

1. *Aubryosphaera Steurbaut (1990)*

Type species: *Aubryosphaera deconinckii* n. sp.

Derivatio nominis: In honour of Dr. M.-P. AUBRY (Lyon, France), author of the "Handbook of Cenozoic Calcareous Nannoplankton".

Diagnosis: This genus is introduced for dome-shaped, porous nannoliths, consisting of a hollow construction of bifurcating ribs, which in certain orientations show high birefringence in cross-polarised light.

Remarks: *Aubryosphaera* differs from other holococcolithid genera by its typical dome-shaped outline and by its hollow construction, which, in certain orientations, show high birefringence under crossed nicols. There is a certain similarity of shape and construction between this genus and *Trochoaster* KLUMPP, 1953. The latter, however never exhibits birefringence under crossed nicols (see AUBRY, 1988, p. IV). This difference in optical behaviour cannot be due to secondary calcification because representatives of *Trochoaster* which show no birefringence (e.g. *T. operosus*) are also found in the same samples and slides. *Aubryosphaera* also seems to be related to the genus *Dactylethra* GARTNER, 1969. The type species of this monospecific genus *D. punctulata* GARTNER, 1969, however, has a solid construction with a completely enclosed centre which is filled with calcite (see GARTNER & BUKRY, 1969, p. 1219). It also seems to be formed of several crystals of calcite, which act differently in cross-polarised light, some of them showing maximum and others minimum birefringence. Only one species is known, the type species *Aubryosphaera deconinckii*. It is recorded from various exposures and boreholes in the Ypresian of the Belgian Basin.

Steurbaut, E., 1990. Ypresian Calcareous Nannoplankton Biostratigraphy and Palaeogeography of the Belgian Basin. *Bulletin de la Société Belge de Géologie*, **97(3/4)**: 251-285.