

**Range and colour extension for *Engina muznoides*  
(Gastropoda: Buccinidae)**

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**Abstract:** *Engina muznoides* Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013 from Oman was described as a new species in this magazine. In the present article, it is shown that the range of this species extends into the southern Red Sea. The colour of this species is much more variable than initially observed.

**Introduction:** In 1991 the author took part in an expedition to Oman to collect small species of molluscs. This Expedition was organised by the late Donald T. Bosch (1917-2012). Some of the results were published by Bosch et al., 1995. In 1993, the author organised the Tibia-I Expedition to the Red Sea coast of Yemen to explore its molluscs together with Fred G. de Ceuninck van Capelle (Leiden, The Netherlands). The species list was published by Dekker & de Ceuninck van Capelle, 1994. In 1995 a second expedition to Yemen was organised, but this time to the SE coast, Indian Ocean, adjacent to Oman. No report was published on this second expedition. Altogether, a fair collection of shells from southern Arabia is present in the collection of the author, among which several samples of the newly described *Engina muznoides* Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013. Those enabled to extend the known range of this species, and show a larger variation of colour pattern than seen by the authors of the new species. Their reported specimen of *E. natalensis* (Melvill, 1895) from Oman is here regarded as a colour form of *E. muznoides*, limiting the distribution of *E. natalensis* to SE Africa.

**Abbreviations:**

HD: Collection Henk Dekker, Winkel, The Netherlands

## SYSTEMATICS

Family BUCCINIDAE Rafinesque, 1815

Subfamily Pisaninae Gray, 1857

Genus *Engina* Gray, 1839

Type species: *Engina zonata* Gray, 1839 (SD. Gray, 1847).

*Engina muznoides* Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013

(Pl. 1, Figs 1-7)

- 1994 *Engina* sp. – Dekker & de Ceuninck van Capelle: p. 130  
 1995 *Engina natalensis* – Bosch et al.: p. 128, fig. 523  
 2013 *Engina muznoides* Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013: p. 80, figs 1-6  
 2013 *Engina natalensis* [in part] – Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013: p. 83, figs 7-8

**Type locality:** Oman, Dhofar, Mirbat.

**Material studied: Oman:** Masirah Island, Ra's al Ya, 23 Nov. 1991, coll. R.G. Moolenbeek & H. Dekker, HD 31803, 11 spec.; Masirah Island, Sur-Masirah, 1989, coll. D.T. Bosch, HD 31821, 3 spec.; Al Hallaniyah, main island (= Kuria Muria Island), 12 Nov. 1991, coll. R.G. Moolenbeek & H. Dekker, HD 31805, 3 spec. **Yemen, al-Mahrah, Indian Ocean coast:** Nishtun, 5-6 Oct. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9412, 5 spec.; wadi between Jadib and Damqawt, 3 Oct. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9410, 2 spec.; 4 km W of Qishn, 26 Sept. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9408, 5 spec.; E side of Ra's Itab, 9 Oct. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9413, 1 spec.; al-Ghayday, 29 Sept. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9409, 1 spec.; Damqawt, 3-4 Oct. 1995, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 9411, 1 spec. **Yemen, Red Sea coast:** al-Luhayyah, 11-12 April 1993, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 7813, 2 spec.; al-Mukha, 2.5 km N of electricity power station, 21-22 April 1993, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 7814, 3 spec.; Zahrat Ashiq (island), 26 April 1993, coll. H. Dekker & F.G. de Ceuninck van Capelle, HD 7815, 1 spec.

**Distribution:** Southern Arabia: from Oman, Masirah Island westwards to the southern Red Sea. Bosch et al. (1995: 128) already recorded this species from Masirah Island and the Dhofar region of Oman. The Dhofar region is confirmed by the material reported by Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013 and material listed above. We can now add the occurrence along the Indian Ocean coast of Yemen, reaching the Red Sea. From the Red Sea it was reported by Dekker & de Ceuninck van Capelle (1994: 130) under the name "*Engina* sp."

**Habitat:** It inhabits rocks in shallow water, empty shells can be found on the beach.

**Colour:** As can be observed in the specimens figured (Figs 1-7), the species' colour is rather variable in the amount of dark brown to blackish colour present. Some of the spiral bands lack this colour and form white zones in some specimens.

