



*A review of **Rare and Unusual Shells of Southern Florida (Mainland, Florida Keys, Dry Tortugas)** by Edward J. Petuch and Dennis M. Sargent.*

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It is difficult to know where, or how, to begin this review. A work by the same authors with a similar title, *Rare and unusual shells of the Florida Keys and adjacent areas*, was the subject of a recent review (Petit 2011). For reasons that will become obvious, that work will be referenced as “Edition No.1” or “1st Edition” and the work now under review as “Edition No. 2” or “2nd Edition.” The title page of this latest work has no mention of it being an “edition.” The verso of the title page, however, after repeating the title and authors names, has “First edition 2011” in a place and form indicating that this work is the First Edition and was published in 2011. There is no mention of the name of the prior work. At the bottom of the same page, “First Edition: Publication Date, January 2011.” is printed on a line between the ISBN number and the name of the printer. These statements of dates are, to say the least, misleading. If one does not have any knowledge of the previous work, this date would be taken to apply to the work in which it is printed as no publication date appears anywhere in this latest iteration. It is not until the third paragraph of the Introduction on page 6 that the phrase “this second edition” appears, but again prior knowledge is necessary to interpret this remark as the name of the “first edition” is not mentioned.

As dating of taxonomic works is of great importance, especially for those containing descriptions of new species, the dating of the works under discussion must be addressed. After

it is realized that “First Edition 2011” applies to a previously published work, there is still the statement “First Edition: Publication Date, January 2011.” The authors certainly knew this to be incorrect as the CD issued for the First Edition was dated 9 June 2011 and the print version was not published until 9 July 2011 (Petit 2011: 1). It will be difficult to ascribe this error to the publisher, as the second author, Dennis M. Sargent, is identified in the colophon on page 2 as the publisher under the name Conch Republic Books.

More serious is the lack of a publication date in this 2nd Edition. Not only is there nowhere in the volume an exact date of publication, there is not even any statement of the *year* of publication. The new taxa on Figures 6.13 and 6.14 are listed as of “Petuch and Sargent, 2012,” the first indication that this work was published in 2012. How will *The Zoological Record* and other data bases know what date to ascribe to these new taxa? Such organizations cannot be expected to go through the work page-by-page. This omission of a publication date is grossly irresponsible. For the record, this 2nd Edition was first made available on 9 February 2012.

There is no logical reason for these printed dates. The “First Edition 2011” under the title makes it appear that the authors considered this to be a new book, especially as it has a new title. However, as already mentioned, in the text, in several places, this new work is referred to as the “second edition.” The statement near the bottom of the colophon page, “First Edition: Publication

Date, January 2011” makes sense only if this new work was not meant to be a “second edition” and “January 2011” is an error for “January 2012.” This possibility is negated by the use of “first edition” by the authors in referencing the 2011 book.

Physically, this 2nd Edition consists of 189 pages (the number of the inside of the back cover), 22 more than in the 1st Edition for reasons to be shown. Unlike the hardbound 1st Edition, this new incarnation is softbound (perfect bound) in a flexible printed cover. While the cover is sturdy, the binding is not and pages become completely loose after only minimal use. The paper of the 2nd Edition is of good quality but is slightly yellow in comparison with the brilliant white used for the 1st Edition. This is especially noticeable when the plate legends of the two works are placed side-by-side.

The price of the 2nd Edition, \$39.95, is printed on the back cover. The imprinted price on the 1st Edition is \$79.95 but it is now being discounted by its publisher and is listed at \$30.

The type font used for the 2nd edition is larger than that of the 1st Edition which should make it easier on the eyes, especially for older users. However, the typography, which should have been done electronically, would not be acceptable by most authors. Although most of the text is exactly the same as in the 1st Edition, it would seem that it would be printed from the same word processed manuscript. If so, in the process something went awry. Latin names that should be in italics, and were in italics in the 1st Edition, have been printed in normal type. This happened to all names on pages 46, 47, 63, 64, 112 and 113 and to some names on pages 91, 92, 109 and 181. The last four lines on page 111 are entirely in italics. There are places (e.g., pages 47, 64) where a section heading that should be in bold face type, with spacing before and after, is in normal type with no spacing between it and the preceding and following paragraphs. The *Index* (pages 183–187) is not right-justified, but it was also irregular in the 1st Edition.

