# BOOK REVIEWS

*Catalogus Fossilium Austriae* (Ed. W.E. Piller): Bivalvia Band 1/Teil1-3 (in German) By Ortwin Schultz Published by Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, P.O. Box 471, A-1011 Wien, Austria: http://verlag.oeaw.ac.at : Price: 149, 146 & 248 Euros.

It may appear unusual to review a work on Neogene bivalves in the *Journal of Conchology* but I have always believed that we neontologists rarely pay sufficient attention to the fossil record, especially to the Cenozoic and the Neogene in particular. Many modern genera are represented in this fossil record and many genera described from this fossil record are extant today; unfortunately the nomenclatures often fail to recognise this. In my own area of interest, the Arcoidea, I quickly noticed that the Neogene genus *Hoernesarca* was identical to the Recent genus *Noetiella*. In Europe I suspect part of the problem is the inaccessibility of some of the early and seminal works by the likes of Cossmann, Deshayes, Brocchi and Hornes. Here, however, there is no excuse with these three massive volumes on the Neogene bivalves of Austria. Volume 1 (2001) covers Nuculacea to Unionacea in pages 1-379 and 56 plates; Volume 2 (2003) Lucinoidea to Mactroidea runs to page 690 and plate 95 and concludes in Volume 3 (2005), Solenoidea to Clavagelloidea at page 1212 and plate 152. For myself the excellent photographic illustrations give me an immediate idea of the taxa and whether or not they are relevant to the recent faunas, especially to those of the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean. For the palaeontologist there are extensive, synonymy, stratigraphic and locality lists making these volumes a "one stop shop" for data on the Austrian Neogene and very relevant in the wider European context. If the species has also been recorded outside of Austria, then lists of occurrences are also given.

Ortwin Schultz must be congratulated for the compilation of such an extensive catalogue and I for one would also recognise the Natural History Museum, Vienna in promoting this type of monographic project. This is not a "good read" but then it's not meant to be, but as a lasting work of reference it is an excellent contribution. I would have thought it an essential part of any library serving the study of European Cenozoic faunas and in addition I recommend it to bivalve sytematists who often forget the connection between these and modern faunas.

Graham Oliver

*Catalogue of the Marine Gastropod Family Fasciolariidae* by Martin A. Snyder. Academy of Natural Sciences Philadelphia Special Publication 21, 2003, 432pp paperback ISBN 0-910006-57-1. approx £30

*Fasciolariidae* by Daniel Mallard and Alain Robin. Pub. Museum du Coquillages (8 rue du Marechal Leclerc, 85100 Le Sables d'Olonne, France), 2005, 100pp paperback ISBN 2-908752-65-4. approx £20

To review two publications together may seem to be invidious, as comparisons are, naturally, made. However, since these two books on the same subject appeared in quick succession a combined review seems appropriate.

Starting with Snyder's "Catalogue ….."; This is undoubtedly the most comprehensive study of this family ever published, particularly as it covers both recent and fossil species, though it is neither a revisionary monograph nor an illustrated identification guide. After brief introductory sections the book commences with an alphabetical list of Genus/Group taxa. Here for the 131 Genera currently considered as belonging to the family we are given full references to the original description together with details of the type species. Next comes a provisional systematic arrangement of these Genus-Group taxa, this is followed by an alphabetical list of Genera previously assigned to the Fasciolariidae but now removed from the family.

The bulk of the book, some 189 pages, is an alphabetical list of species which are, or have been, placed within the family, covering approximately

5,700 taxa. For each species cited we are given full references to the original description, an indication of how subsequent authors have treated the species, together with details of distribution and for fossil species geological horizon. The layout – use of different typefaces and indentation – clearly helps differentiate at a glance between valid taxa within the Fasciolariidae, and taxa which are currently regarded as synonyms, homonyms, *nomena nuda* or which are no longer regarded as Fasciolarids. For the latter there is a clear indication of their current systematic position.

Since the Catalogue usually, and most helpfully, includes species which have previously been included in Fasciolariidae but which are now removed from the family there is a huge amount of information on non-Fasciolarids, something which is not obvious and might not be expected by the casual reader, but which makes the book a useful shortcut in tracing references far beyond the Fasciolariidae. For example, we are given information for *Melongena morio* (Melongenidae) it having variously been treated *as Fusus* and *Fusinus,* and for *Neptunia Antiqua* (Buccinidae) and 24 varieties thereof it having been treated as *Fusus* by Lamarck. The *Catalogue* also helpfully includes references for previous erroneous citations together with an indication of the correct usage – Thus *Latirus nangasakiensis* (sic) (E.A. Smith) as cited by Paetel is included and noted as an error for *Latirus nagasakiensis* (E.A. Smith) many errors would not be easy to spot without this work.

