

On the status of *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998)

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Abstract

It is proposed that the species name *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998) should be used for this rare and elusive species. The recently re-established name *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971 by Buzzurro, Nofroni and Tringali (2001) for this species is to be considered a *nomen dubium*.

Riassunto

Considerazioni sulla validità di *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998). Si propone che *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998) sia il nome da utilizzare per questa specie rara ed elusiva. Il taxon *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971, recentemente riabilitato per questa specie da Buzzurro, Nofroni e Tringali (2001) è da considerarsi *nomen dubium*.

Key words

Gastropoda, Recent, Pyramidellidae, *Kejdonia cachiai*, valid name, Mediterranean Sea.

Introduction

Recently, Buzzurro *et al.*, (2001: 160) have discussed the taxonomy of *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998) and placed it in synonymy with *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971. However, they retained the genus *Kejdonia* for the species, arguing that *Saccoina* Dall & Bartsch, 1904 had a different heterostrophic protoconch. Oberling never figured the species, which was described from a single incomplete specimen, and the type material is absent in his collection at the Natural History Museum of Berne (Buzzurro *et al.*, 2001). Aim of this paper is the re-assessment of the status of *Kejdonia cachiai*.

Discussion and conclusion

Notwithstanding the rather similar description of *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971 and *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998), the previous taxon should be regarded as a *nomen dubium*. The reasons for this, apart from the fact that the species was described from a damaged specimen ("*Le cinq premieres tours...*") and that no figures or type material from Oberling exist, are that:

1) There is a discrepancy in the number of spiral and axial ribbing between these two taxa, 22-40 spirals and 12-20 axial ribs in *S. galatensis* (original description), 10-20 spirals and 30-35 axial ribs in *K. cachiai*.

2) In the knowledge that many species of the very small Mediterranean Pyramidellidae can only be separated in many cases by the angle of tilt of the protoconch, the inclination angles of the nucleus of the protoconch are different, 80° for *S. galatensis* and 135° for *K. cachiai*. In fact Oberling clearly placed his specimen in *Saccoina*, a subgenus of *Ebala* Leach in Gray, 1847 (= *Anisocycla* Monterosato, 1880), because he compared the similar type of protoconch, which, in *Saccoina* is rather inflated and loosely coiled, and not because of the shell morphology.

3) Reinstating names for species with "probable similar descriptions" alone has led to a long list of synonyms for these small Pyramidellidae species in the past.

4) Since there could be doubt that Oberling's specimen could even have been a juvenile Recent or fossil Pyramidellidae species such as *Turbonilla fulgidula* (Jeffreys, 1884) and *T. rufa* (Philippi, 1836) or a fresh juvenile specimen of *Careliopsis modesta* (Folin, 1870) and even some species of Aclididae and small species of Epitonidae which have indeed similar morphologies as also suggested by Buzzurro *et al.*, 2001.

5) Because of the ever increasing number of Lessepsian species from various families and especially of Pyramidellidae of Indo-Pacific origin being discovered and which were introduced into the Eastern Mediterranean (type locality of *S. galatensis*) since the opening of the Suez Canal, and therefore other similar rare congeneric species could exist. In fact Aartsen J.J. van (2002) has recently introduced a new species of *Graphis* from the Eastern Mediterranean with a different protoconch and sculpture from that of *G. albida*.

6) The fact that most of the species described by Oberling cannot be identified from his descriptions (Buzzurro *et al.*, 2001).

Conclusions

Due to all of the above facts, the species name *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971 does not completely fulfill the ICZN Recommendations of Article 73. Therefore for the sake of stability of the nomenclature it is proposed to retain the name *Kejdonia cachiai* (Mifsud, 1998) for this rare species. *Saccoina galatensis* Oberling, 1971 should be regarded as a *nomen dubium*.

Incidentally *Saccoina* Dall & Bartsch, 1904 is also a homonym of *Saccoina*, a Phylum name in the Kingdom Protista.

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