This lack of care taken in the composition, showing considerable disregard for those who use it, is manifest in many ways. On page 175 the authors of a subspecies named in the 1st Edition are rendered as “Petuch and sergeant [sic; capitalization and spelling as printed].” Correcting page proofs is a concept evidently not yet adopted by this new publishing company or the authors.

The work is divided into numbered Chapters, with the Figure numbers bearing corresponding numbers. These sectional and other headings are italicised herein for clarity.

The first part of the 2nd Edition is a copy of the 1st Edition with only a few changes. Errors that were pointed out by Petit (2011) remain unchanged in the 2nd Edition. Even such errors as a figure being *Melongena bicolor* on one plate and repeated on a different plate as *M. bicolor* form *estephomenos*, with different dimensions, have not been corrected. The different dimensions for a figure of *Calliostoma adalae* were also left unchanged as was the typographical error in the plate legend of Figure 2.7 which is headed “FiFigure 2.7.” Typographical errors were not listed in the review of the 1st Edition and few will be mentioned herein.

The *Introduction* is the same except that the new species listed for some localities in the 1st Edition have been deleted and the sections reworded to accommodate the new species and subspecies of this new Edition. Also added is a comment about “this second edition.” Not mentioned is the fact that a new genus is introduced in this new Edition.

On page 109 the unfamiliar name *Atlanticonus granulatus* (Linnaeus) is encountered with a reference to Figure 5.17. However, readers are left in the dark about the genus *Atlanticonus* until its description is found on page 178. Checking the Index for this genus is fruitless. The reader might be lucky enough to note that there is an *Americonus granulatus* but that listing just refers back to Figure 5.17. It must be assumed that the authors changed the name of their new genus midstream. The unfortunate result is that *Comus*

specialists will now have another *nomen nudum*, *Americonus* Petuch and Sargent, 2012, with which to contend along with the nude species-group names of the 1st Edition. *Americonus* appears nowhere else in the book.

In the *List of Florida Keys Endemic Gastropods* on page 23 the “new species” tag has been removed from *Scaphella junonia elizabethae* which was described in the 1st Edition and *Gradiconus tortuganus* Petuch and Sargent, 2011b, belatedly determined to be a synonym of *Gradiconus anabathrum tranthami* (Petuch, 1995) has been removed. Added to the list are *Nassarius websteri* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 [sic; = 2012] and *Bulla striata frankovichii* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 [sic; = 2012]. These last two taxa also appear in the *List of Florida Bay Gastropods* (pages 40–43) as *Nassarius (Uzita) websteri* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 [sic; = 2012] (page 42) and *Bulla striata frankovichii* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 [sic; = 2012] (page 43). These two taxa are newly described in this 2nd Edition and date from February 2012. On page 144 and on their figure captions they are correctly cited as 2012. These are the first appearances of the date 2012 in the book.

The discussion on *Florida Bay Gastropods* on page 36 has been changed. “Burry’s Cone Shell, *Gradiconus burryae* ... and Peal’s Cone Shell, *Jaspidiconus pealii* ...” in the 1st Edition have been removed and replaced with “Mazzoli’s Cone Shell, *Gradiconus mazzolii*.” The sentence following that listing begins with “Like Peal’s and Mazzoli’s Cones ...” but there is no prior mention of Peal’s Cone Shell in the 2nd Edition. In the list of Florida Bay Gastropods on pages 42–43, to which several species have been added in the 2nd Edition, all three of these species are listed.

Here is a good place to mention that *Gradiconus mazzolii* Petuch and Sargent, 2011c is stated, on page 143, to have been “originally described as a subspecies but now considered to be a full, distinct species.” If so, why does Figure 6.3, new to the 2nd Edition, illustrate it as “*Gradiconus burryae mazzolii* Petuch and Sargent, 2011”? Determining the original place of

publication is made unnecessarily difficult by the fact that there are three “Petuch and Sargent, 2011” works listed in the *Bibliography* without differentiation.

