

Overgenomen uit „Basteria“, Vol. 16, No. 1 en 2, 15 April 1952

## Notes on Kenya land- and freshwater snails

by

BERNARD VERDCOURT

### 1. *Pseudoglessula mirabilis* Preston

This species is perhaps the commonest snail in the forests surrounding Nairobi, being particularly common in the Karura Forest and the Chania Falls gorge. Both these localities are very similar botanically with *Piptadonia buchananii*, *Uvariadendron* sp. nov., *Rawsonia usambarensis*, *Teclea*, *Drypetes* and *Strychnos* being dominant. Although the shells are so common, I have only found living specimens on rare occasions. The body is opalescent, the foot being colourless, and the back very pale brick red. Under a lens it is seen that actually only the tops of the dorsal corrugations are coloured, the grooves being pale. A white epiphragm is formed. The radula of a young  $\frac{1}{4}$  grown specimen was mounted and some representative teeth are figured (fig. 1).

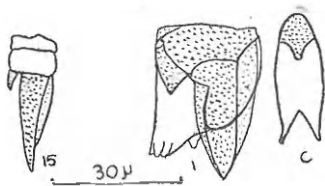


Fig. 1. Representative teeth of *Pseudoglessula mirabilis* Preston, Karura Forest, Nairobi, Kenya.

The radula is 0,8 mm broad and 1,7 mm long. There are 68 rows of teeth, ten of which stain in acid dyes. The central tooth is small, 10  $\mu$  broad, with an emarginate base. There are 8 laterals having a large mesocone, small ectocone and no true entocone. The merge into the marginals is gradual. There are about 15 marginals. My thanks are due to Dr. BEQUAERT for naming material sent to Harvard. This snail is easily recognised by the extremely strong spiral grooves on the apical whorls.

## 2. *Kaliella barrakporensis* (Pfr.)

This tiny snail (fig. 2) is common in the Karura forest under moist leaves and logs. It strongly resembles the British *Euconulus* in shape but is not closely related. PRESTON has described several forms which are almost certainly not specifically distinct from this very widely distributed species.



Fig. 2. *Kaliella barrakporensis* (Pfr.), Karura Forest, Nairobi, Kenya.

The base of the shell is obscurely transversely striate cut by very fine spiral striae. Above — the apex is more or less smooth, and the rest of the whorls are sculptured with very fine ribs. The carina is sharp. Average shells measure 3,75 mm high and 3,25 mm broad. The radula has been described and the present specimens agree with typical ones. They are 0,94 mm long and 0,41 mm broad and have the following formula: 26 : 1,7 : C : 7,1 : 26 × 84 — 90. Centrals and laterals 3-cusped, marginals 3—4 cusped. The animal is colourless.

## 3. *Bulimus* spp.

This genus is better known as *Bithynia* and recommendations are being made that this well known name should be conserved. The genus is well known from the Great Lakes but other East African species are very imperfectly known. E. VON MARTENS (1897) described a *Bithynia putcanus* from Zanzibar. I have seen no named specimens nor has Dr. BEQUAERT. I do not know where the types are. The species was not figured and the description is exceedingly brief.

Two lots have recently passed through my hands which seem referable to this species, both collected by C. TEESDALE Esq. The first lot from a cement tank at Takaungu near Mombasa are more tapering

shells than those mentioned in MARTENS' description. They are 3,6 mm high and 2,4 mm broad. Aperture ovate, 1,5 mm. There are 4 whorls, very convex with a deep suture. The spire is obtuse, and the umbilicus narrow and deep. The shell is thin, and bears traces of spiral lines and faint close longitudinal striae and a few growth lines on the body whorl. The colour is whitish with blue patches showing through. A representative shell is figured (fig. 3). The operculum is thinly calcareous, spirally striate and retracted some distance inside the shell.

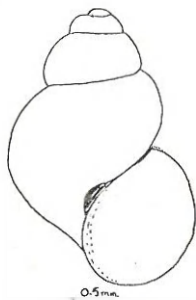


Fig. 3. *Bulimus* sp. cf. *pucanus* Mts., Takaungu, Kenya, C. Teesdale coll.

The second lot from Lake Illore, Kenya, agree more closely with the description of *B. puteanus*. They are more globose shells 4,5 mm long, 3,5 mm broad and with an aperture 2,5 mm high. The operculum is more thickly calcareous and lodges just inside the aperture. They are no more than racially distinct from the Takaungu shells. Until a wide range of shells have been collected from Zanzibar and the mainland including living material it will not be possible to say whether more than one species is involved and whether these forms really are related to the *Bibynnae* of Europe. It is rapidly being discovered that very many Freshwater genera are represented by species common all over Africa and that numerous forms formerly thought distinct are no more than races. It is therefore not unlikely that VON MARTENS' species is but a form of an earlier described form. Nothing can be done until more extensive collections have been made in all the freshwaters of the colony.

Specimens of both forms have been presented to the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard. Dr. DARTEVELLE has also kindly reported on shells sent to him and thinks my determination may be correct. He refers these *Bibynnae* to the genus *Gabbia*.

