
***PALISADIA RITTNERI*, A NEW SPECIES FROM THE GULF OF AQABA
(MOLLUSCA, GASTROPODA, EULIMIDAE)**

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Abstract: A minute Eulimid species dredged in the Gulf of Aqaba off Elat is described as a new species: *Palisadia rittneri*. It is the second representative of the genus *Palisadia* Laseron, 1956.

Key words: Mollusca, Gastropoda, Eulimidae, *Palisadia rittneri*, taxonomy, distribution, Red Sea, Gulf of Aqaba.

Dredging operations carried out in the Gulf of Aqaba off Elat in water down to a depth of 630 m (Por & Lerner-Segev, 1966) have revealed numerous mollusc species which had not been reported before from any place in the Red Sea. Quite a number turned out to be identical to the hundreds of new species described by Melvill between 1897 and 1928 from dredgings carried out by Captain F.W. Townsend in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and the North Arabian Sea in the years 1893-1915 (Trew, 1987).

Some 20 years ago I came across two specimens of an unknown gastropod dredged respectively from 80 and 190 m in the Gulf of Aqaba off Elat which looked quite similar to a species described by Laseron (1956: 432, Fig. 129 – here reproduced in Fig. 2) as *Palisadia subulata* from Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, yet they differed in several details in shell form and sculpture and were put aside in a drawer of unidentified material.

Meanwhile Ponder (1985) had transferred *Palisadia* from the Rissoacea to the Eulimidae, while Tringali & Oliverio (1995) had reported typical specimens of *Palisadia subulata* from Sanganeb Reef, Sudan, in the Red Sea. The specimens from Elat were once again studied by me and my colleague Oz Rittner at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History and we reached both the conclusion that the specimens from Elat belong to a closely related but different species. It is here described as a new species.

Family Eulimidae

Genus *Palisadia* Laseron, 1956

Palisadia rittneri new species (Fig. 1)

Holotype – Israel, Gulf of Aqaba, off Elat, RS-18 grab, 190 m depth, leg. F.D. Por, 8 October 1965 (HUIJ MOL 12474).

Paratype – Israel, Gulf of Aqaba, off Elat, dredged, 80 m depth, leg. F.D. Por (?), 1968 (HUIJ MOL 12546).

Type locality: Gulf of Aqaba, off Elat, Israel, at a depth of 190 m.

Diagnosis: A species of the genus *Palisadia* which differs from the type species *Palisadia subulata* by a more slender shell, the lack of sharp axial ribs over the surface between the varices and a non-duplicated peristome.

Description: The small cylindrical shell has a smooth protoconch consisting of four whorls; the following remaining four whorls are compressed from back to front and show at both sides sinuous varices; the areas between the varices are smooth, the sutures are shallow; the distorted aperture shows a complete single peristome; a basal fold surrounds the base; the umbilicus is open in part. Length of the holotype is 2.54 mm. The paratype is similar in full details, except for a tiny hole in the last whorl. It has a length of 2.53 mm.

Distribution: The only known specimens were both dredged off Elat in the northern part of the Gulf of Aqaba.

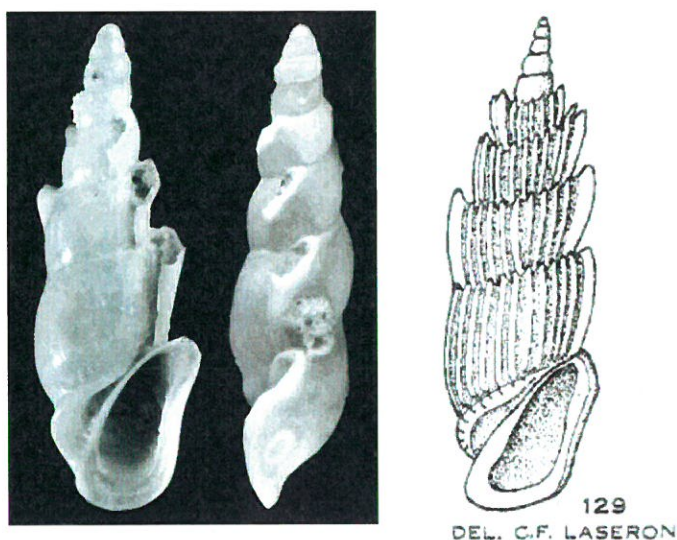


Fig. 1: *Palisadia rittneri* new species Holotype (Photo Oz Rittner) Fig. 2: *Palisadia subulata* Laseron, 1956 Holotype (Original drawing Laseron)

Etymology: I am pleased to name this new species after my colleague and friend Oz Rittner, who is my right hand in the Mollusc Collection of the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv University.

Discussion: The new species differs from *Palisadia subulata*, the only other representative of the genus *Palisadia*, by its slightly more slender shell, by the more shallow sutures, the complete absence of sharp axial ribs between the varices and by the simple peristome of the aperture.

Additional remark: I do not rule out the possibility that the shells identified as *Palisadia subulata* from the Philippines on the website www.poppe.images.com might represent a third species.

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