MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION OF TWO SPECIES OF PEANUT WORM
*Siphonosoma australae australae* AND *Sipunculus nudus* (Sipuncula: Sipunculidea: Sipunculiformes: Sipunculidae) IN THE LOWER REACHES OF THE GIANH RIVER, QUANG BINH PROVINCE

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Summary

The Peanut worms, *Siphonosoma australae australae* (Keferstein, 1865) and *Sipunculus nudus* Linnaeus, 1766, belongs to the phylum Sipuncula, family Sipunculidae, genus *Siphonosoma*. This is the first description of the morphological characteristics of two species of peanut worm from the lower reaches of the Gianh river, Quang Binh province (Vietnam), based on 22 specimens that collected during the year 2015. These results indicate that the *Siphonosoma australae australae* and *Sipunculus nudus* live in sandy or muddy burrows at less than 10 m depth in intertidal habitats. It has two main parts, a fluid-filled trunk and a retractable introvert. The anterior most introvert bears a terminal tentacular apparatus to catch food. Just behind the tip of *Siphonosoma australae australae* is a zone bearing hooks arranged in rings (37-76 rings). The trunks of adults of this species range from 133.6-317.5 mm in length. Their shape is cylindrical. The introvert length is 36% of the body length. There are two pairs of retractormuscles and approximately 15-17 longitudinal muscle bands. The *Sipunculus nudus* differs from *Siphonosoma australae australae* in size, weight, number of longitudinal muscle bands, morphological and structural characteristics of tentacle.

**Keywords:** Peanut worm, Sipuncula, Siphonosoma, Sipunculus, Gianh river, Mangrove forest.