

European marine Mollusca: notes on less well-known species  
VI. *Cerithidium submammillatum* (Rayneval & Ponzi, 1854)

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In 1856 Jeffreys (1856: 184, pl. 2 fig. 10, 11) published a new species *Turritella ? pusilla*. Later on Monterosato (1878: 98) considered it identical with the fossil *Cerithium submammillata* (Rayneval & Ponzi, 1854) and still later made it the type of his new genus *Cerithidium* (Monterosato, 1884: 123). Although Monterosato as well as Jeffreys himself indicate that the species is by no means rare and mention it from a number of different places (dredgings) from the Mediterranean area, this *Bittium*-like species is still not well known. As we have not seen any material of the fossil species we accept the identity on the basis of Monterosato's statement, which is also corroborated by the study of Cerulli-Irelli (1912: 338-340).

Being interested in the recent species, we studied the syntypes of Jeffreys [British Museum (Natural History) 56.5.19.224, as mentioned by Warén (1980: 26) and BM 56.2.18.11 (not mentioned by Warén)], as well as some other samples [Porcupine Expedition 1870: Rasel Amoush (off Tunisia); Adventure Bank] in the London museum. All samples proved to be the same species, which is apparently very true to form. As the original description is not readily available, we cite it here:

"*Turritella ? pusilla* n.s. - Testa turrita, lutea fusca, solidula; anfractibus 12, convexiusculis, interdum varicosis, plicis 8 longitudinalibus (quarum 3 mediae prominentiores) costellisque transversis (in ultimo anfracto 8, in penultimo 5) decussatis, in superioribus anfractibus nodulis efformatis; sutura profunda; apertura ovatorhomboida, subeffusa, sextam spirae aequante; long. 1/5, lat. 1/18 unciae.

In about twelve fathoms, Gulf of Spezia; not common. It has somewhat the habit of a *Cerithium*, but differs in its shorter spire, and, above all, in the form of its aperture."

Monterosato (1875 and later) also mentions a variety *ecostata* (without description) and indeed we did obtain several specimens without any axial ribs from Franqui (South of France, Van Aartsen colln. no 12722). We did not see any original specimens of this variety, however.

From the Atlantic coast of Portugal (Alvor) one of us obtained some shell-grit (don. H.P.M.G. Menkhorst) that contained quite a number of specimens of a special colour pattern, viz. with dark-brown top whorls, whereas the rest of the shells are yellowish-white. Most specimens do not show any trace of axial ribs or varices. An occasional specimen does show varices however. It seems quite possible that this form is identical

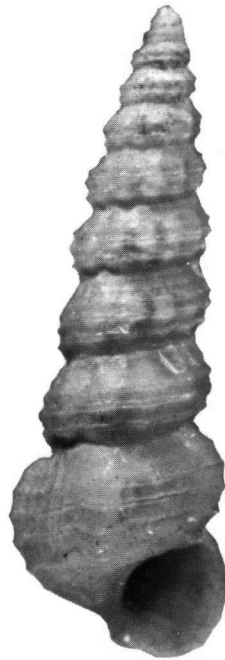


Fig. 1. *Cerithidium submammillatum* (Rayneval & Ponzi, 1854), x 20. Syntype of *Turritella pusilla* Jeffreys, 1856, British Museum (Natural History) 56.2.18.11.

with *Mesalia pulchella* Pallary, 1901, as it corresponds exactly with the description by Pallary (1902: 16) as well as with the figures given. As Dr. Ph. Bouchet, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, informed us (in litt.) that the syntypes of this species could not be found in the Paris museum, a direct comparison was not possible. This identity seems the more likely, however, as Pallary himself later on (1920: 47) suggests possible identity of his *Mesalia pulchella* with "*Cerithium pusillum*, Jeffreys". We suggest the Alvor specimens should be called *Cerithidium submammillatum* var. *pulchella*. This variety is also found at Algeciras (Spain).

The species in question can always be distinguished from *Bittium reticulatum* (Da Costa) s.l. and related forms by the absence of a real siphonal canal (probably the reason why Jeffreys described it originally as *Turritella* ? and later on changed that generic placement to *Mesalia* ?), by its rather convex whorls which show 5 spirals on the later ones, by the frequent occurrence of varices and by the difference in embryonic whorls. As to this point it should be mentioned that Richter & Thorson (1975: 129, pl. 4 fig. 20, 21) give a detailed description as well as a very fine picture of the protoconch of *Cerithidium submammillatum* under the erroneous name of *Bittium jadertinum* Brusina, 1865. We have been able to check this on the original material, for which we thank Dr. G. Richter, who placed it most kindly at our disposal.

The absence of a real siphonal canal is the main reason for the erection of the genus *Cerithidium* by Monterosato. Many specimens however, do have damaged apertures as have many specimens of *Bittium*. In such cases the distinction between the two genera (and species) is not always evident.

A reasonably correct figure is given by Thiele (1929: 209, fig. 210) s.n. *Cerithidium pusillum* (Jeffreys). However, the description by Thiele does not mention the very characteristic varices.

Although the species in question is not very rare and apart from the literature is also known from different samples of recently dredged material (Western Mediterranean, but also off the island of Kastos and from Haifa Bay) from circalittoral depths (Van Aartsen colln.), a good recent figure does not seem to exist and we, therefore, give one of a syntype of Jeffreys [British Museum (Natural History) 56.2.18.11].

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