On page 78, under the heading for the *List of Florida Keys Reef Tract Gastropods*, a source for the list has been added as: “Data taken from personal observations and from Abbott (1974).” Two errors that appear in Abbott’s work have been perpetuated: the misspelling of *Cyphoma mcgintyi* as *Cyphoma macgintyi* and the misdating of *Dolicholatirus cayohuesonicus* (Sowerby, 1879) as 1878. There are several additions to this list in the 2nd Edition, not counting the appearance of *Tripterotyphis triangularis* (A. Adams, 1856) twice on page 82.

The Figures of the species described in the 1st Edition remain unchanged and those species are still indicated as “n. sp.” on Figures 2.10, 3.15, 4.2, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5. Mentions of these species in the text have been changed to “Petuch and Sargent, 2011.” The Figures of the species newly described in the 2nd Edition are correctly cited on Figures 6.13 and 6.14 as of “Petuch and Sargent, 2012”

A List of Dry Tortugas Gastropods is on pages 103–105. Listed are 97 taxa (94 species and 3 subspecies). Of these 97 taxa, 28 are figured on pages 94–102 (Figures 4.1–4.9). This series of figures constitutes a mini-monument to Petuch as all but five of the species selected for illustration were named by Petuch (1987 [18]; 1995 [1]) or by Petuch and Sargent (2011 [4]). Only one ‘Petuch’ species, *Architectonica sunderlandi* Petuch, 1987 is not figured and another, *Scaphella junonia elizabethae* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 is figured in another series of plates (3.15). These same plates were in the 1st Edition but were not mentioned in the review of that work (Petit 2011). The listing of species is only slightly changed.

To the authors’ credit, most of the species figured are holotypes, including two of those not named by the authors. Their appearance in these Editions is the first in color for most of them.

Unfortunately, the authors' propensity for carelessness has affected the plate legends. Of the 20 holotypes attributed to Petuch or to Petuch and Sargent, only 3 have measurements matching the original description, and one of them has a wrong measurement for a paratype. This disregard for their own work extends to the work of others as the measurements of the two holotypes of species attributed to other authors are also misstated. Differences of a few tenths of a millimeter may not seem important, but as this is copied data, it raises questions of credibility about other data. In a few cases the discrepancy is rather striking, involving a size difference of over 10%.

As if the holotype size differences were not error enough, there is the further problem of migrating type localities. Two examples will be given: The holotype of *Vokesimurex lindajoyceae* (Petuch, 1987) was stated to be 29 mm in length and to have been collected from 150 meters depth. In this work it is stated to be 32.4 mm and to have been taken from 100 meters depth. On the other hand, the holotype of *Chicoreus rachelcarsonae* Petuch, 1987 has shrunk from 43 mm to 40 mm and is now stated to be from 200 meters instead of 150 meters.

In the faunal list on page 105, one of seven additions to the Conidae is "*Gradiconus sennottoi* - *rum* subspecies (*largillerti*?)". Some of the *Comus* of this section are discussed on pages 91–92 but there is no explanation given for this listing, devoid of authorship or comment. This review is not a forum for taxonomic placement and no further comment will be made, but readers should not have been left with a listing of this type without any comment.

Of the errors in the 1st Edition, the spelling of the name of the author of *Prunum carneum* (Storer, 1837) appears to be the only one corrected (page 86).

In Chapter 4. *Shells of the Dry Tortugas Area* on pages 89–90 (87–88 in the 1st Edition) several changes have been made. At the end of the discussion of collecting from lobster traps on page 90 the species *Gradiconus tortuganus* Petuch and

Sargent which was listed there in the 1st Edition has been removed. Only two species are listed as having been collected from the lobster traps, one of them being *Scaphella (Caricellopsis) matchetti* Petuch and Sargent. This does not agree with the locality for this species given on page 177 which is "trawled by deep water shrimp boats from 200 m depth due West of Naples, Collier County, Florida and due north of the Dry Tortugas."

In the section *Shells of the Shallow Reef Areas* (page 90) the first paragraph is almost entirely changed with a discussion of *Gradiconus tortuganus* Petuch and Sargent replaced by a somewhat different discussion of *G. anabathrum tranthami* (Petuch, 1995). The comments about *Jaspidiconus fluviamaris* Petuch and Sargent, 2011 and *Hermes granulatus* (Linnaeus, 1758) have been removed and those names no longer appear in this section.

