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Book review

B. Landau, R. Marquet & M. Grigis

The Early Pliocene Gastropoda (Mollusca) of Estepona, southern Spain. Part 1: Vetigastropoda

John W.M. Jagt
Natuurhistorisch Museum Maastricht, de Bosquetplein 6, NL-6211 KJ Maastricht, the Netherlands;
e-mail: john.jagt@maastricht.nl

Landau, B., Marquet, R. & Grigis, M., 2003. The Early Pliocene Gastropoda (Mollusca) of Estepona, southern Spain. Part 1: Vetigastropoda. *Palaeontos* 3, ii + 1-87, 2 figures, 2 tables, 19 plates. Palaeo Publishing and Library vzw, ISSN 1377-4654, 35 €. The book may be purchased at http://www.palaeontos.be/

With number 3 of the monograph series *Palaeontos* out now, it is good to see that the editors have been able to maintain the high standard of illustration. One issue per annum is not bad for a journal that has just made its way into the world, not bad at all.

The focus in the present issue is on the rich gastropod faunas from Lower Pliocene deposits in southern Spain (province of Málaga, Estepona area), previously covered in smaller contributions, including those in *Contributions to Tertiary and Quaternary Geology* and *Cainozoic Research*, as well as in faunal lists without illustrations. Part 1 is devoted entirely to the order Vetigastropoda, as indicated on the title page. However, this is slightly misleading since the volume also covers representatives of the families Patellidae, Acmaeidae, Cocculinidae, Lepetellidae, Addisoniidae and Pseudocculinidae. These, now, are assigned to the orders Patellogastropoda and Cocculiniformia!

A total of seventy-nine (sub)species of gastropod, most of them firstly recorded from the area, are discussed and illustrated. Of these, six are described as new, namely *Haliotis iberica*, *Agariste juliencilisi*, *Bolma baccata mariachristinae*, *Jujubinus annamarieae*, *Gibbula spadinii* and *Solariella wareni*. One taxon is renamed, *Microgaza seguenzae*. Note that this should have been spelt *seguenzi* – after all, the species is named after Giuseppe Seguenza.

For all taxa, the authors update the taxonomy and provide the most important synonyms. It is so good to see the original paper referred to in all cases; there is just one case (on p. 37) where the 'sp. n.' of the original publication is listed as well – this must have slipped through. Descriptions are detailed, as are discussions which list similarities to and/or differences from congeners and/or other taxa. Where possible, data on protoconch structure are supplied. And all descriptions are 'backed up' by beautiful illustrations. The smaller taxa in particular are shown in photomicrographs, and for many species particular features of ornament are highlighted, so that identification of your own material should be a piece of cake. In addition, current knowledge of geographic and stratigraphic distribution of all taxa concerned is outlined, inclusive of reference to pertinent literature sources. All type material is deposited in the collections of the Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique (Brussels). But: what about all these specimens that are in the authors' collections? There is definitely room for improvement in this respect – all material illustrated in scientific papers should be placed in public collections. I think we can all agree on that.

As the authors rightly claim, these are the most diverse assemblages to have been recorded from outside Italy. This diversity reflects the occurrence of numerous types of facies, documenting all possible settings, ranging from nearshore to deeper water, in a small area. The faunal composition also is a function of the geographical position of the Málaga area, close to the Strait of Gibraltar, thus combining elements of Atlantic (both cold [North Atlantic] and warm [West Africa] water) and Mediterranean origins. What I found most interesting is the occurrence of a small Miocene relict fauna, suggesting the Málaga area to have been some sort of refugium during

the Early Pliocene. This, and the rather cursory mention (p. 72) that of the Eogastropoda from Estepona, 37.5% constitute extinct species, will hopefully be discussed in more detail in future parts in the series. The distribution table, listing all species according to localities and stratigraphic levels, also notes the numbers of specimens collected and thus appears very useful in future analyses. Of the items of literature consulted for the present work it is of note that these also include works covering faunas from the North Sea Basin.

In short: make sure to have a copy in your library – it's a good buy.

N.B. Later in the same year, part 2 of this series came out (Landau, B., Marquet, R. & Grigis, M., 2003. The Early Pliocene Gastropoda (Mollusca) of Estepona, southern Spain. Part 2: Orthogastropoda, Neotaenioglossa, 109 pp., 52 €. *Palaeontos* 4), while in the following year, three papers on Estepona molluscs appeared in *Palaeontos* 5 (2004) (60 €). These issues may be purchased at http://www.palaeontos.be/