



**NEW RECORD OF *NERITA (THELIOSTYLA) PATULA*  
RECLUZ 1841 (MOLLUSCA : GASTROPODA) FROM  
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS WITH A  
NOTE ON THE SPECIES**

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Recluz (1841) described the species *Nerita patula* without mentioning its Type-locality. At a later date (1850) he figured the species from a collection from the Philippines. The species was hitherto known from Pacific only and there was no report of this species during the present century. The latest report of this species was by Tryon (1888).

During a Survey of Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 1970 and 1972, the present author collected a few examples of this species. This forms the first record of this species from Indian Ocean region. This species was not recorded by any one in the recent years. Hence it is thought worthwhile to give a complete synonymy, description and other notes on this little known neritid, *Nerita patula* Recluz.

Synonymy: *Nerita patula* Recluz, 1841, *Revue Zool. Soc. Cuvier*. p. 148  
Type - locality: Not mentioned; Recluz, 1850, *J. Conch. Paris*, 1:285, pl. 11, fig. 7; Reeve, 1855, *Conch. Icon.*, 9, *Nerita*, sp. no. 84, pl. XIX, figs. 84 a, b; Sowerby, 1883, *Thes. Conch.*, 5, pl. 11, fig. 23, pl. fig. 58; Von Martens 1887, in Martini & Chemnitz's *Syst. Conch. Cab.*, 2 (11): 52, pl. 9, figs. 8-13; Tryon, 1888, *Man. Conch.*, 10: 22, pl. 3, figs. 53-56.

*Nerita dombeyi* Recluz, 1841, *Revue Zool. Soc. Cuvier.*, p. 149, Type—locality: Bombay; Reeve, 1855, *Conch. Icon.*, 9, *Nerita*, sp. no. 71, pl. XVII, figs. 71 a, b.

*Nerita beaniana* Recluz, 1843, *Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, p. 201; Reeve, 1855, *Conch. Icon.*, 9, *Nerita*, sp. no. 85, pl. XIX, figs. 85a 85d.

*Material examined.*—(1). 1ex., station I - From the upper surface of rocks at splash zone at Chatham, Port Blair, 10 - ii - 1961, coll. A. Daniel. (2) 10 ex., In front of Naval Garrison, Camorta, 25-iii-1970; coll. B. K. Tikader and N. V Subba Rao (2). 12 ex., Bay near Rangchang village, 17 km. south of Port Blair, Andamans, 30-x-1972, coll. K. Reddiah and N. V Subba Rao.

*Description.*—Shell semioval, more or less dilated, a little triangular, whorls 2, spire minute but impressed, apex distinct but not pointed, sculpture consists of 30 to 40 moderately flat, uneven oblique ribs, interstices very narrow, colour uniformly yellowish brown without any bands or spots.

Aperture largely expanded, columella flatly excavated, columellar

callus moderately large, slightly concave, light black coloured with a mixture of pale yellow in the middle, with an oblique fold like structure on the superior side, inner columellar margin concave and toothless, outer margin of outer lip not very much thickened, white, fringed with yellowishgrey, on the inferior side slightly expanded to from a fold, inner margin of outer lip distinctly yellow; with 19 to 20 black and longitudinal elongated teeth of equal size, internal palatal hinge tooth absent.

Operclum externally convex, with numerous granules, grey with whitish nucleus, internally pale yellow.

Radula : Central broader, marginals in the middle serrated.

*Measurements* (in mm.)

	Length	Width	Height of the aperture
Small (Rangachan)	5.35	4.30	2.15
Average (Rangachang)	16.65	12.35	7.45
Large (Chatham)	18.05	12.90	8.05

*Habitat*.—It was found sticking to small stones in the bay near Rangachang, where a small stream was flowing into it.

*Range*.—Andamans to Moluccas and the Philippines.

*Distribution*.—Andamans : Port Blair, Rangachang, Nicobars : Camorta ; INDONESIA : Moluccas, Ternate, Batjan ; PHILIPPINES : Island of Negros, Island of Corrigidor.

*Remarks*.—*Nerita patula* can be easily distinguished from other species by its distinct columellar callus bearing black granules in the middle and longitudinally elongated black teeth on the inner margin of outer lip. The general shape of the shell is almost triangular. In the young forms, the columellar callus and the margin of outer lip are smooth and uniformly yellowish. The first to appear are the black granules on the columellar callus which are seen on shell with 8.8 mm. height. Indications of teeth first appear in a shell 10.7 mm. height, which become more distinct when it is of 12.7 mm. height.

Basing on general shape, nature and colour of columellar callus von Martens (1883) recognised three forms, namely *typical*, *beaniana* Recluz and *dombeyi* Recluz. The collection studied agrees with the typical form.

Though the collection studied exhibited no bands, Reeve (1855) and von Martens (1883) observed the bands on the shell. The former mentioned the colour as purple rose, encircled with black lines and white dotted bands, while the latter noticed 1-3 broad orange red bands.

Reeve (1855) treated *Nerita dombeyi*, *Nerita patula* and *Nerita beaniana* as three separate species. The characters distinguishing these three species are of trivial nature and it is hardly possible to separate them. The general shape of the shell, the nature of ribs, aperture and columellar callus are identical in the the three species.

*Nerita dombeyi* was described by Recluz from the specimens collected by Mr. M. de Dombey on the Bombay coast from where no *Nerita patula* was reported. Von Martens (op. cit.) opined that *N. dombeyi* may be an young form of *N. patula* or at most a local variety. He had rightly merged all the three species.

The material from Krusadai Island, Gulf of Mannar, preserved in the Madras Museum was erroneously ascribed to *Nerita dombeyi* Recluz (Satymurti, 1952) ; it belongs to *Nerita insculpta* Recluz.

#### SUMMARY

*Nerita (Theliostyla) patula* Recluz is recorded for the first time from Indian Ocean. A detailed description and synonymy are given.

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#### REFERENCES

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