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Autore	Taylor Paul D.
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Sommario/riassunto	"Until the early 19th century, natural historians were puzzled by organisms at the time known as zoophytes: were they animals (zoo-), plants (-phyte), or something in-between? Perhaps they were even the common ancestors of animals and plants? Zoophytes as then conceived included sponges, corals and coralline algae, as well bryozoans, the subject of this book. The so-called 'zoophyte problem' greatly engaged Charles Darwin when he set sail from Plymouth Sound on board HMS Beagle in December 1831. Indeed, Darwin's first scientific paper, which was read by his mentor Robert Grant before both the Wernerian and Plinian societies when Darwin was a medical student at the University of Edinburgh, had concerned species of zoophytes we now know to be the bryozoans Flustra and Carbasea. And he made detailed observations of the intriguing behaviour of the peculiar 'bird-head' structures in bryozoans dredged off Patagonia during the Beagle voyage (Keynes

2003)"--