

**Studies on West Indian marine molluscs 17.**  
***Aesopus obesus* (Hinds), the correct name for “*A. metcalfei* (Reeve)” auctt.**  
**(Gastropoda Prosobranchia: Columbelloidea)<sup>1</sup>**

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The name *Aesopus metcalfei* (= *Terebra metcalfei* Reeve, 1860) appears to be used for *A. obesus* (Hinds, 1844), a West Indian columbellid. Apart from being a junior synonym, no type material could be traced, which leaves the interpretation open to doubt.

Key words: Gastropoda, Prosobranchia, Columbelloidea, Terebridae, *Aesopus*, *Anachis*, *Terebra*, nomenclature, West Indies.

In August 1988 I had the opportunity to study the holotype (no. 1968250) of *Terebra obesa* Hinds, 1844, in the British Museum (Natural History), London. Immediately it became apparent that this name represents a West Indian member of the columbellid genus *Aesopus* Gould, 1860 (type *A. japonicus* Gould, 1860). For this taxon the name “*Aesopus metcalfei* (Reeve, 1860)” is sometimes used. However, type material of *Terebra metcalfei* could not be traced in the above museum, leaving some doubt as to its identity (see also Bratcher & Cernohorsky, 1987: 30). Moreover, as the latter (younger) name cannot be regarded as widely used and firmly established in zoological nomenclature (see International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, 1985, article 79(2) for criteria), it should no longer be used as the valid name for a West Indian columbellid. It has to be replaced by *Aesopus obesus* (Hinds, 1844).

The name *Aesopus obesus* should not be confused with *Anachis obesa* (C.B. Adams, 1845), an entirely different West Indian taxon of Columbelloidea.

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<sup>1</sup> The paper by Moolenbeek & Faber in *Basteria* 53: 77-80, 1989, is to be considered no. 16 in this series.