

## Confirmation of the presence of *Fusinus bifrons* (Sturany, 1900) (Gastropoda: Fasciolaridae) in the Gulf of Aqaba

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**Key words:** GASTROPODA, FASCIOLARIIDAE, Fusininae, *Fusinus bifrons*, Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea.

**Abstract:** The discovery of three specimens of *Fusinus bifrons* (Sturany, 1900) confirms the presence of this species in the northern part of the Red Sea.

**Discussion:** The recent find of the deep water species *Fusinus bifrons* in the northern part of the Gulf of Aqaba confirms its presence in the entire Red Sea. There were previous records of this species, but only one from the northern part of the Red Sea. The first record of this species in the Red Sea is from the Imperial Austrian vessel "POLA", which led a comprehensive expedition to the Red Sea including deep water dredging. This expedition took place at the very end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1895-1898): for several years the Imperial Austrian Navy vessel "POLA" explored the entire Red Sea, including both Gulfs of the Sinai peninsula: the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba. The material was sent to Austria and divided among numerous experts to analyse and study the finds. The study of gastropods and bivalves was carried out by Dr. Rudolf Sturany, who described no fewer than 33 new gastropod species. Today the majority of the marine zoological material is stored in the National History Museum Vienna. For more information on the "POLA" expedition and its results, we refer to Stagl, Sattmann & Dworschack (1996).

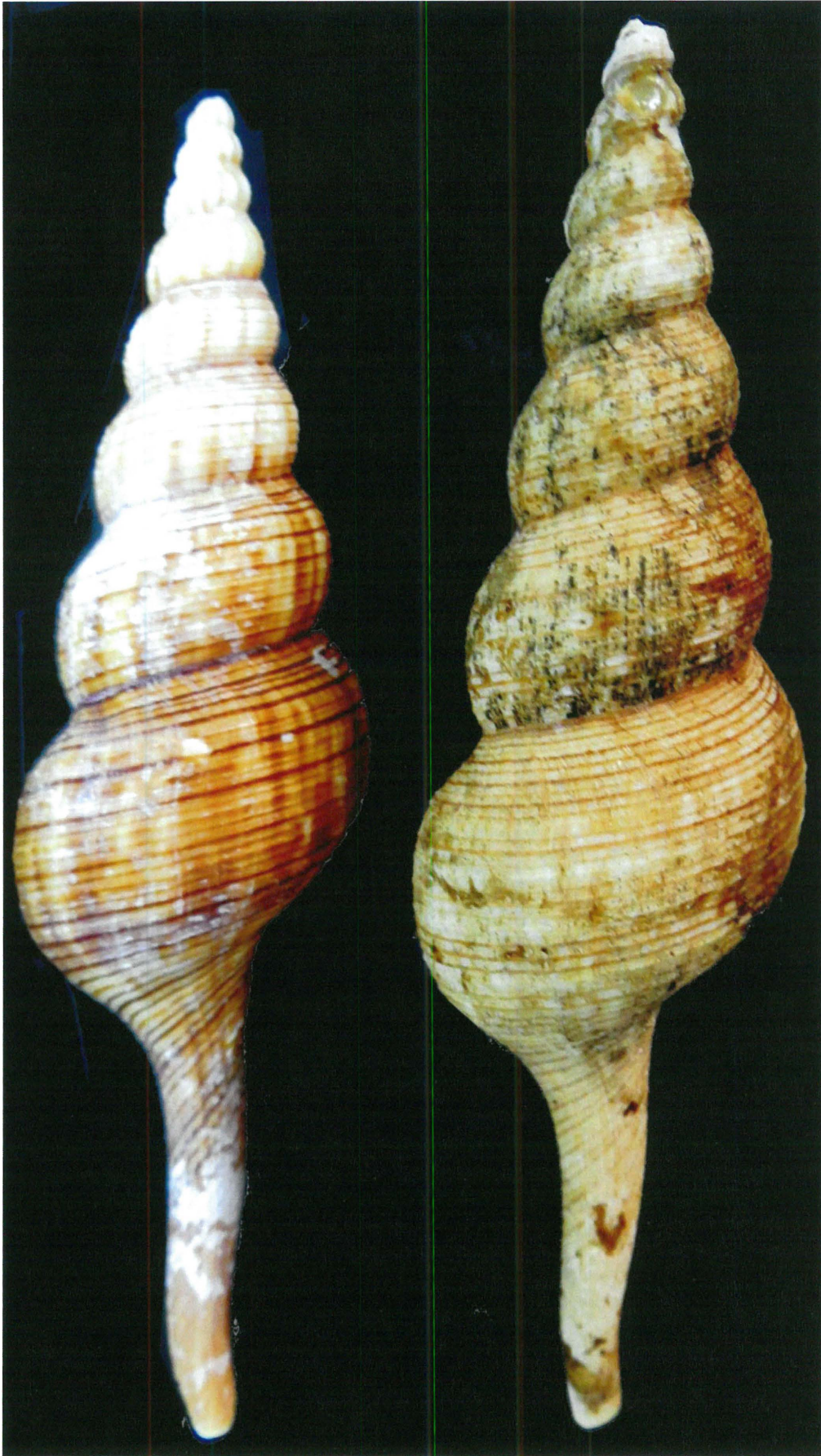
For his original description, Sturany (1900) had 70 shells at his disposal: 19 of them are currently considered syntypes of *F. bifrons* ('F. typica' – F. for forma) and 28 syntypes of the "*F. paucicostata*" (F. for forma, not *Fusinus*), with *paucicostata* currently being considered an invalid form name as they "differ only slightly in the more or less extended development of axial ribs in respect to their strength and number. Both forms intergrade and are considered phenotypical variations of the same taxon" (Albano et al, 2017). This opinion was followed by Snyder (2002).

Sturany (1903) mentioned that this species inhabits the continental zone of the Red Sea (dredged between 490 and 900 m), with "East of Dahlak, Eritrea" as the locality of the shell illustrated by Sturany (1900). Snyder (2002) extends this range in both southern and northern directions by adding records from Saya de Malha bank in the Indian Ocean and Neviot (=Nuweiba), 75 south of Eilat, Egypt in the Red Sea. The present record (Eilat) therefore confirms the presence of this species in the northern Red Sea and slightly extends its range towards the northernmost parts of the Gulf of Aqaba.

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**Plate:**

*Fusinus bifrons* (Sturany, 1900)  
Eilat. Left: 131 mm; Right 138mm.