
NOTES

***Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846 (Bivalvia: Chamidae) another established Lessepsian invader in the Mediterranean Sea**

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ABSTRACT. The Indo-Pacific bivalve *Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846 seems to have established itself very well in the eastern Mediterranean. The species is also recorded herein from Turkish coasts.

DISCUSSION

The species of *Chama*, commonly known as “jewel boxes” have the lower valve with an anti-clockwise growth direction. The bivalves are attached by the lower valve to the substrate or some other object. In the Mediterranean Sea there are four recorded species (CLEMAM) of CHAMIDAE. *Chama gryphoides*, *C. circinata* Monterosato, 1878 and *Pseudochama gryphina* (Lamarck, 1819) are the three Mediterranean endemic species while *C. pacifica* Broderip, 1834, a Lessepsian species, is already known to have established itself well in the eastern Mediterranean (Bogi & Galil 1997, Çeviker 2001, Mienis 2006). Mienis (2006) also records the presence of *Chama asperella* Lamarck, 1818 and *Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846, as ‘well established Lessepsian species along the coast of Israel’. *Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846 is a very common Indo-Pacific species. Its invasion into the Mediterranean Sea was first recorded by Mienis (2004) from three loose upper valves found on three different beaches along the coast of Israel. Later, Mienis (2006) listed *Chama aspersa* as a well established species along the coast of Israel. The most striking characteristic of this species is the colour pattern of two or three red-brown lines or bands radiating from the umbo on the top or right valve.

We would like to record herein the presence of this species at Mersin and Marmaris, Turkey. A few living specimens were found by one of us (P.O.) during several dives at these localities (June/July 2006) in shallow waters of from 5 to 10 meters depth. At both these localities the specimens were attached to rocks or to bivalves such as *Spondylus gaederopus*

Linnaeus, 1758 (Figs 1-2). The size of the specimens varied from 12 to 23.5mm. *Chama pacifica* was also present at these localities.

C. aspersa seems to have established itself very well and its distribution in the Mediterranean from its first findings has substantially increased. The species has become rather common at the coasts of Israel (Mienis pers. comm.). Whether these invasive species are taking over from the established local species has still to be evaluated.

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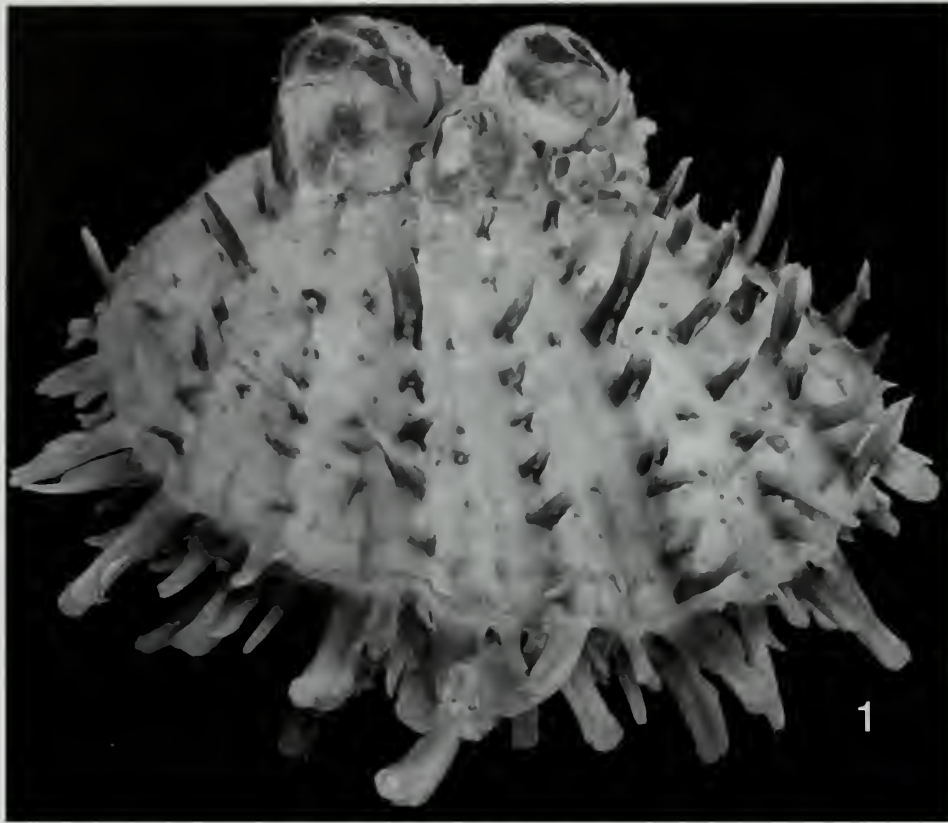


Fig. 1. Three specimens of *Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846 attached to a *Spondylus gaederopus* Linnaeus, 1758. Size: 90 x 74.5mm.



Fig. 2. Close up on the specimens of *Chama aspersa* Reeve, 1846. Left specimen 20 x 18mm, central specimen 13 x 10mm, right specimen 17.5 x 15mm.