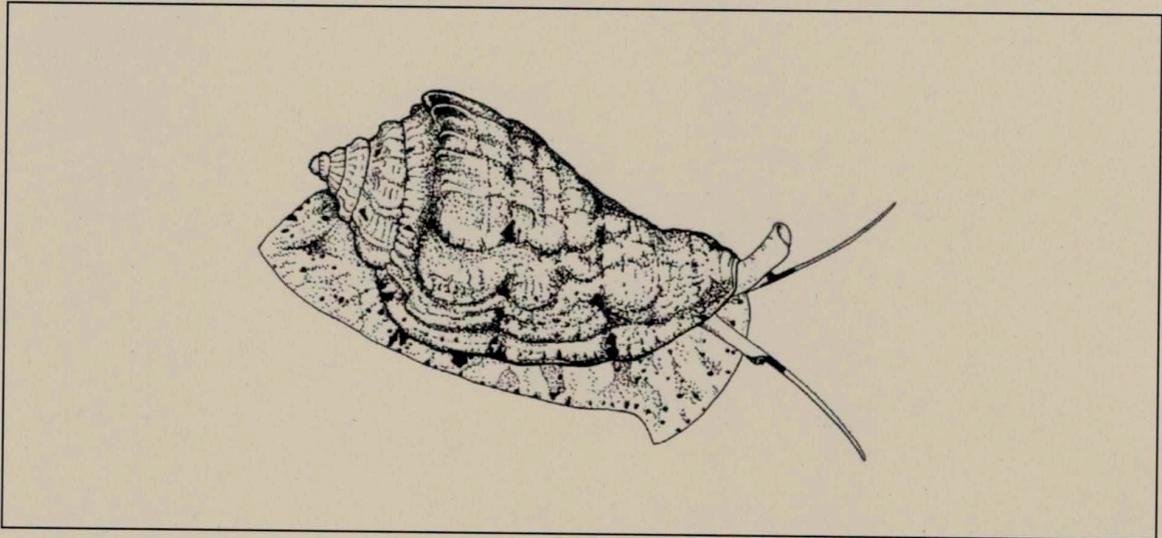


# Schriften zur Malakozoologie

## aus dem Haus der Natur - Cismar

Heft 26



Ein neuer Start der Schriften zur Malakozoologie

- MONSECOUR, D. & LORENZ, F.: A new species of *Morum* (Gastropoda: Harpidae) from the Tuamotu Archipelago. .... 3
- MONSECOUR, D.: A new species of *Morum* (Gastropoda: Harpidae) from the western Indian Ocean. .... 7
- LORENZ, F.: A new species of *Zoila* from SW Australia (Gastropoda: Cypraeidae). .... 11
- DHARMA, B.: A report on the recent worm slit shell *Tenagodus obtusifomis* MARTIN 1905 with the description of two new species from western Indonesian waters. .... 15
- WIESE, V.: *Nautilus* – eine wohlbekannte unbekannt Gattung (Cephalopoda: Nautilidae). .... 27
- LORENZ, F.: A new species of *Rolaniconus* from the western Indian Ocean (Gastropoda: Conidae). .... 37
- COADĂ, V. & WELTER-SCHULTES, F. W.: Checklist of land and freshwater mollusc species in Moldova. Index sistematic al speciilor din Republica Moldova. .... 41
- SAHLMANN, B.: Bibliography of the Scaphopod Molluscs of the Philippine Archipelago and Surrounding Waters. .... 47
- WIESE, V.: Gewächshaus-Schneigel *Lehmannia valentiana* (FÉRUSSAC 1822) im Museumsgarten in Cismar (Gastropoda: Limacidae). .... 53

## A new species of *Rolaniconus* from the western Indian Ocean (Gastropoda: Conidae).

by

FELIX LORENZ, Buseck-Beuern.