**Comparison:** *Engina muznoides* is very similar to the southeast African species *Engina natalensis* (Melvill, 1895). A synonym of this species is *Buccinum perlatum* Küster, 1858 (non Conrad, 1833). Figures of this species can be found in several books of this region, e.g. Kilburn et al. (2010: 43, text fig.), and are figured here for comparison (Figs 8-10). The major difference can be found in the size, *E. natalensis* is 7-9 mm in height, whereas *E. muznoides* becomes larger: 9-12 mm. The knobs are courser in *E. muznoides* than in *E. natalensis*. The colour pattern is very similar in both species; what seems different is that the dark brown spots on the apertural margin are more prominent in *E. muznoides* than in *E. natalensis*. Although the differences are small, the large gap in distribution between both species justifies they are both valid species.

**Discussion:** The specimen from Oman figured by Fraussen & van Laethem (2013: figs 7-8) is a paler colour morph of *E. muznoides*. This restricts the distribution of *E. natalensis* to SE Africa. It was recorded as far north as Kenya by Kilburn et al. (2010: 43), but I have no records to confirm this.

A similar species is known from Mozambique (Fig. 11), but this differs from both *E. muznoides* and *E. natalensis* by having the knobs in the adapical spiral rows not filled with brownish colour. Furthermore, the sutural spiral is more pronounced and the regularly distributed knobs are alternately brown and white stained. The identity of this species is not known to me.

The total number of known *Engina* species from Oman is three (Bosch et al., 1995: 128), the species *Engina rawsoni* (Melvill, 1879) belongs to the genus *Pollia*.

## References:

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- Fraussen, K. & van Laethem, K.,** 2013. The genus *Engina* Gray, 1839 (Gastropoda: Buccinidae) from Oman with description of a new species. *Gloria Maris* 52(3-4): 79-85. [erratum in *Gloria Maris* 52(6): inner side front cover]

Kilburn, R.N., Marais, J.P. & Fraussen, K., 2010. Buccinidae. pp. 16-52. *In*: Marais, A.P. & Seecombe, A.D. (eds.). *Identification guide to the seashells of South Africa*. Centre for Molluscan Studies. Groenkloof.

**Plate 1:**

**1-7: *Engina muznoides* Fraussen & van Laethem, 2013**

- 1: Oman, Masirah Island, Sur-Masirah, 1989, leg. D.T. Bosch, HD 31821, 9.9 mm.
- 2: Oman, Al Hallaniyah [= Kuria Muria Islands], main island, 12 Nov. 1991, leg. R.G. Moolenbeek & H. Dekker, HD 31805, 9.0 mm.
- 3: Oman, Masirah Island, Ra's al Ya, 23 Nov. 1991, leg. R.G. Moolenbeek & H. Dekker, HD 31803, 11.5 mm.
- 4: Yemen, south coast, Al-Mahrah, Damqawt, 3-4 Oct. 1995, Tibia-II Expedition, HD 9411, 12.0 mm.
- 5: Yemen, south coast, Al-Mahrah, 4 km W of Qishn, 26 Sept. 1995, Tibia-II Expedition, HD 9408, 9.5 mm.
- 6: Yemen, Red Sea, Zahrat Ashiq Island, 26 April 1993, Tibia-I Expedition, HD 7815, 9.1 mm.
- 7: Yemen, Red Sea, Al-Lohayyah (= Loheia), 11-12 April 1993, Tibia-I Expedition, HD 7813, 8.4 mm. A long dead specimen, showing the typical reddish colour when faded.

**8-10: *Engina natalensis* (Melvill, 1895)**

- 8: South Africa, SE coast, HD 29203, 8.2 mm.
- 9: South Africa, Kwa Zulu Natal, Park Rynie, beached, HD 22034, 8.7 mm.
- 10: Madagascar, Lavanono, shell grit, Oct. 2009, HD 27975, 6.7 mm.

**11: *Engina* sp.**

- 11: Mozambique, Maputo prov., Inhaca Island, in rubble, 12 m deep, HD 29204, 6.9 mm.



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