

***Myurellopsis vauberti* sp. nov.,
a new species of Terebridae (Gastropoda: Conoidea) from Mauritius**

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Abstract: *Myurellopsis vauberti* sp. nov. is described and compared with its geographically and morphologically closest relatives.

Introduction: Dredging efforts conducted by a number of conchologists at an average depth of about 100 m about 3 km NW off N Mauritius yielded a surprisingly diverse fauna of the family **Terebridae**. The sample included 18 species, one of which apparently undescribed. It is compared with its geographical and morphological relatives *Myurellopsis monicae* (Terryin, 2005) and *Myurella reunionensis* (Bratcher & Cernohorsky, 1985) below.

Abbreviations:

FL: Private collection Felix Lorenz, Germany
JR: Private collection José Rosado, Portugal
MNHN: Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France
MSF: Molluscan Science Foundation, Inc., Owings Mills, MD, USA
SG: Private collection Sandro Gori, Italy
YT: Private collection Yves Terryin, Belgium

Systematics:

The systematics for the species described and discussed herein follows the systematics proposed by Fedosov et al. (2020), where the complex and in many cases preliminary and tentative taxonomic status of certain *Myurella*- and *Myurellopsis*-species is discussed.

Class **Gastropoda** Cuvier, 1797
Order **Neogastropoda** Wenz, 1938
Superfamily **Conoidea** Fleming, 1822
Family **Terebridae** Mörch, 1852
Subfamily **Terebrinae** Mörch, 1852
Genus ***Myurellopsis*** Fedosov, Malcolm, Terryin, Gorson, Modica, Holford & Puillandre, 2020

***Myurellopsis vauberti* sp. nov.**
Figs 1-6

Type material: **Holotype:** MNHN-IM-2000-350033, 15.1 mm (Figs 1, 4-5). **Paratypes:** from type locality: **Paratype 1:** FL, 22.3 mm (Fig. 2); **Paratype 2:** FL, 18.2 mm (Fig. 3); **Paratypes 3-9:** YT, 14.1-19.1 mm; **Paratype 10:** JR, Mauritius, off Flic en Flac, dredged at 40-60 m, 16.3 mm; **Paratype 11:** SG, Mauritius, off Flic en Flac, dredged at 40-60 m, 15.7 mm; **further paratypes:** from the type locality: FL, 11 paratypes, 13.5-19.0 mm; MSF, 13 paratypes, 14.0-19.2 mm; YT, 18 paratypes, 14.5-21.6 mm.

Additional material: YT, 4 specimens, Mauritius, off Flic en Flac, dredged at 40-60 m, 13.8-18.5 mm.

Type locality: 3 km NW off N Mauritius, at approx. 100 m.

Description (holotype): Overall outline of shell straight, individual subsutural band and remainder of whorl convex. Protoconch 1.14 mm long, with about 4 white, somewhat translucent conical whorls; transition to teleoconch gradual. Shell colour white. Subsutural band bordered by a deep concave furrow, somewhat intersected by the axial ribs. Axial structure of arcuate, widely spaced ribs; 26 of varying width, height and interspace on the penultimate whorl. Ribs stretch from suture to

suture and continue onto basal area. The spiral structure consists of 5 evenly spaced riblets, which intersect with the axial ribs, giving a somewhat beaded impression. Subsutural band ornamented with 3 rows of spiral riblets. Below the periphery, spiral sculpture of densely set, faint spiral ribs. Aperture elongate, columella straight.

Distribution and habitat: Known from off W and NW Mauritius between depths of 40 and 100 m. The dredged material contained a vast variety of typical sand-dwelling gastropods, fine dead coral rubble and sponges.

Comparison and discussion: Although the intensity and number of axial ribs and the depth of the subsutural band demarcation may vary slightly, the characteristics are stable within the type series. The colour ranges from pure white to off-white and faint yellowish brown. Mature specimens (e.g. paratypes 1-2) have a white columellar callosity, while this is not developed in smaller-sized juveniles and subadults. The species is characterised by having a large protoconch consisting of 4.0-4.5 whorls (gradual transition), an uncommon feature in **Terebridae**, easily setting it apart from its conchological relatives.

Its generic placement in the genus *Myurellopsis* is tentative (see Fedosov et al., 2020), awaiting confirmation from molecular analysis.

M. vaulberti sp. nov. can be compared with *M. monicae* and *Myurella reunionensis* (supraspecific status uncertain). Although white specimens of *M. monicae* are known from off Mauritius, the spiral sculpture of deep incisions easily sets it apart from the spiral riblets in *M. vaulberti*. *M. reunionensis*, described from off Reunion and dredged at depths between 110 and 225 m, is a brown shell with a protoconch of only 3 whorls, a spiral sculpture of about 10 riblets and a shallow or often inconspicuous subsutural groove.