Near the end of the section *Shells of the Deep Water Coralline Algal Bottom Areas* the authors unnecessarily, and redundantly, use a term unfamiliar to most when they mention two species that "live on deep water antipatharian Sea Whip octocorals." The use of the term antipatharian is unnecessary in a book of this nature. It is considered by this reviewer that almost all readers of this book will know what a Sea Whip is.

On page 94 (Figure 4.1) the name *Gradiconus antoni* Gargile [sic], 2011 appears in the synonymy of *G. anabathrum tranthami* (Petuch, 1995). This synonymy is discussed on pages 90 and 145 was treated by Petit (2011: 2). Gargile's name is correctly rendered where it appears elsewhere in this book.

In Chapter 5. *Shells of the Palm Beach and Broward County Coastlines*, six holotypes of species previously named by Petuch are illustrated (Figures 5.1–5.3). The size and/or stated depth of all differ from the data published when they were originally introduced.

The section *Shells of the Deep Reefs*, beginning on page 108, starts with the sentence: "The deep reefs and hard bottom biohermal communities found off Palm Beach County are still virtual-

ly unexplored, and have only rarely been sampled and studied.” Although earlier used (page 36) as “... large bioherms (‘reefs’) of several types of sponges ...” the introduction of the term “biohermal” should have been accompanied by a definition. It is doubtful that many users of this book will have advanced degrees in oceanography and/or geology which would enable them to understand the term. It was certainly new to this reviewer. Consultation with professionals leads to the conclusion that it is an involved subject and that a reef can be seen as a bioherm, but not every bioherm is a reef. A recent paper (Reed et al. 2005), can be consulted for an understanding of the word. Here, as with the use of the term antipatharian, the authors are unnecessarily using technical terms without properly defining them. The reason for this can only be speculation and the temptation to comment further is resisted.

In the discussion of two infrasubspecific varieties on page 117 (1st Edition), the term “form” was placed between the subspecific and infrasubspecific nomina [e.g. *L. raninus* form *nanus*]. In the 2nd Edition (page 110) these same nomina are treated but “form” is placed in italics. There are no iron-clad rules on such citations, but the non-italic arrangement is preferable.

On page 111 “the Giant Horse Conch, *Triplofusus papillosus* (Soperby [sic; = Sowerby] I, 1825)” appears. In the 1st Edition this was *T. giganteus* (Kiener, 1840) and it remains under that name on Figure 5.11 and on page 104 in the 2nd Edition. On the Figure plate legend *papillo - sus* is stated to be “under investigation as to its validity.” Sowerby’s species is almost universally considered a *nomen dubium* as it cannot be recognized and should not be resurrected without comment or reference.

Figure 5.16, featuring species of *Janthina*, was changed in the 2nd Edition to add *Janthina exigua* Lamarck. In changing the text for this section, headed *Gulf Stream Drifters* on page 112 (126 in the 1st Edition), some text was omitted and this incongruous sentence closes the first paragraph: “These three currents merge north of Cay Sal to produce the Gulf Stream, which flows

northward out of the predators of the stinging siphonophore hydrozoans.” Perhaps we now have the solution to the Bermuda Triangle Mystery – currents flowing out of predators!

In the list of these “Drifters” on page 141, *Janthina rollandiana* (Petit, 1853), listed in the 1st Edition, has been dropped without explanation.

Figure 5.17 has already been mentioned as new. Figures 6.1 to 6.18 are also new to the 2nd Edition. Chapter 6, titled *Ongoing Research in Florida Bay and the Florida Keys*, begins on page 143 and is new to this edition. In the discussion the eastern Pacific species *Gradicomus scalarissimus* is mentioned without author. Readers must go elsewhere to learn that this name was introduced by da Motta (1988) as a replacement name and is not universally considered to be a valid name (although it is an available name). It is unfortunate that it is made to appear that the “senior author and his students” are responsible for all the research being done in the Keys when Petuch is well aware of the intense work being done by other researchers who are studying the entire fauna and not simply picking out a few showy specimens to name.

