

At Hastings in Sussex, *Ellis*. Tenbigh, Wales, *Adams*. Frith of Forth, *Dr Coldstream*. Berwick Bay, common.

When contracted the body is of a thick short subcylindrical form, deeply wrinkled in two or three places, about three inches long, and one-half of that in diameter, but when fully expanded about five inches: the skin is quite smooth, and of a uniform whitish, cream or flesh-colour. The centre of the oral disk is ornamented with a circle of white bands radiating from the mouth, and the transparency of the skin here permits us to see the lamellæ running across the circumference with their narrow colourless interspaces. From these interspaces the tentacula originate; the largest about one inch long, watery, white, tapered, smooth, irregularly dispersed, and very numerous. They are all placed between the mouth and the margin, which is encircled with a dense fringe of inimitable beauty, composed of innumerable short tentacula or filaments forming a thick furry border.

I have seen specimens of this species, which is certainly as Muller says "actiniarum pulcherrima," from the size of a split pea to fully five inches in diameter, and have found it, in all the intermediate sizes, uniform in shape and colour, but others have found it variable in these respects. It is strictly gregarious, and the larger individuals are generally surrounded by a multitude of small and middle-sized ones, which form very pleasing groups. From this gregarious habit it is subject to monstrosities, two or three occasionally uniting and coalescing into one body, of which *Dicquemare* has described an example.

"This species is good to eat," according to *Dicquemare*; and his testimony may be strengthened by the authority of *Plancus*, who says of his "*Urtica soluta caryophyllum referens*,"—a synonyme probably of *A. Dianthus*, *—"hæc more ostrearum coquitur, et una cum ipsis, quibus, ut dixi, frequentissime hæret, comeditur." *Planc. de Conch. min. not. 43, tab. 4, fig. 6. †*

No one who has studied the species but will, I think, assent to the conjecture of *Cuvier* that the *A. Dianthus* of *Ellis* is a mere variety of the *A. plumosa* of subsequent authors, the former having had the oral disc deeper lobed than is usual from peculiarity of position or

* If this opinion is correct, and to me the thing seems indisputable, then the *ACTINIA JUDAICA*, *Lin. Syst. 1088*, and of all other systematists who have followed him, must be added to the *aliases* of *A. Dianthus*.

† In reference to these edible *Actinia* I may here remark that the *Anemonia edulis* of *Risso*, which, according to *Rapp*, is synonymous with the *Anthea Cereus* of this work, furnishes the dish called *Rastegna*, a favourite in Provence. "Nos trates vero hoc cibo delectari nondum comperi." *Baster*.