**Abstract:** *Rolaniconus lecourtorum* nov. sp. is described and compared with several superficially similar species.

**Introduction:** Isolate offshore atolls are usually characterized by a low molluscan diversity and a higher amount of endemics. This is particularly true for the Cargados Carajos Shoal (also called St. Brandon) approx. 450 km north of Mauritius. The new species of Conidae described here was collected among shellgrit on sandbanks throughout this atoll to where it appears to be endemic.

### *Rolaniconus lecourtorum* nov. sp.

**Material:** Ten moderately fresh beach collected specimens and 30 further eroded samples.

Holotype: 16,1 mm coll. MNHN24257

Paratype 1: 16,5 mm coll. Lorenz

Paratype 2: 14,7 mm coll. MNHN24258

Paratype 3: 13,6 mm coll. HNC

Paratype 4: 15,0 mm coll. Lorenz

Paratype 5: 8,8 mm coll. MNHN24258

Paratype 6: 11,7 mm coll. Lorenz

**Description:** The shell is small and solid, slightly ventricose, posterior slightly convex. The spire is moderately high and distinctly stepped, with a straight outline. The protoconch consists of three whorls of which the first one is smooth, the following ones finely and distinctly tuberculate. There are six teleoconch whorls whose sutural ramps are flat, with three to four spiral ribs and prominent tubercles which extend across the angular shoulder onto the body whorl where they form shallow transverse ridges. The anal notch is shallow and symmetrical. The body whorl shows 22 striate grooves which are barely visible posteriorly but stronger anteriorly. The ribs inbetween them are weakly and irregularly nodulose.

The ground colour is plain white. There are two transverse zones of irregular reddish patches.

In some specimens (paratypes 3, 5, 6), these patches are more distinct and may be connected by transverse lines of the same colour. There are small white zigzag dashes within the blotches.

**Type locality and habitat:** All specimens of *Rolaniconus lecourtorum* nov. sp. were collected on beaches inside the lagoon, throughout the Cargados Carajos Shoal. The habitat is unknown but supposedly shallow water.

**Etymology:** Named in honour of my friends Eric, Maryse and Raymond le Court de Billot of Mauritius.

**Discussion:** The combination of a densely tuberculate, stepped spire and the peculiar markings make *Rolaniconus lecourtorum* n. sp a very distinct species in the family. The generic assignment of the new species to *Rolaniconus* is based on the definition of this genus given by TUCKER & TENORIO (2009): a coronate spire, a short, conical shell and shallow anal notch. It superficially resembles *R. axelrodi*

