



Conchology

Guido T. Poppe & Philippe Poppe - Since 1994

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NEWSLETTER: DATABASE MANAGEMENT IN LOCKDOWN AND OTHER TOPICS

Dear Conchologists,

Above, one of our 90cm+ Karashigoi eating his breakfast from the hand of Sheila, in times of lockdown. This type of gigantic fish is a mixture of the yellow Higo koi and the originally brown Chagoi. From the Higo he gets the amazing colors, here called the "Sakai mustard Karashigoi" reputedly the most beautiful on the planet. From the Chagoi, these fish get their nice and friendly character: they are easy to tame and they like people. Some grow to over 120 cm... hopefully we are lucky with our couple, possibly they go for one meter as they eat a lot with great pleasure.

In Conchology we started our isolation earlier than the rest of the country, and by now almost one month I spend daily 10 hours in the gigantic databases of Conchology, Inc. It concerns more than a stunning 1.6 million records with photos.

Since about 10 years, scientists started changing considerably the systematics, which is confusing for everybody. There are several reasons for that, but the appearance of easy techniques to study the genetics and the molecular relationships between species are not alien to that. The matter of changing systematics, validity of species, subspecies, creations of new names and the like is a complex and challenging subject. However, we trust that the end results of all this "noise" in our field will have better results than with what we had before.

In the time being we are stuck with the changes. Some species I changed 4 times from family in our databases and the creativity went up so high that we now end with more than 700 different molluscan families at present.

A brief refreshing of the memory and the importance of all this. Most of the larger collections are arranged following the systematic composition of the animal

groups they harbor. Therefore, books listing all systematics and the order of the families, followed by curators, were and are still very important.

THIELE

Most of us started with the books of "Thiele", which date back to the 1930's and this systematic overview was published in two Volumes. There were reprints of these Volumes and the books are still useful today for the descriptions of the genera and the figures they host. Easy to find on the secondhand book market, as well as new reprints.

WENZ (and Zilch)

Written in the WWII, better than Thiele, and better illustrated. Unfortunately, the stock was in Stuttgart when printed in wartime. Zilch took 10 copies to Leipzig, expecting the worst for Stuttgart, and he was right. The main stock of the magnificent books was destroyed during the bombing of Stuttgart. Klaus Groh has an original of the 10 first printings in his library. Museums photographed the books page by page and worked with the photographs for decades, until in the 1960's reprints appeared. These reprints are truly expensive but still available. Very useful.

VAUGHT

Later, after a few decades, the WENZ was also outdated, and so many new things were described that Vaught made a "listing" of the new systematics. It was used until very recently.

THE INTERNET appeared and now the norm is set by **WORMS** and **MOLLUSCABASE**. Both databases are handled by organizations in Belgium, under the guidance and leadership of the best professionals on the planet, with gigantic knowledge. They do their best to make these databases constantly updated. Among the leaders there are BOUCHET and ROSENBERG, but there are many other valuable collaborators, you learn on them on the respective homepages.

These databases need some training to use, they are not so easy for the newcomer, but after a few hours one gets used and in a few days you can learn the refinements of the systems. We advise WORMS for marine mollusks, MOLLUSCABASE for land and freshwaters. But both overlap each other almost completely.

My job of the last month was to adapt the 1.6 million records of Conchology, Inc. to these databases.

In a very few cases I deviated for the sake of simplicity, of the norm. I guess I will leave TRIDACNIDAE in a separate family and CORALLIOPHILIDAE in a separate family. It has been like that for a century and even the molecular proves they are closely related to other families, for me, they are separate enough in appearance and lifestyles to keep them separate.

For decades we used TROCHIDAE for what has now been split in about a dozen families. The same for TURRIDAE. The simple systematics with a few hundred families from the time of Thiele were easy to memorize, but now it is difficult in most cases to assign a Trochid to the proper

family. So, in this case, we use for the moment "TROCHIDAE - CALLIOSTOMATIDAE" etc.... As time goes, we will drop this system, but first get used to what is in TROCHIDAE proper, in TEGULIDAE, in SOLARIELLIDAE and so on. The same for the TURRIDAE which are still very far from properly handled.

It is said that good systematic experts can handle up to 7 000 to even 10 000 names out of their head. But if 700 are already taken by the family names alone, and another 3000 by the genera, there is little space left for the species level!

The results of the lockdown job here done on Mactan are little but give big satisfaction. In the current affair I had to make a simple list of all the families. We will put this list online, first classified in the classic formal systematic order, but only the superfamilies are given with the families they contain. Secondly, the same list, but all the family names by alphabet.

I strongly advise newcomers to follow the alphabetical order by family name to organize their drawers: they will find back much faster the shells they are looking for than with any other classification.

It will save all of you many days to make a similar list with the means of today, so we hope you can spend more time on the homepage of Conchology, Inc.! To know what goes in which family, you can use the homepage, as quite a substantial part of the molluscan species that were handled on the markets and by people in the last decades are all online in the now reduced Encyclopedia.

