

La Conchiglia

The Shell

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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW OVULIDAE SPECIES FROM SOMALIA

(Gastropoda: Ovulidae)

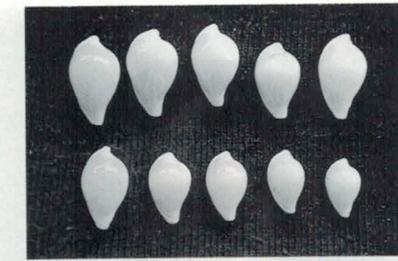
Felix Lorenz jr.

During deep sea fishing, practised only in recent years along the Soma-
lian coasts, many interesting species
of molluscs have come to light; some
are very rare, others known only
from different localities. Well known
examples are, for the former, *Festilyria
festiva* and *Strombus oldi* and,
for the latter, *Cypraea broderipii*. The
new species of *Pseudosimnia* descri-
bed in this article was fished on only
one occasion at about 300 m. depth
in an area about 20 miles south of Ca-
pe Ras Hafun, in the north-east of the
country, in December 1983. Luckily
quite a considerable number of speci-
mens were found, thus allowing the
new species to be established without
problems with the name:

Pseudosimnia wieseorum.

DESCRIPTION:

Shell light and fragile, some have a
slightly callous base. The shape is
pyriform and varies little, with tape-
red extremities and a slightly margi-
ned labrum. The dorsum is finely
striated transversally, especially to-
wards the extremities. The internal
part of the labrum has 17 to 25 sharp
denticles. The terminal plica on the
columellar side shows slight traces of
2-4 denticles, while the rest of the co-
lumella is smooth. The fossula is
well pronounced in adult specimens
and forms a jutting callous line along
the sulcus. The aperture bends
sharply to the left. The base is white
but may become pale yellow towards
the margins which are bright yellow,
especially the external one. The dor-
sum is white, with two indistinct pale
purple zones towards the extremities
and is distinctly framed by a bright
orange band on the labial side. This
band seems almost to divide the dor-
sum from the labial margin and gives
the shell a most delicate appearance.
The height of the shell may vary be-



Taken by the author showing the 10 paratypes: the five specimens in the first row will be donated to the British Museum (N.H.)



tween 10 and 16.5 mm., while the
width is, on an average, 60% of the
height. Intraspecific variability is
very little, the above-described char-
acteristics are found in all specimens,
except the yellow colouring at the ba-
se, which can also be completely whi-
te. The yellow band, on the other
hand, is a constant specific feature
and is always complete throughout
the whole length of the external lip,
from one extremity to the other. It
may also be present towards the extre-
mities of the columellar side but it is al-
ways interrupted on the columellar
margin. The band may become fainter
towards the centre of the external
lip only in subadult specimens.

MATERIAL AND TYPES:

The holotype measures mm. 12 x
8 and will be preserved in the Civic
Museum of Zoology of Rome collec-
tion. Paratype n.1 (mm. 12 x 8) is in
the Mrs. Kety Nicolay's collection.
Ten others specimens have been cho-
sen as paratypes to distribute to va-
rious Museums: see photo, the 5 spe-
cimens of the upper row will be dona-
ted to the B.M.N.H. About 100 other
specimens, all in perfect state of pre-
servation, are available for study and
comparison.

TYPE LOCALITY:

The exact spot where the known
shells were dredged all together on
the one occasion cannot be localized.
However, it is in a restricted area
about 20 miles south of Cape Ras Ha-
fun at a depth of 300 m.

ANIMAL:

It has not been possible to study
the characteristics of the animal and
the radula. Dried traces found in
many shells are red coloured.

DISCUSSION:

Pseudosimnia wieseorum resem-
bles many small species of *Pseudosim-
nia* (and also of other similar genera li-
ke *Aperiovula*), but it is easily distin-
guished by the striking orange band
framing the dorsal side of the lip. A
similar characteristic is found in *Pseu-
docyphona aureocinctum* Dall, 1899,
a rare species from Florida which, ho-
wever, is larger, straighter than *P.
wieseorum* and has a weakly denticula-
ted lip. Again at first sight, the new
species looks very like the Mediterra-
nean *Pseudosimnia carnea* (Poiret,
1789) which, however, has a comple-
tely different colouring, a less curved
aperture and, above all, it lacks the
orange band. There is a notable simila-

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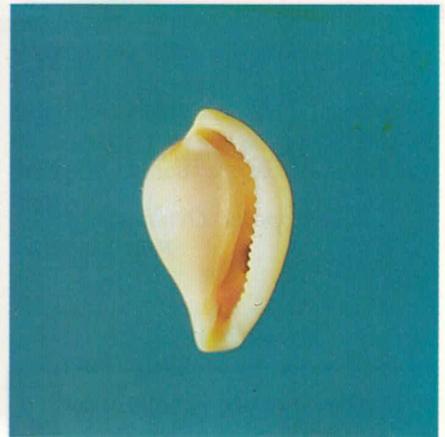
rity also to *Aperiovula jeanae* Cate, in the overall appearance and in the colour of the dorsum, but this species has amore elongated shell and lacks the orange band.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS :

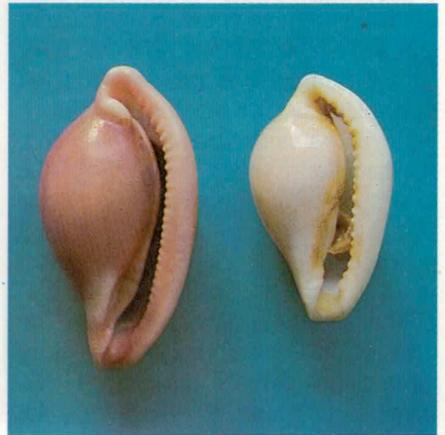
Particular thanks to my father, Cap. F. Lorenz, for his attentive on-the-spot research along the East African coast and for providing the basic information and material for this description.

REFERENCES:

Cate, C.N., 1973: Systematic Revision of the Recent Cypreid Family Ovulidae (Mollusca: Gastropoda). The Veliger Vol. 15 (Suppl.).



Pseudosimnia wieseorum , holotype



Left: *Pseudosimnia carnea*, right: *P. wieseorum*

AGAIN ON *C. FALLAX*

We are republishing the photo of *C. fallax* (Smith, 1881) (= *haddni-ghatae*, Tremberth, 1973) given on page 24 of no. 204/5, March/April 1986 in the article by F. Lorenz and G. Biraghi on the Australian Cribarulae. Someone claimed that it is not *fallax* but a «common *Cribraria*».

The specimen was chosen from amongst a half a dozen *fallax*, being the most like Smith's holotype. We must admit that colour of the shell came out a bit too red in the printing (something which happens easily and is just as difficult to avoid). Therefore we are republishing the illustration of the specimen just to show its true colour. But apart from the colour, the shape, the ventral view, the columellar teeth (see Smith's original discussion) should not have led a real expert into making such a blunder.

G.B.

