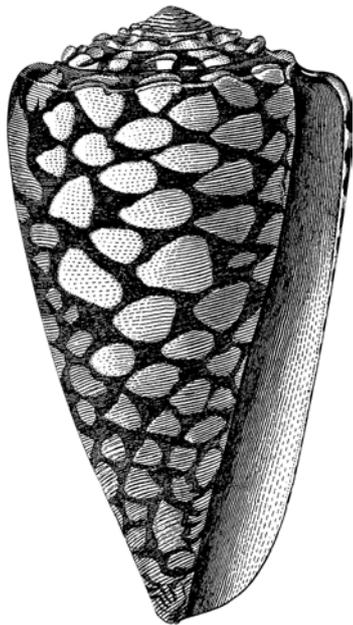


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BOOK REVIEW

Tropical Deep-Sea Benthos. Volume 22.

Edited by Philippe Bouchet and Bruce Marshall.

Published 2001, by the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. (Also Volume 185 of the Mémoires du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle.) 406 pages. Hardback. Euro 67.08, approximately AUS115.

Scientists from the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris and the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD, formerly ORSTOM) have been conducting extensive collecting expeditions in the Indo-West Pacific Ocean since 1985. The field program has been led by Dr Bertrand Richer de Forges using the Noumea based Research Vessel *Alis*. Dredging and trawling have been centred on New Caledonia but also include work in the Philippines, Vanuatu, Tonga, the Marquesas, Norfolk and Loyalty Ridges and other areas. In fact, the paper by Bruce Marshall on *Acesta* records *A. saginata* Marshall, 2001 from 23°S on the Norfolk Ridge to 56°S on the Macquarie Ridge. The studies have been conducted in depths ranging from shallow lagoons in coral reef atolls to below 2000 metres. An incredibly wide variety of organisms has been collected and sorted. The Muséum team has gone to considerable effort to make the material available to the leading world experts on particular groups. Many scientists have had the opportunity of working on the material in Paris and extensive amounts of material have been loaned to other institutions. The results have been published in 21 volumes of *Résultats des Campagnes MUSORSTOM*. Three of these volumes (one in 1981, two in 1986, and 16 in 1997) are devoted entirely to molluscs and others include mollusc sections.

Tropical Deep-Sea Benthos Volume 22 is the continuation of the MUSORSTOM series. The new title is intended more accurately to describe the series and to highlight the fact that the volumes are published primarily in English: ten papers in the present volume are in English and two are in French. The 16 authors of Volume 22 are, in general, well-known experts in their respective groups and come from eight different countries.

Volume 22 deals entirely with molluscs and includes papers on Aplacophora (five new species described), Polyplacophora (five), Pectinoidea (two), *Acesta* (one), Spondylidae (eight), Poromyoidea (five), Triviidae (nine), Muricidae (one genus, eleven species), Conoidea (17), Pleurobranchiidae (one), Phyllidiidae (12) and Cephalopoda (one). Thus, the richness of the fauna collected continues to be validated, with one new genus and 77 species described. Many of the new taxa are quite interesting. Five of the six aplacophorans found in the western Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea by Dmitry Ivanov and Amélie Scheltema are new species; none of the six has been reported in the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans. The newly described *Sepia subplana* Lu and Boucher-Rodoni, 2001 from banc Bayonnaise is the eastern-most record of a cuttlefish in the Pacific Ocean.

However, the volume is much more than a simple compendium of new species. The considerable material available means that there is a wealth of information generated about previously known species – a total of 182 species are discussed in the volume. For example, the paper on Spondylidae by Kevin Lamprell and John Healy describes eight new species but this only represents a quarter of the 32 species discussed. The family Phyllidiidae was recently revised in a major work by David Brunckhorst (*Records of the Australian Museum, Supplement 16*; 1993). New material made available through the MUSORSTOM collecting allowed Ángel Valdés to examine a total of 15 species, 12 of which were new. In contrast

to the shallows where *Phyllidia* is dominant, over 70% of the species at depths of 100–500 metres, and both of the species found deeper, are *Phyllidiopsis*.

In addition to the high quality of science presented in the MUSORSTOM series, *Tropical Deep-Sea Benthos* continues the earlier high quality standards of editing and presentation. The volume is a substantial credit to the two well-known malacologists who edited it, Philippe Bouchet of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris and Bruce Marshall of the National Museum of New Zealand. The volume is well laid out and illustrations are good. There are even a number of colour plates showing some of the more spectacular species. The volume is hard bound, which means that it will remain durable even after repeated consultation. The cover is attractive, with a green background. The top of the front cover is a photograph of a deep-water habitat. Along the left side there are several colour photographs of the vessel used and the animals collected. A colourful *Spondylus* is on the lower right.

This volume is a welcome addition to the MUSORSTOM series and will be of considerable interest to scientists and amateurs interested in molluscs around the world. Additional information can be found at the MNHN websites: www.mnhn.fr/publication/memoire/mem.html (for the series) and www.mnhn.fr/publication/memoire/m185.html (for this volume).

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