The book continues with abbreviated lists of species for individual Genera or closely related groups of Genera in the family. For example *Peristernia* with the closely related *Nodopelagia* and *Streptopelma* form one such group of Genera. For each Genus/Group we are given an alphabetical list of species summarizing in one line the main species list entry, and again indicating valid living and fossil species. These lists are easy to use in order to pick out say all recent *Peristernia*, or recent *Peristernia* from the Indian Ocean, or fossil *Peristernia* from Australia or whatever specific combination you are looking for.

A bibliography of some 103 pages completes the book. Full details for each title are given, and again the references are so extensive that the bibliography is useful far beyond the study of the Fasciolariidae. There are very helpful cross references so that, for example, looking up papers by the New Zealand conchologist A.W.B. Powell we are directed to W.O. Cernohorsky's combined biography, bibliography and list of Molluscan taxa described by Powell.

This book brings together a huge amount of information and is invaluable in instantly untangling often complicated nomenclatural problems. However, since the work is not illustrated and does not describe the species, but rather relies on referring to the original description or subsequent authors works, unless one has access to an extensive Molluscan library this will not help in the identification of specimens.

Turning to Mallard and Robin's "Fasciolariidae"; This is undoubtedly aimed more at shell collectors. The book commences with brief introductory sections, bilingual in French and English, including general information on habitats, biology feeding etc and an identification key to Genera – although how useful general collectors will find this given that several steps refer to radula characteristics I'm not sure. A clearly set out classification of the family to subgeneric level prefaces a fifteen page systematic list covering some 400 recent species (no fossils here). For each species, as well as scientific name we are given details of geographic range, average size, synonyms, details of subspecies and 'varieties' and occasional notes or bibliographic references. Though I am surprised to find no comment on the iridescent periostracum of *Latirus iris*, and it would have been helpful had the notes indicated how the subspecies/varieties differ from the nominate forms.

There is a good index giving references to both text and plates and clearly differentiating between species considered valid and synonyms. The bibliography, however, is limited to one and a half pages, and some references are so abbreviated as to be almost useless. For example "*Journal of Conchology* **13** (16) 1911 Melvill" – no page reference, no title, no indication of the subject of the paper. While many key references, even those cited in notes in the systematic list, are missing altogether. This is a pity as there are one and a half blank pages immediately following the bibliography, so it should have been possible to have provided full details and more references within the available space.

The bulk of the book is given to 70 plates illustrating some 340 species. Most species are shown in full colour photographs, although black and white photographs and illustrations taken from older works are used where necessary. Species

are usually shown in both dorsal and ventral views often with additional specimens to show variability. Several juveniles and photographs of living Fasciolarids are also included. Four plates showing non-fasciolarids appear without explanation although they seem to show a selection of species once (or often) described as Fasciolarids but now removed from the family, and additional text to explain these species would have been welcome – though they could equally have been excluded from the book altogether.

This book would have benefited greatly from clearer and more consistant use of scientific names. Within the systematic list subspecies are sometimes given separate entries sometimes simply referred to under the nominate form. Thus there are entries for *Fasciolaria tulipa* and *F. tulipa* ssp *hollisteri* yet *F. tulipa* ssp *scheepmakeri* is simply listed under the entry for *F. tulipa* – which itself should surely be *F. tulipa tulipa* if subspecies are under discussion. There are no ( ) used for authors names anywhere, and the species *Dolicholatirus (Fusilatirus) pauli* has the added note "*Fusilatirus* is a synonym of *Dolicholatirus*" in which case *Fusilatirus* should not have been used as a subgeneric name. It is surprising to find discrepancies between the systematic list and the captions to the plates. For example *Fusinus forceps* in the systematic list with *F. salisburyi* listed as a synonym while the plates show *F. forceps salisburyi* as if this were a subspecies. The systematic list correctly shows *Peristernia reincarnate* Snyder, 2000 yet the plate is captioned *P. reincarnate* Kiener, 1840.

Altogether this is an excellent identification guide, including both many recently described species and others not previously illustrated in a popular work. Some readers may not like the horizontal A4 format, and others will find the print rather small in places, but it will certainly help with the identification of this family.

Considering that there has been no recent monograph of the Fasciolariidae, to have two works published in quick succession is surprising, however these books are all the more welcome given the previous lack of a comprehensive reference. Undoubtedly Snyder's *Catalogue* is the more scientific work and synthesizes a huge amount of information providing a baseline for future workers, moreover the work encompasses both recent and fossil species so will be of use to conchologist and palaeontologist alike. The major drawback of the work is the lack of illustrations. Mallard and Robin's book is a more 'popular' work, it is well, though not fully, illustrated as far as recent species are concerned, but lacks for rigour in systematic nomenclature. In many ways these two books are complimentary in nature, and given their moderate prices it would not be exorbitant to purchase both. Either can be recommended depending on the reader's need for a scientific catalogue or an identification guide while together they throw a welcome light on this all too often underrated family.

Kevin Brown