The first data concerning single stony corals in the northwestern Sea of Japan were presented by Deryugin [2] in the description of vertical zonation and biocenos of Peter the Great Bay. A brief description of one Caryophyllidae species, Caryophyllia clavus (unfortunately without any information of the locality), was given for the first time in [6]. The individual Caryophyllidae corals were found during the 1974 expedition aboard R/V Pervenets in dredgings taken from the mouth of Peter the Great Bay. New findings of individual ahermatypic scleractinians from Russian abyssal waters (the Kuril–Kamchatka Trench) were reported during the expeditions of R/V Vityaz [3, 4]. Four species were found and described, and Caryophyllia alaskensis was one of them. More complete data, including information on coral diversity (11–13 species), were adduced for the North Pacific [7–10]. The earliest known data on findings of various ahermatypic corals and extensive information on their diversity have been reported for the areas of the East China and South China seas, the Japanese Islands, and South Korea [13, 16, 17, 19, 20, etc.].

At the end of the century, there were mostly oral communications about the occurrence of small coelenterates on hard substrates in Peter the Great Bay. Later on, their photos [1], unfortunately without any explanations, appeared in popular scientific literature. In one of the samples taken at Furugel’ma Island, Far Eastern State Marine Reserve, the coral was found and identified as Dendrophyllia arbuscula. A hydrobiological survey in 2001, conducted by the author and V.B. Darkin, a PADI Diving Instructor and an underwater photographer, showed that D. arbuscula was distributed on rocky stony substrata and in populations of the mussel Crenomytilus grayanus at depths of 3 to 15 m in different areas of Peter the Great Bay. They form crust populations up to several square meters, constructed of either small colonies up to 5–9 corallites or individual polyps. The polyps had calyces 4–7 mm in diameter, the corallites are 7–10 mm high, and the density of the populations reached 120 ind/m². Living corals had a bright orange-yellow coloration and a whorl of 42–46 yellow tentacles.

The findings of scleractinians in different areas of Peter the Great Bay, Sea of Japan, expand our knowledge on their geographic range and on the depth of their distribution. The depth of their habitat increased to a depth of 1280 m deep for Caryophyllia alaskensis and up to 15–3 m deep for D. arbuscula. The occurrence of populations of the latter coral species in the northwestern Sea of Japan may provide additional arguments for advocates of the theory of global climate change. Following are the descriptions of the registered species of corals.

**Order SCLERACTINIA**

**Family Caryophyllidae**

**Genus Caryophyllia** Lamarck, 1816

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**New Data on Scleractinians from the Northwestern Sea of Japan**

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**Abstract**—three species of scleractinians, individual caryophyllids Caryophyllia alaskensis, C. japonica, and the colonial dendrophyllid Dendrophyllia arbuscula were described for the first time for the Sea of Japan. The findings of these corals in different areas of Peter the Great Bay, Sea of Japan, allow us to expand their geographic range and the depth range of their distribution. The depth of inhabitation reached 1280 m for Caryophyllia alaskensis and up to 15–3 m deep for D. arbuscula.

**Key words:** scleractinian corals, Sea of Japan, distribution.
Fig. 1. Outer view of corals and corallite calices. a, b—Caryophyllia alaskensis (×4, spec. no. 4416); c, d—C. japonica (×4, spec. no. 4420, protruded pali are observed on the septae of the first two cycles); e, f—Dendrophyllia arbuscula (×7, spec. no. 4421, 4422, the septae of various cycles are well observed).

Caryophyllia alaskensis Vaughan, 1941 (see Figs. 1a–1b).


Solitary ceratoid or slightly trochoid corals, slightly curved at the base, attach to substrate by a small flat sole. Calyces are deep, round or slightly ellipsoid, 15–20 mm in diameter; the corallite is 18–22 mm high. The