

## Buchbesprechungen

31. Beesley, P. L., G. J. B. Ross & A. Wells (eds.): *Mollusca: The Southern Synthesis. – Fauna of Australia vol. 5A,B: CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne, Australia, 1998. Part. A xvi + 563 pp. Part B viii + 565-1234 pp. ISBN 0-643-05756*

There are many reasons to regard the phylum Mollusca as a most important component of the earth's biodiversity. Is it possible to compile the contemporary knowledge this group in a single work? In many respects the title in hand reaches this goal. A large number of authorities contribute extensive, up-to-date information spanning subjects from history to modern research methods to form an outstanding, comprehensive work on the phylum.

The volumes begins with a major chapter describing the molluscs in general which is structured into sections like classification, history, morphology, distribution, economic significance and the fossil record. This structure is principally retained when treating lower systematic units, which reach down to the family level. The length of each description decreases according to the systematic rank of the taxon. The (systematic) chapters are written by more than 70 different specialists. Unfortunately, their names are omitted at the chapter headings, so that one has to go back to the contents to find the author. The major chapters are followed by a vast reference list which, all together, include no less than 7700 (!) references, by themselves representing an essential fundus on contemporary literature on molluscs. At the end of the second volume one can find a very helpful glossary of more the 30.000 entries.

As a consequence of the multiple authors, combined with the hierarchical systematic structure, the volumes contain a lot of redundant information and, in places, some inconsistencies (e.g. chapter "Pulmonata": mantle cavity = pulmonary cavity = lung, vs. p. 1039, 1046 subchapter "Family Smeagolidae": "... the lung opens into ... the mantle cavity"). Based on recent publications the work uses a new classification that differs significantly from traditional ones. This may have the potential to become used as a reference for the arrangement of institutional collections. Unfortunately, it is not really consistent with the structure of the text, as for example in the gastropods where traditional groupings like prosobranchs are retained as chapters and overlap the new systematic units. Another point of criticism is that all of the names of taxa, regardless of taxonomic level, are given without author and year. This inconvenience limits the information linked to a taxon, particularly at the species level. The most serious shortcoming, however, is that the work,

despite what is indicated by the title, is not a guide to the molluscan fauna of Australia. Only the general chapter on molluscs offers some information with reference to Australian fauna, specifically when introducing different habitats. However, even here details like species distribution or endemism are treated poorly. Also, this section of the work in particular is somewhat confusingly structured with identical habitats described in several different places (e.g. "Mollusca on Land" by C. Little, p. 55-59 vs. "The terrestrial Molluscan Fauna" by A. Solem, p. 86-88; "Estuaries" by C. H. Peterson & F. E. Wells, p. 40-44 vs. "Estuaries" by W. F. Ponder & F. E. Wells, p. 79-80). As a concession to Australia taxa without members in that continent, like some deep sea gastropods, were omitted. This appears poorly considered as the number of omitted groups is low enough that it would have taken little additional effort to get a truly complete description of the world's molluscs.

Nevertheless, all of the above listed shortcomings are practically negligible compared with the overall scientific value of the volumes. To date, the work represents the most comprehensive review of what is currently written on Molluscan morphology, systematics and anatomy in general. Although the non-specialist may hesitate to purchase it because of the relatively high price and scientific contents, the volumes should not be missing from any institutional library.

B. Ruthensteiner

32. Größer, D.: *Wandelnde Blätter, Ein Katalog aller bisher beschriebenen Phylliinae-Arten und deren Eier mit drei Neubeschreibungen. – Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt/M., 2001, 119 S., 132 überw. farbige Abb., ISBN 3-930612-45-1.*

Die letzte umfangreichere Arbeit über die Unterfamilie Phylliinae umfaßte eine taxonomische Revision der Gattung *Phyllium* (Klante 1976). Aus diesem Grunde ist es sehr erfreulich, nun eine Zusammenfassung von vielen Einzelarbeiten vorliegen zu haben. Diese Arbeit umfaßt die Gattungen *Chitoniscus* (5 Arten), *Microphyllium* (1 Art), *Nanophyllium* (1 Art) und *Phyllium* (28 Arten). Nach einer Einleitung mit der allgemeinen Morphologie und Lebensweise folgt der spezielle systematische Teil. Dieser ist übersichtlich gegliedert und enthält alle wichtigen Informationen, wobei auch die einzelnen Arten mit ihren Synonymen aufgelistet werden. Es ist ein Katalog, der auch bei allen Liebhabern und Züchtern dieser wunderschönen Tiere vorhanden sein sollte.

T. Kothe

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