

**Spiricella unguiculus Rang, 1827 (Gastropoda, Euthyneura: Umbraculidae)
in the Mediterranean**

F. CARROZZA

Villa Il Poggio, I-56030 Soiana (Pisa), Italy

& R. ROCCHINI

Via Don Bosco 15, I-51100 Pistoia, Italy

Shells of *Spiricella unguiculus* are reported from two localities in the Mediterranean, viz. (1) Italy, Tuscan coast south of Livorno, and (2) Tunisia, island of Djerba. At each locality only a single fresh shell was found. *S. unguiculus*, originally described from Miocene deposits, has only recently been recorded as an extant species from southern Portugal, Algarve (Hoeksema & Janssen, 1984).

Key words: Gastropoda, Opisthobranchia, Umbraculidae, *Spiricella unguiculus*, distribution, Mediterranean, Italy, Tunisia.

Following the publication of the finding of a dead but apparently Recent specimen of *Spiricella unguiculus* Rang, 1827, on the southern Atlantic coast of Portugal by Hoeksema & Janssen (1984), the present authors now report that two more Recent shells of this species have been found, both along the coasts of the Mediterranean. One specimen (fig. 1) was obtained in the bay of Baratti, south of Livorno (Italy), by dredging on a muddy bottom at a depth of about 30 m; this shell measures 4.0 × 1.8 mm. The second specimen (fig. 2) was collected on the coast of the island of Djerba in Tunisia; this shell measures 2.2 × 1.0 mm. The two shells have been collected without the animals or the periostracum, but in excellent condition. The shells are largely transparent, exhibiting a vague pearly sheen around the ventral margin. All this leads us to believe that these shells may be considered Recent specimens.

This somewhat obscure species, almost unknown in modern literature, has been brought to the attention of malacologists by the two Dutch authors. They stated that their Portuguese specimen at that time seemed to be the only Recent shell of the species in existence in collections. Obviously *S. unguiculus* is a rare species, the Mediterranean specimens only being the second and third Recent shells known.

Although nothing can be added to the description of the shell by Hoeksema & Janssen, we have noted that the depression separating the two lobes originally forming the shell, is more marked in our specimens than in those figured by the Dutch authors. This is particularly the case in the smaller and younger specimen from Tunisia. Hoeksema & Janssen (1984: 9) describe this as follows: "From the growth lines close to the protoconch it can be seen that initially the teleoconch developed as two lobes separated by an interruption which in a somewhat later stage was closed with shell material. In the full-grown shell this separation is visible as a clear depression, sloping from the apex to the left part of the posterior margin."

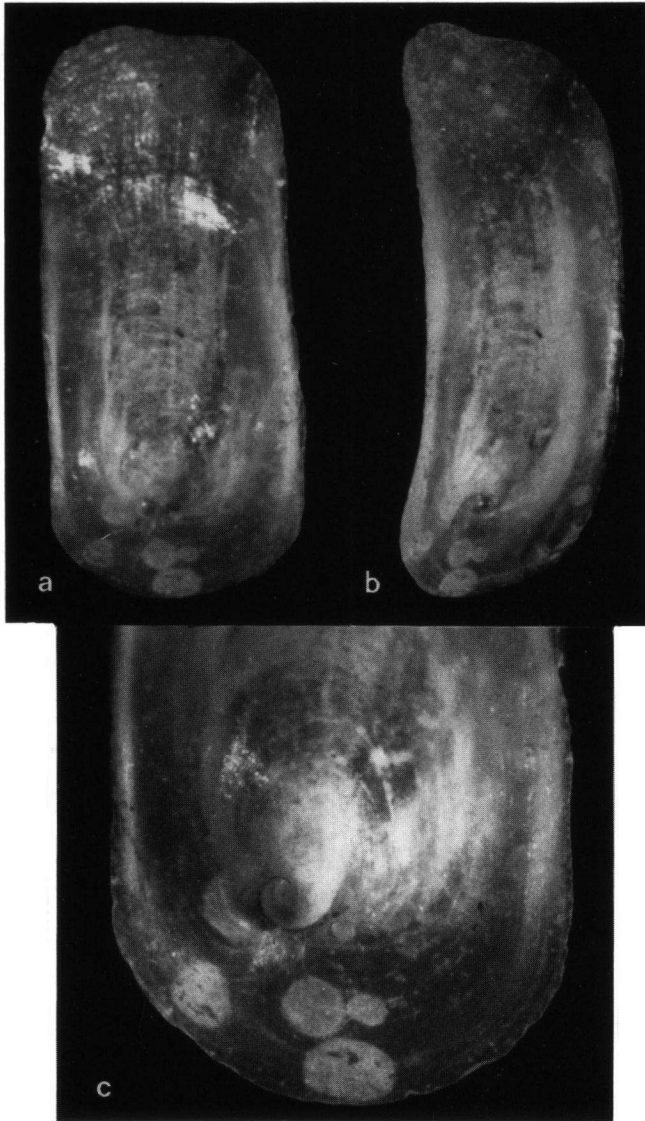


Fig. 1. *Spiricella unguiculus* Rang. Italy, Tuscan coast S. of Livorno, bay of Baratti, muddy bottom at a depth of c. 30 m. Actual length 4.0 mm. a, dorsal view; b, oblique-lateral view; c, detail of the protoconch. Specimen in R. Rocchini colln., Pistoia.

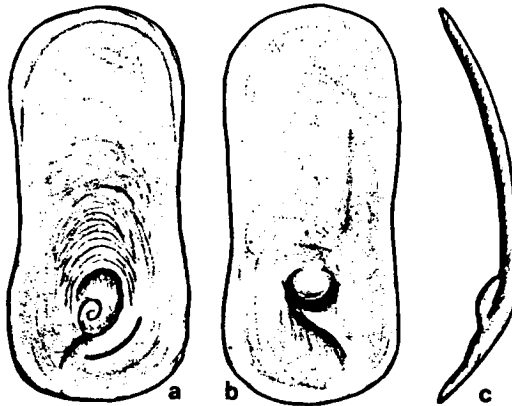


Fig. 2. *Spiricella unguiculus* Rang. Tunisia, island of Djerba. Actual length 2.2 mm. a, dorsal view; b, ventral view; c, lateral view. Specimen in F. Carrozza colln., Soiana (Pisa).

Nothing is known about form, colour, etc. of the animal; only the capture of a living animal would permit a thorough study so that the species can be properly classified. For the time being we concur with Hoeksema & Janssen in placing *S. unguiculus* in the opisthobranch family Umbraculidae.

Acknowledgements are due to Dr. J. Christiaens (Hasselt) for assistance and bibliographic research; the second author is responsible for the photographs and drawings.

REFERENCES

- HOEKSEMA, D.F., & A.W. JANSSEN, 1984. Rediscovery of the marine gastropod *Spiricella unguiculus* Rang, 1827 (Euthyneura, Umbraculidae) in Miocene deposits of the North Sea Basin and in the Recent fauna of South West Europe. — *Basteria* 48: 7-11.
- RANG [P.S.] & C. DES MOULINS, 1827. Description de trois genres nouveaux de coquilles fossiles du terrain tertiaire de Bordeaux, savoir: *Spiricella*, par M. Rang, correspondant; *Gratelupia* et *Jouanetia*, par M. Charles des Moulins, président. — *Bull. Hist. nat. Soc. linn. Bordeaux* 2: 226-255.