Page 151 (Figure 6.3) figures specimens of *Gradicomus burryae mazzolii* Petuch and Sargent, 2011c. As already mentioned on page 143, this is now considered to be a full species by the authors but for some reason is not uniformly so treated. The Figure captions for Paratypes 1 and 2 are reversed as can be noted by a comparison with the original 2011c figures.

Figure 6.10.B on page 158 is of *Jaspidicomus fluviamaris* Petuch and Sargent, 2011b, and is stated to be 15.3 mm. This same specimen was figured by them in 2011b (Plate 5, figures 3a–b) as being 15.13 mm.

Figure 6.16.A on page 164 is a color form of *Gradicomus anabathrum tranthami* (Petuch, 1995), stated to be 26 mm in length and from “Pickles Reef, Plantation Key.” This same specimen was figured in 2011b (Plate 3, figure 2) as being 26.17 mm in length and from “Tavernie

[sic; = Tavernier] Key, off Pickles Reef.” There are no maps of the Keys provided, but it is probable that these are adjacent Keys and when off shore it might be difficult to know exactly which Key you are “off”, a reason why maps should have been provided instead of the imaginary views from space. Were GPS coordinates not available?

The *Bibliography and Pertinent Literature* is on pages 169–170. It has doubled in size since the 1st Edition, now listing 20 titles, four of the newly listed titles being by Petuch and Sargent, reducing Petuchian works to only 50% of the total. Of the other six newly added items, the work by Hoffmeister & Mulster is a geologic work for which no mention has been found in the book. Of the five remaining, only the booklet by Lipe is mentioned in the text. It is difficult to know how the other newly added references could have contributed to the book as they are not cited and all but one are older works with outdated nomenclature. The newest of the additions, William’s popular 1988 work, has extremely good color photographs of Florida scenery, living mollusks, etc., and references to it would have been understandable, but such references have not been found. On the other hand, specific mention is made on page 147 of the “systematic scheme of Tucker and Tenorio (2009)” but that work is among the multitude that are not included in the “Bibliography and Pertinent literature.”

There are three “Petuch and Sargent, 2011” references that are not differentiated so when “Petuch and Sargent, 2011” appears in the book it cannot be determined which work is being cited. Of the only two of these 2011 citations that are dated to month, one is dated incorrectly, one has incorrect pagination, and both use a month date for the journal *Visaya* instead of the issue number. The one dated “September, 2011” is *Visaya* 3(3): 37–58, not pages 117–138 as cited. It has a printed date of August but was published on 21 September 2011. The other *Visaya* 2011 paper which is listed as “October, 2011” has a cover date of November but was mailed by the publisher on 7 December 2011. The pagination given for

that article is correct, *Visaya* 3(4): 98–104.

Page 171 is headed *Systematic Appendix: Descriptions of New Species and Subspecies*. Reading the first paragraph eventually makes it clear that this section is a copy of the original descriptions in the 1st Edition. It is stated that “We have retained the original descriptions of these taxa in this *Systematic Appendix*, reprinting them for future workers who may not have access to the **rare first edition** [emphasis supplied].” A strange statement considering that the 1st Edition is still being sold by the publisher and by a book dealer in Germany. At the end of this introductory paragraph mention is made of the new species-group taxa to be introduced at the end of the section. There is still no mention of the new genus.

In the 1st Edition the new species *Favartia goldbergi* Petuch & Sargent was stated to be “named for Richard Goldberg of New York.” It is entirely appropriate to name a species for a person who has done so much for malacology, but Richard Goldberg has been a resident of Columbia, Maryland for the past two decades.

Page 178 is headed *New Genera [sic], Species, and Subspecies Described for the First Time in This Edition*. This is the first statement that a new genus, *Atlanticonus*, is being introduced. As already mentioned, it is not in the Index, but the type species appears there in the genus *Americonus*.

The descriptions of the two new species and one new subspecies are minimal, just as were the descriptions in the 1st Edition. The shortcomings of these descriptions will not be repeated but may be found in Petit (2011: 3–4). However it will be mentioned that in this day and age latitude–longitude references should be included with each description of a new taxon – especially when collected and described by a scientist.

