

Book review

GAVETTI, Elena, Stefano BIRINDELLI, Marco BODON & Giuseppe MANGANELLI, 2008. Molluschi terrestri e d'acqua dolce della Valle di Susa. Monografie XLIV, pp. 273, 177 figs, 159 distribution maps. In Italian. Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali, Via Giolitti 36, I-10123 Torino, Italy. Price € 50 + postage. Can be ordered at the postal address, or by e-mail: anna.grassini@regione.piemonte.it.

A book may be bought because it is supposed to be interesting or more simply because it is beautiful and far superior to the computer screen. Gavetti and co-authors produced a hardcover book that combines both aspects.

This is a book in Italian, dealing with the molluscan fauna of only a single valley in the eastern Alps, in the Piemonte region. The area is not really popular with malacologists. Therefore, this publication is a real surprise.

The authors report 159 non-marine molluscan species, 146 of which are gastropods and 13 bivalves. The nomenclature is up to date as far as this may be applicable. Maybe *Radix peregra* has to be called *R. labiata*, and I wonder whether there is only a single *Euconulus* species in the valley, but in *Radix* and especially *Euconulus*, the systematics are still rather misty anyway. For all the species there are short notes on their habitat in the valley, the general distribution and observations.

All figures are in colour. The species are illustrated with good photographs of either live animals, or shells in front view. As a consequence, readers that are less experienced might not be able to distinguish species like *Clausilia cruciata*, *Macrogastra plicatula*, *Clausilia dubia* and *Macrogastra mellae*, or even *Cochlodina laminata* and *Charpentieria dyodon*, with this book. The same applies to the slugs, which are illustrated without a reference to anatomical details. For the ten *Pisidium* species that occur in the valley, beautiful photographs of only the outside of the shells are presented. Thus, in many cases the species should in fact be known in advance. For the *Vertigo*, *Columella* and *Truncatellina* species, the classical, front view shell figures are given, which enable a comparison and identification.

For every species a distribution map for the Valle di Susa is given, also nicely coloured, what makes the book extra attractive. Records from before 1980 can be distinguished from more recent records by different symbols. In an appendix all the localities are listed, with a short ecological characterization and the 1 km UTM code.

I'm afraid that this will prove to be a book for the happy few, for those who do not need identification keys because they already know most of the species that are dealt with. They will be really happy however, with this valuable contribution to the non-marine molluscan biogeography and ecology.

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