

A New Species of *Morum* from the Diaoyu islands (East China Sea) (Gastropoda: Harpidae)

By DAVID MONSECOUR, B-Aarschot, FELIX LORENZ, D-Buseck
& KEVIN MONSECOUR, B-Aarschot

With 10 Figures on 1 Plate

Keywords

Morum, new species, East China Sea, Diaoyu islands.

Abstract

Morum lathraeum n. sp. from Uotsuri-shima / Diaoyu Dao (Diaoyu islands), East China Sea is described and compared with superficially similar congeners. The new species is defined by a faint axial sculpture of few narrow ribs, a prominent spiral sculpture on the body whorl, a high spire consisting of roundly shouldered whorls, a semi-detached columellar plait with numerous, sometimes somewhat elongated pustules and a denticulate inner lip with teeth of variable strength.

Zusammenfassung

Morum lathraeum n. sp. wird von Uotsuri-shima / Diaoyu Dao (Diaoyu islands), im Ostchinesischen Meer beschrieben und mit auf den ersten Blick hin ähnlichen Arten der Gattung verglichen. Die neue Art ist durch eine feine Axilaskulptur aus wenigen schmalen Rippen, eine auffällige Spiralreifung auf dem letzten Umgang, eine hohe Gewindeaus abgerundet geschulterten Umgängen, eine teilweise angeheftete Gaumenplatte mit zahlreichen, manchmal etwas länglichen Pusteln und eine gezähnte innere Lippe mit Zähnen unterschiedlicher Länge gekennzeichnet.

Introduction

G. B. SOWERBY I (1825) described *Oniscia cancellata* in a very short manner: “O. superficie externa, lineis elevatis, cancellatis”. Fortunately, the illustrations that go along with this brief description cannot be misinterpreted and clearly show the species now commonly known from the Philippines and the East China Sea. The latter is the source of large amounts of specimens now commercially available, but a number of shells with a consistently different sculpture, more elongate shape and more rounded spire whorls are found among them. These apparently constitute a separate species, which is here described as *Morum lathraeum* n. sp.

Morum lathraeum n. sp.

Type Material

Holotype MNHN 33.3 × 18.6 mm

Paratypes 1-6, coll. F. LORENZ (30.9, 35.0, 37.1, 32.2, 32.6, 34.6 mm); Paratypes 7-14, coll. D. MONSECOUR (35.8, 33.0, 36.1, 33.2, 37.8 mm), Paratypes 15-20, coll. WU FEI, China (39.0, 35.4, 38.0, 46.1, 30.6, 38.3 mm); Paratypes 21+22, coll. D. MONSECOUR (29.0, 34.0 mm).

Type locality

All type specimens were live-collected, trawled at 130-260m deep in the same area near Diaoyou Island, East China Sea.

Description

The shell is of average size for the genus (about 30-38 mm), solid. The general shape is slender, elongate, with a tall spire (about 1/3 of total shell length). The protoconch is multispiral, consisting of about 2.5 smooth whorls of 0.15 mm width and is 2.5 mm tall. The transition to the teleoconch is marked by the appearance of fine axial striae.

There are 5-5.5 roundly shouldered, convex postnuclear whorls. The first three whorls show an axial sculpture of fine, straight riblets diminishing in number towards the lower whorls and not gaining any strength. Penultimate whorl with a maximum of 15-16 such riblets, but often strongly reduced or completely obsolete (leaving about half of them discernible). Body whorl sometimes without any discernible axial ribs, but this is a variable characteristic: some specimens show up to 9 very narrow, sharp axial ribs, ranging from the shoulder to the siphonal canal). From the second postnuclear whorl onwards, a fine spiral sculpture consisting of 3-4 fine cords appears. These become weaker on later spire whorls (usually only 2 of them are still visible on the penultimate whorl), but regain their strength on the body whorl, where 10-11 stronger, rounded, yet rather narrow spiral cords can be discerned. Most specimens bear small, rounded knobs on the intersections of spiral and axial sculpture, but this feature can only be clearly noticed on the body whorl and to a lesser extent on the penultimate whorl.

The aperture is narrow throughout, rather triangular in shape, without any noteworthy protrusion of the labrum and its denticles in the central section. The siphonal canal is rather wide, more than half-open and constricted by a terminal labral ridge. The parietal shield is semi-detached, covers about 50% of the body whorl's ventrum and densely adorned with elongated pustules on the inner edge of the aperture and a row of irregularly placed pustules near the edge, some of which may be slightly elongate.

