

Book review

S. VAN DER SPOEL, 1976. *Pseudothecosomata, Gymnosomata and Heteropoda (Gastropoda)*. Bohn, Scheltema & Holkema, Utrecht, 484 pp., 246 figs., some unnumbered figs. and graphs. Price (hard cover) US \$ 60.00.

Within a time span of ten years Van der Spoel has succeeded in completing and seeing through the press a second volume of his series on planktonic molluscs. The first volume appeared in 1967 and is entitled "Euthecosomata, a group with remarkable developmental stages" (for review see *Basteria* 32: 47-48, 1968). This volume was favourably received and has since been widely used. Now the author has tackled the difficult *Pseudothecosomata, Gymnosomata and Heteropoda* with the same thoroughness and zeal as the *Euthecosomata*. The volume consists of seven parts, viz., Introduction (14 pp.), Taxonomy (146 pp.), Distribution (18 pp.), Type material (28 pp.), followed by two appendices (distribution maps, keys with figures, together 21 pp.), an annotated list of references (83 pp.), and the 246 figures (166 figs. and 81 maps, together 166 pp.).

In general set-up both volumes are entirely comparable; both will be reference books of great value for many years to come. Van der Spoel's beautifully illustrated and detailed treatment of the taxa reflects a thorough training in taxonomy. The complete literature has been evaluated in addition to studies of a profuse material. Van der Spoel is a gifted artist as shown by his exquisite drawings. Particular features of the second volume are, (1) the Additions to the *Euthecosomata* (pp. 48-61, bringing the 1967 volume up to date), (2) the lists of type material (pp. 187-214, giving details of types, their whereabouts, etc., also for the *Euthecosomata*), (3) the most valuable distribution and diversity diagrams (pp. 216-220, also for the *Euthecosomata*), and (4) the new keys for the identification of all *Pteropoda* and *Heteropoda* (pp. 221-235; these will enable even comparative laymen such as oceanographers to get fairly reliable identifications quickly).

Van der Spoel's second volume to me seems somewhat more mature than his first; his drawing techniques, while already of a very high standard in the 1967 volume, if anything have even improved. The 1976 volume is not as detailed as regards anatomy and reproduction as the first one; the introduction to the present book announces a separate volume to deal with the biology of planktonic molluscs. The author may eventually also tackle the fossil pteropods and heteropods.

The reviewer is not altogether happy to find the indices scattered throughout the book (pp. 122 and 166, referring back to systematic indices on pp. 16 and 21 respectively); in using the book the system is rather cumbersome. All non-Anglo-Saxon scientists using English as a twentieth-century Latin are bound to make mistakes — expressing one's thoughts and ideas in a foreign language is even more difficult than doing so in one's own. However, the reviewer feels that there are cases, such as "desected" for "dissected" (e.g., on pp. 355 and 361), that should have been avoided.

To sum up: a beautifully produced and illustrated, most valuable, treatise enabling one to come to grips with a difficult group of planktonic snails. It is a must not only for anyone possessing and working with the 1967 volume, but also for all oceanographers, marine biogeographers and molluscan taxonomists. New volumes in this series are awaited with interest.

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