**Tornus tornaticus**, a new species from Mauritania, West Africa  
(Gastropoda; Tornidae)

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**ABSTRACT.** Recent investigations off the coast of Mauritania, initiated by the Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, have revealed a new species *Tornus tornaticus*. The assignment to *Tornus* and even the family Tornidae is provisional.

**INTRODUCTION**

In May and June 1988, investigations by the Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ, Texel) and the Delta Institute (Yerseke, now Nederlands Instituut voor Oecologisch Onderzoek) using the research vessel "Tyro" in the Banc d'Arguin [Tyro Mauritania I Expedition], have revealed sediment samples in which we encountered many known and unknown gastropods. Amongst them a small and remarkable, rather skeneimorph gastropod species.

Several planispiral and/or skeneimorph genera of marine molluscs, belonging to families like Trochidae, Tornidae, Vitrinellidae, Vanikoridae were discussed by ADAM & KNUDSEN (1969). They already noticed that the generic division of these micromolluscs was far from convenient and, awaiting anatomical research, they did not provide the family rank of these taxa.

The new species from off Mauritania could not be identified using ADAM & KNUDSEN (1969) and a search in other literature could not solve the identification. Our first impression was that it could be a species of an undescribed genus but having only dead collected shells we provisionally assigned them to the genus *Tornus*.

**SYSTEMATICS**

*Tornus tornaticus* n. sp.  
Figs 1-3.

**Description of the Holotype (ZMA Moll. no. 3.94.017):** Shell small, with numerous axial growth lines and with a strong basal carina. Width 1.59 mm, height 1.4 mm (fig. 1), white, translucent.
Sta. B 2: 19°33'N-17°W, depth 99-152 m, 1 shell.
Sta. B 5: 19°57'N-17°28'W, depth 85-154 m, 3 shells.
Sta. B 7: 20°N-17°26'W, depth 50-62 m, 3 shells.

Mauritania II Expedition (material in NNM and coll. Hoenselaar):
Sta. MAU. 031: 18°48'N-16°28'W, depth 70 m, 1 shell.
Sta. MAU. 034: 18°46'N-16°40'W, depth 167 m, 2 shells.
Sta. MAU. 035: 18°45'N-16°42'W, depth 200 m, 4 shells.
Sta. MAU. 085: 19°35'N-16°51'W, depth 35 m, 1 shell.

**Variability.** Only dead collected shells were available for study so the soft parts, periostracum and operculum are unknown to us. The species is rather uniform. The width of full grown specimens varies from 1.35 to 1.80 mm. Also the distinctness of the growthlines can vary a little.

**Discussion.** We have doubts about the right generic and family classification, but as long as no information of the soft parts is available, we consider the species provisionally belonging to genus *Tomus* in the family Tomidae. Maybe *Tornus garrawayi* Adam & Knudsen, 1969 from Liberia is related with *T. tornaticus* n. sp. However, that species is flatter with a less bulbous body whorl, a wider umbilicus and axial sculpture on the upper part of the whorls. *Tornus subcarinatus* from Europe and West Africa differs by its axial and spiral sculpture. Also *Conjectura glabella* (Murdoch, 1908) from New Zealand as figured by Powell (1979: pl. 20 fig. 20) shows affinity but has two strong sharp keels bordering the umbilicus.

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**REFERENCES**


Figs 1-3. *Tomus tornaticus* n. sp.
Fig. 1. Ventral view of holotype, width 1.59 mm (ZMA Moll. 3.94.017).
Fig. 2 Top view of paratype, width 1.8 mm (ZMA Moll. 3.94.018a).
Fig. 3 Bottom view of paratype, width 1.5 mm (ZMA Moll. 3.94.018b).