Derivatio nominis: Named in honour of Dr Jean-Pierre Vaulbert de Chantilly of Mauritius, who provided the logistics for the dredging campaign that resulted in the discovery of this species.

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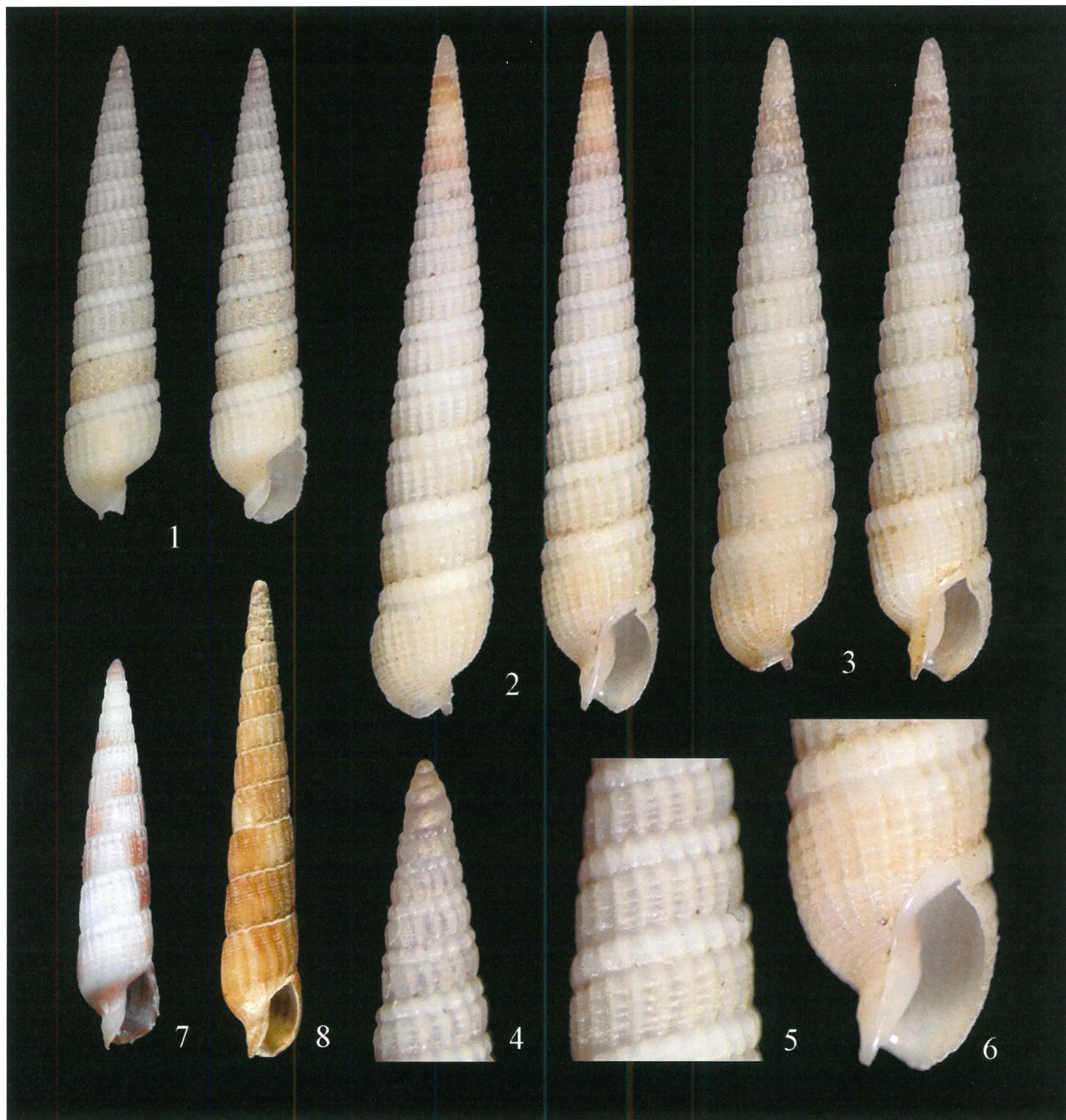
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1-6: *Myurellopsis vauberti* sp. nov.

3 km NW off N Mauritius, approx. 100 m.

1: Holotype, 15.1 mm.

2: Paratype 1, 22.3 mm.

3: Paratype 2, 18.2 mm.

4: Detail of apex of holotype.

5: Detail of sculpture of holotype.

6: Detail of aperture of paratype 1.

7: *Myurellopsis monicae*

YT, paratype 4, Reunion Island, St. Paul Bay, 60-100 m, 10.6 mm.

8: *Myurella reunionensis*

MNHN, holotype, off Reunion Island, 21°05'S -55°12'E, 110-125 m. 13.2 mm