanthellae. Major advances have been made in the understanding of the symbiotic relationship and the nutrient requirements. Ecological studies are rare and the knowledge of reproductive- and population ecology is still fragmentary. The aim of this paper is to review some of the recent advances in the biology of giant clams and to point out areas where research may be conducted.