Comments about the new species *Nassarius (Uzita) websteri* do, however, seem necessary. It is stated that this difference in Floridian species had been noted by Sally Kaicher “who published sets of shell identification note cards in the 1970’s and 1980’s.” Kaicher’s work has a title as shown

in the Literature Cited herein. No reference is made to the place where Kaicher made her observation. It is assumed that it is her 1982 Card #3234 where she figures a shell as “*Nassarius albus* auct. non Say” with a short discussion. This may not be the correct reference as Kaicher mentions and figures a protoconch of 1? whorls while *websteri* is described as having a protoconch of 2 whorls (unfigured). This is one of the few times where Petuch and Sargent have given any protoconch information. It is stated that *websteri* has a “proportionally much larger and more rounded protoconch” but how it is larger (wider, taller) is not stated or shown and no measurement given. Not having figures of the protoconchs of *N. websteri* and *N. albus* for comparison is incomprehensible in a descriptive work, especially when it is a primary basis of differentiation. “Proportionally” is also hard to understand as *websteri* is stated to be a smaller shell than *albus* yet Kaicher shows *albus* as being the smaller of the two. Possibly the species figured by Kaicher is not the one described as *websteri*, but the authors of the new species have made that impossible to determine.

From the description and discussion, *N. websteri* is not a rare species but the holotype has a hole in it and there are no paratypes. More importantly, there is no preserved type material available for future molecular work nor is mention made of the radula or any soft parts. The unnamed species discussed by Kaicher, said by her to be common, was also stated to be ovoviparous, a distinctive feature not mentioned for *N. websteri*.

The *Systematic Index* is on pages 183–187. It is neither systematic nor an index. It is a list of figured taxa, listed alphabetically by their assigned genera, with reference only to the plates. There are no references to taxa treated in the text, not even to the descriptions of new taxa. This might be understandable in some measure if the Figures gave a reference to the pages on which they appear, but that is not the case. A page-by-page search is the only way to find any taxon described, listed, or discussed.

The book itself ends on page 187. Pages 188 and 189 are devoted to biographical bits about the authors. The back cover consists of a short description of the book and two quotations, appearing to be comments on this edition but which actually refer to the 1st Edition. One of them, beginning with “... a good addition to your library” is taken from a review of Edition No. 1 by Tucker (2011) which, after favorable and unfavorable comments closed with “... the book would still be a good addition to your library.” The other quote, taken from an article by Morrison (2011) in the shell club bulletin of Sargent’s home club is actually two disconnected sentences from what is a glowing review of the 1st Edition based primarily on its color photographs. Approximately a third of the article is biographical information about Petuch and Sargent. There is no mention of nomenclature or taxonomy. It is interesting that the first three paragraphs of Morrison’s article are complimentary comments about the publisher, MdM Books, and that book being their first venture into publishing. MdM Books has no association with the 2nd Edition.

In the discussion of the *Dry Tortugas* section it was pointed out that 18 nomina introduced by Petuch, 1987 are figured. Petuch’s 1987 work is incompletely listed in the *Bibliography* which does not include its Addendum, consisting of pages A-1–A-4 that contain a plate and the descriptions of two species that are not in the index and are easily overlooked. There was a review of that 1987 paper by R. Tucker Abbott (1987) that is as appropriate now as it was then and it is recommended reading.

No reason is evident in this 2nd Edition for its necessity. Surely the new genus, two new species and one new subspecies, could have more easily been published in a journal than to have this palingenesis. It would be justifiable if the myriad errors in the 1st Edition had been corrected, but simply creating a new version of the same, in worse quality, defies understanding.

It is unfortunate that the authors did not take the opportunity afforded by this 2nd Edition to correct the errors of the 1st Edition, but instead they introduced additional error. In summary the physical construction of the book, its typography, and the arrangement and treatment of the subject matter can all be summed up in a single word: pathetic.

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NOTE

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- No. 4. Petit, R. E. 2011. A review of *Rare and Unusual Shells of the Florida Keys and Adjacent Areas* by Edward J. Petuch and Dennis M. Sargent, 2011. 5 pp.
- No. 5. Petit, R. E. & Tucker, J. K. 2011. A name too far. (Review of "Taxonomic review of the *Conus spectrum*, *Conus stramineus* and *Conus collisus* complexes (Gastropoda – Conidae) – Part I" by R. M. Filmer, 2011). 6 pp.
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