

ON A NEW VARIETY OF *RAHULA MUNIPURENSIS* FROM
TERIA GHAT AND A NEW RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION OF
THAT SPECIES FROM JAINTIA HILLS, ASSAM (MOLLUSCA,
GASTROPODA, PULMONATA : FAMILY ZONITIDAE)

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INTRODUCTION.

While examining the named collection of the family Zonitidae and also the figures in Plate CXVII appearing in Godwin-Austen's Land and Freshwater Mollusca of India, Plates, Vol. II (1889-1914), for the purpose of comparison and study of some very interesting tiny land shells obtained from Himachal Pradesh, Simla Hills, we found one beautiful figure marked Ia concerning *Rahula bascauda* from Teria Ghat, which showed certain important peculiarities in its shape and character not at all agreeing with other figures (Nos. 1, 3, 3a) and description of the species concerned. This aroused a great curiosity to know what may be its exact position, identity and relationship. So, after looking into further details of character it was found that its spire-pattern, whorls, sutures and costulations are entirely different from those of *bascauda* proper. It is really surprising how Godwin-Austen¹ and Blanford² could ignore all these interesting points and consider it as quite identical with other figures of *bascauda*. Close or remote costulations may be one of the chief characteristic features of the genus *Rahula*, but the combination of both in shells of one and the same species appears rather unusual. And if it so happens in any rare case, then other important characters should also be taken into consideration before arriving at a definite conclusion as to the identity of the material concerned.

In order to remove the doubt from our mind as to the exact identity of the figure in question we approached Dr. G. L. Wilkins of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London, clearly indicating the main points of distinction between it and other figures of *bascauda*. He has been very kind enough to take great pain and trouble for examining very critically all the figures given by Godwin-Austen relating to *bascauda* and *muni-
purensis* and also the shells of the same available in the collection of the British Museum and remarked that the figure at issue seems to be a variant and the shell on which it was originally based is not found in their collection. But one very important thing which he failed to mention is that what may be its nearest ally, either *bascauda* or *muni-
purensis*. However, it is now finally decided that it is distinct from *bascauda*.

¹ Godwin-Austen, H. H. *Moll. Ind.* II, p. 216.

² Godwin-Austen, H. H. and Blanford, W. T. *Faun. Brit. Ind. Moll. Test. & Zonitid.*, p. 251 (1908).

The nature of spire, whorls, sutures and costulations as found in the figure under observation may, no doubt, indicate its position and affinity more nearer to the species *munipurensis* than to *bascauda* proper, but not so much as to make it identically same owing to some important points of difference. So, we consider it better to treat this as a new variety of *munipurensis*, for which the name *teriai* is proposed after the type-locality Teria Ghat.

The illustrations given in Plate I, if carefully examined, will certainly leave no doubt as to the marked difference in shell-characters between *teriai* and *R. bascauda* and also the nearest approach of the former to *R. munipurensis* justifying at least a separate varietal rank, if not specific.

We offer our cordial thanks to Dr. G. L. Wilkins of the British Museum for his valuable remarks and to Dr. S. L. Hora, Director, Zoological Survey of India, for his useful criticisms. Thanks are also due to Shri A. K. Mondal, our Artist, for the care he has taken in drawing the figures.

***Rahula munipurensis* Godwin-Austen, 1907**
var. ***teriai***, nov.

(Plate VI, Fig. 2.)

1907. *Rahula bascauda* (in part), Godwin-Austen. *Moll. Ind.* II, p. 218, pl. CXVII, fig. Ia.
1908. *Rahula bascauda* (in part), Godwin-Austen and Blanford. *Faun. Brit. Ind. Moll. Test. & Zonitid.*, p. 251.

The main points of interest in which this new variety differs from the *forma typica* are :—shell appearing slightly more conical owing to narrowness of the spire ; sutures slightly more oblique ; costulations not so strong, regular and close—a remarkable feature, indeed ; aperture roundly-lunate somewhat like that of *R. bascauda*, though its outer angulation appearing less pronounced than in the latter owing to upper part of the peristome becoming slightly more curved and less projecting ; lower part of the columella not so vertical and curved and this condition together with less descending of lower end of the peristome make the aperture roundly-lunate like that of *bascauda*, though not semi-circular as in *munipurensis*.

Type-locality.—Teria Ghat, Assam.

Remarks.—The apertural peculiarities (including those of the lips) of the new var. *teriai* may suggest some affinity with *Rahula bascauda* (Benson), but other essential features of the shell already mentioned above will certainly show its closer approximation to *R. munipurensis* justifying the varietal rank proposed.

Now, we like to add a few words more about the new record of distribution of *R. munipurensis* from the Jaintia Hills of Assam. This interesting species was originally described by Godwin-Austen (1907) from the Manipur Hills, Assam (hence the name *munipurensis*), and on

other records appear to have been made hereafter from any other locality. But while looking into the named collections we found, to our utter surprise, two very beautiful specimens associated with the shells of *R. bascauda* obtained from Jaintia Hills. Though their shape, size and sculpture gave some indications about their close identity with *manipurensis*, we hesitated to treat them as such owing to the absence of any identified specimens of the same in our collection that could be utilised for the sake of comparison. So, we finally decided to send both the shells to Dr. G.L. Wilkins of the British Museum, London, and the expert opinion so kindly given by him has fully confirmed our identification. So, this new record may prove of great value in the distribution of the species concerned. Moreover, the specimens found may form an interesting addition to our collection helping greatly towards future comparison and study.