The labrum is rather broad and thickened (about 3-3.5mm), usually with the adapical $\frac{1}{4}$ slightly thinner due to the smaller, less prominent teeth. There are 9-11 teeth that run all the way from outer edge to the inner edge of the labrum. There usually is a smaller, shorter tooth in between 2 such prominent teeth. These smaller teeth do not reach the outer edge of the labrum and do not become stronger towards the inner edge of the labrum. Inside of aperture smooth.

The ground colour is creamy off-white to yellowish orange, callosities are off-white and the protoconch is off-white to greyish. There are 3 broad brown spiral bands on the body whorl: one between the suture and the shoulder, one at midwhorl and one cutting the space between the band at midwhorl and the siphonal canal in half. Spiral cords in these coloured bands slightly paler. The area between the shoulder of the penultimate whorl and the suture of the third teleoconch whorl shows some brown streaks running from suture to shoulder or is completely brown. Thickened outer lip with numerous tiny black points, which are more densely concentrated in the area where the spiral bands reach the outer margin. Columella, outer lip and aperture white or off-white.

Distribution

As it is hard to obtain detailed locality data from Chinese fishermen, Diaoyu Island and Chiwei Island are the only confirmed exact localities. All other material we have seen so far simply carried the label "East China Sea", which is of no use to establish the species' actual range. However, it is possible that it extends in the East China Sea, but more detailed and reliable data are necessary to establish the actual range. Interestingly, specimens of *Morum lathraeum* n. sp. have not been among any of the rich material of *Morum cancellatum* collected over the past decades throughout deeper Western Pacific waters. This indicates that its range is restricted to an area only recently opened up for deep sea trawling.

Etymology

The word "*lathraeum*", Latin, neuter, derived from ancient Greek, meaning "hidden": the new species comes from a region that is very difficult to gain access to, which allowed it to stay hidden for a long

time. Moreover, it occurs sympatrically with *M. cancellatum*, which it has hitherto been confused with, thereby “hiding itself” among the apparently much more common specimens of this well-known species.

Discussion

Morum lathraeum n. sp. shares the reduced or (almost) absent axial ribs on the body whorl with *Morum inerme* LORENZ, 2014 from Nazareth Bank in the Indian Ocean, but the latter is much bigger, has a weaker spiral sculpture, more angulate shoulders and an almost smooth parietal callus beyond the inner margin.

Whenever axial ribs are present in *M. lathraeum*, they are reminiscent of the ones in *M. teramachii* KURODA & HABE, 1961 from the central Philippines, but the latter is much bigger, has a more bulbous general appearance, stonger axial ribs on the spire whorls, almost no spiral sculpture, a completely smooth parietal callus and weaker denticles in the inner lip, without smaller teeth in between them.

The only sympatric *Morum* of about the same size is *M. cancellatum* (G. B. SOWERBY I, 1825) and it is the species *M. lathraeum* has hitherto been confused with amongst collectors. *M. lathraeum* n. sp., however, is more elongate and has a higher spire (height/width ratio in *M. lathraeum* n. sp. averages 1.84, whereas this is 1.55 for *M. cancellatum*). The axial and spiral sculpture in *M. cancellatum* are of about equal strength, which renders a much more reticulate sculpture. *M. cancellatum* also has more axial ribs on the final whorl (14-16 vs up to 9 in *M. lathraeum* n. sp.). Moreover, the spire whorls are slightly concave, whereas they come with a strongly rounded shoulder in *M. lathraeum* n. sp. and there are no sharply pointed knobs on the intersection of spiral and axial sculpture, nor small scales on the shoulder in *M. Lathraeum* n. sp.

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Addresses of the authors:

DAVID MONSECOUR
####, B-##### Aarschot, Belgium
E-mail: ###

Dr. FELIX LORENZ
####, D-##### Buseck-Beuern, Germany
E-mail: ###

KEVIN MONSECOUR

####, B-##### Aarschot, Belgium
E-mail: ###

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Plate 1 (on p. ##)

Figs 1+2: *Morum lathraeum* n.sp. Holotype. MNHN 33.3 × 18.6 mm.

