

# B A S T E R I A

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## Note on *Helix balearica* var. *violacea* Rossmuessler

by

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This form was described by ROSSMAESSLER (1854, p. 10, pl. 63 fig. 796) after a few specimens found among „*Helix alonensis*” [*Iberus alonensis* (Fér.)] sold by a saleswoman in Granada. As far as I could ascertain no further records exist and its true habitat has always been unknown. It was considered a variety of *Helix marmorata* Fér. by TRYON (1888, p. 147) and PILSBRY (1894, p. 325). FERUSSAC's species belongs to the genus *Iberus* according to HESSE's anatomical investigations (1915, p. 55, pl. 638 figs. 12-15). ROSSMAESSLER's var. *violacea* is not mentioned by Mrs. GARCIA SAN NICOLAS (1957) in her detailed monograph of the genus *Iberus*.

In April 1960 I found some living specimens of the „var. *violacea*” on the southern slope of the valley of the Darro, opposite the Abadía Monte Cristo, near Granada. The specimens were hiding in shallow crevices of the hard rock.

Conchologically ROSSMAESSLER's form is indeed very near *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.), but the shell reaches larger dimensions and is generally more depressed. The measurements, however, overlap as appears from a comparison of some of the specimens taken near Granada with those of a series of *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.) from Gibraltar and San Anton (about 4 km North of Malaga) in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie. The following measurements in mm are of full-grown shells.

<i>Iberus marmoratus</i>			var. <i>violacea</i>		
height	width	locality	height	width	locality
14	22	Gibraltar	17	26	Darro valley
14	20	San Anton	14	25	idem
13	21	idem	14	22	idem
11	19	idem	13	23	idem
11	18	idem			
12	17	idem			

Dissection of two specimens from the Darro valley showed that in both the length of the diverticulum of the receptaculum seminis was  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times as long as its duct measured from its division to the receptaculum. According to both HESSE and Mrs GARCIA SAN NICOLAS this diverticulum is twice as long as the corresponding part of the duct in *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.). I could not find the „conducto accessorio de la bolsa del dardo” which Mrs. GARCIA SAN NICOLAS discovered in the species of *Iberus* she studied.

The relative length of the diverticulum appears to be an anatomical character distinguishing the „var. *violacea*” from the true *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.). Whether ROSSMAESSLER's form is considered a subspecies replacing the typical form of *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.) in the province of Granada, or given specific status, seems to be a matter of taste. The specimens I took in the Darro valley have been deposited in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie and labelled „*Iberus marmoratus violaceus* (Rossm.)”.

#### REFERENCES

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- PILSBRY, H. A., 1894 Manual of Conchology (2), vol. 9.
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#### SAMENVATTING

*Helix balearica* var. *violacea* Rossmäessler, beschreven naar exemplaren die van een koopvrouw in Granada waren gekocht, bleek voor te komen op de zuidelijke helling van het Darro-dal bij die stad. Conchologisch staat deze vorm zeer dicht bij *Iberus marmoratus* (Fér.) maar hij is daarvan door een anatomisch detail te onderscheiden.