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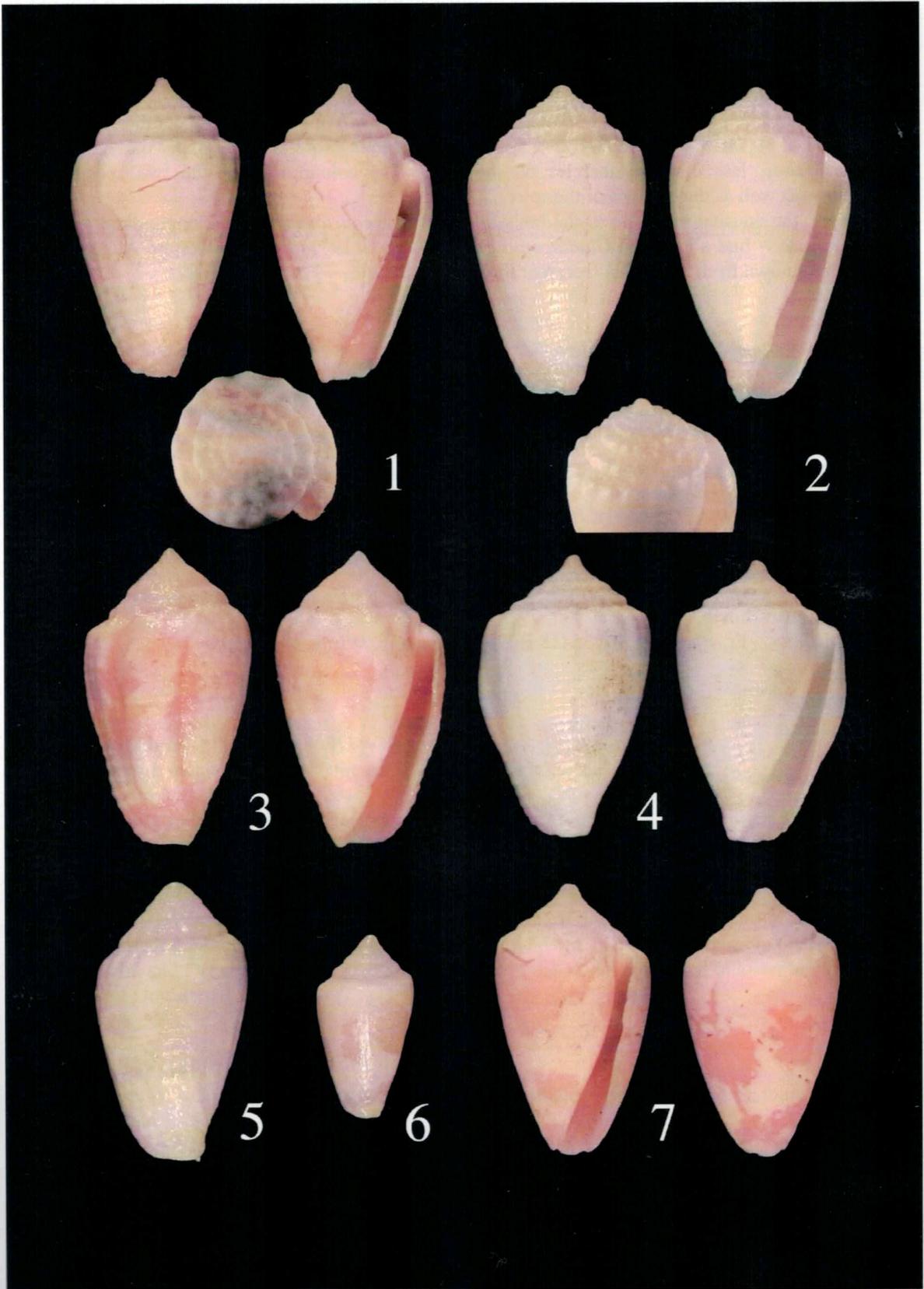
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**Explanations of Plate 10:**

*Rolaniconus lecourtorum.*

- 1: Holotype, dorsal and ventral aspect, view on the spire
- 2: Paratype 1, dorsal and ventral aspect, side-view on the spire
- 3: Paratype 2, 4: Paratype 3, 5: Paratype 4, 6: Paratype 5, 7: Paratype 6



LORENZ, F. : A new species of *Rolaniconus* from the western Indian Ocean.

(WALLS 1978) from the Philippines in size and appearance, but the tubercles and shell structure, along with the different colouration and stepped spire distinguish the new species at once. *R. danilai* RÖCKEL & KORN 1990 from the NW Indian Ocean has a similar spire ornamented with tubercles, but that species has a smooth body whorl in which there are no longitudinal ridges formed by the tubercles and the color-pattern is quite different. However, it may be considered the closest relative on account of the similar spire and the geographic proximity. On the beaches at Cargados Carajos, *R. lecourtorum* n. sp. is found among large and small specimens of *R. balteatus cernicus* (H. G. ADAMS 1869) and confusion may occur when looked at superficially, although that species differs by a more slender shape, the smooth body whorl and fewer, less distinct tubercles on the spire. The colourations of the two species differ considerably, as well as the outlines of the spire.

Interestingly, the unusual sculpture of the body whorl of *R. lecourtorum* n. sp. - longitudinal ridges and transverse striae - find a match in *Gladioconus patae* (ABBOTT 1971) from the western Atlantic, but no other species known from the Indian Ocean or the western Pacific.

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