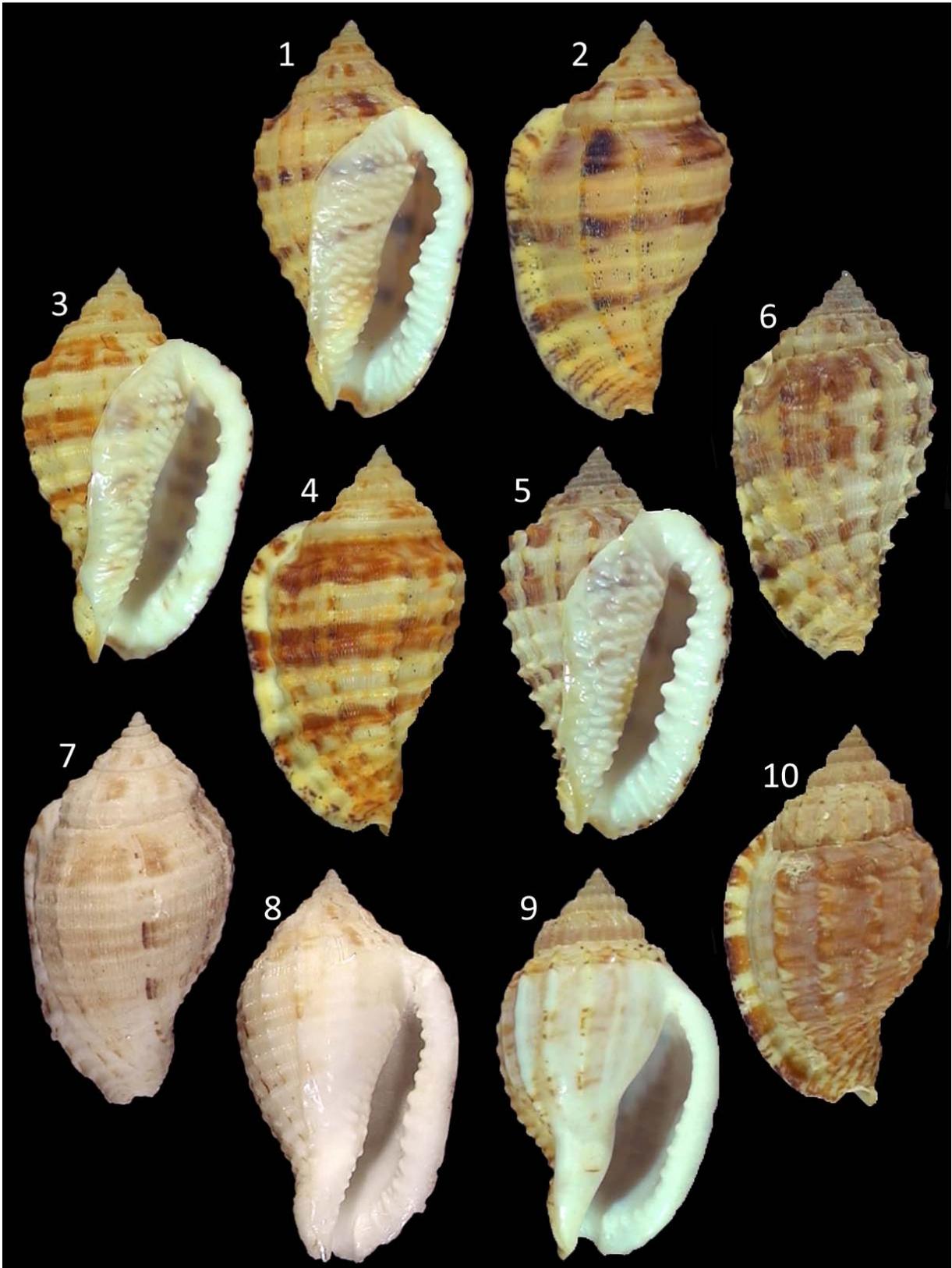
Figs 3+4: *Morum lathraeum* n.sp. Paratype with axial ribs.

Figs 5+6: *Morum cancellatum* (G. B. SOWERBY I, 1825). Off Dong Tou, Zhejiang province, China. 120-160 m.

Figs 7+8: *Morum inerme* LORENZ, 2014. 46.5 mm, Nazareth Bank, "deep water". Paratype.

Figs 9+10: *Morum teramachii* KURODA & HABE, 1961. Aliquay, Philippines

Plate 1



Explanation on p. ##