Another result is that 42 families have changed name: in most cases families became subfamilies in other families. So, the latest years, we lived a reduction of families after a large expansion in families.

A brief list of the changes is given below, in alphabetical order. Some are nice, most are useful. I regret a few such as the romantic name Baicalidae which makes me dream of lake Baical. But I think the truth is indeed these are Amnicolidae...

CHANGES IN LABEL

ACLIDIDAE are now in EULIMIDAE
BAICALIDAE are now in AMNICOLIDAE
BENEDICTIIDAE are now in LITHOGLYPHIDAE
BULIMINIDAE are now a subfamily in ENIDAE
BUSYCONIDAE are back in BUCCINIDAE
CONDYLOCARDIIDAE are now in CARDITIDAE
CUVIERINIDAE are back in CAVOLINIIDAE
DAUDEBARDIIDAE are now a subfamily in OXYCHILIDAE
ERYCINIDAE are now in LASAEIDAE
HELMINTHOGLYPTIDAE are now in XANTHONYCHIDAE
HELIXARIONIDAE change in HELICARIONIDAE
HUMBOLDTIANIDAE are now a subfamily in XANTHONYCHIDAE
KELLIIDAE are now in LASAEIDAE
LEPIDOCHITONIDAE are now in TONICELLIDAE
LACUNIDAE are now in the LITTORINIDAE
LEPTONIDAE are now in LASAEIDAE
LIAREIDAE are now a subfamily in PUPINIDAE
MANZANELLIDAE is now a fossil family, Huxleyia is now in NUCINELLIDAE
MICROMELANIIDAE are fossils in HYDROBIIDAE
MONADENIIDAE are now a subfamily in XANTHONYCHIDAE
MONTACUTIDAE are now in LASAEIDAE

MUTELIDAE are now IRIDINIDAE
OLIVELLA are back in OLIVIDAE
ORECTOSPIRIDAE divided in different families, ours are now PLESIOTROCHIDAE
PEDIPEDIDAE are now back to ELLOBIIDAE
PETRICOLIDAE is now in VENERIDAE
PISANIANURIDAE are now in LAUBIERINIDAE
PLEIOPTYGMATIDAE are now a subfamily in MITRIDAE
POTAMOPYRGUS have moved from HYDROBIIDAE to TATEIDAE
PRISTOGLOMIDAE? are now SAREPTIDAE
PROTANCYLIDAE are now in PLANORBIDAE
RIMELLIDAE?are back in ROSTELLARIIDAE
SIPHONODONTALIIDAE are now in GADILIDAE
THYROPHORELLIDAE is now a subfamily in ACHATINIDAE
STILIGERIDAE are now LIMAPONTIIDAE
STOMATELLIDAE are now STOMATELLINAE, a subfamily in TROCHIDAE s.s.
SUBULINIDAE are now a subfamily in ACHATINIDAE
SMARAGDINELLIDAE are now HAMINOEIDAE
SYSTROPHIIDAE are now in SCOLODONTIDAE and PYRAMIDELLIDAE
TRICHOTROPIDAE are now CAPULIDAE
VASIDAE are now VASINAE, a subfamily in TURBINELLIDAE
XYLODISCIDAE was a mistake, corrected now in XYLODISCULIDAE

Please check out the Lists of families and the refreshed databases online.
Thanks. We now move to lighter conchological things.

Visit: www.conchology.be

SHELL ARTWORK FROM MR. H. TUNODA AND THE STORY OF AMABIE

Our friend from Tokyo, Chino Mitsuo, send us some nice achievements of one of his compatriots: Mr. Hajime Tunoda, the head of "Zoo made of shell in Hayama, Kanagawa, Japan.



This is AMABIE, a traditional Japanese apparition, exterminating epidemic viruses.

Here the story of Amabie, as written by Chino:

"About 170 years ago, in the Province of Higo (now Kumamoto Prefecture) Kyushu, Japan, a local government official heard rumor among fishermen saying that a mysterious lighting object had appeared.

When he went one night to the sea shore, he saw blueish white lights jumping out of the dark sea. He then found an apparition with very long hair, reaching to his feet, rectangle shaped eyes, beak shaped mouth, fully covered by scales, three-footed. The apparition told him "If epidemic is prevalent, draw my features in pictures quickly and show it to people" then the creature disappeared back to sea."



Another fine artwork of Mr. Tunoda: 4 gentlemen surfing the waves of the Tridacna. Photo courtesy of M. Chino.

SITUATION HERE

To finish a little on the situation in Mactan Island. Yesterday was our first meal at noon without meat. But we got plenty of paella around, but with a little piece of chicken and sausage that Mona could still save. We have enough rice for the next six months, so no worries to have.

Big companies continue to work, all other shops are closed. No boats, no planes, the traffic between Cebu and Mactan Island is very impossible unless you get very special permits, which we do not have.

Still enough stuff in the shops, although some things like meat are difficult now. Over 60 and below 15 are not allowed to go out, so I'm in our small condominium where luckily, I can make a round, which I do twice every night to stay fit.

The virus is "not yet" well developed here, we got 4 cases on Mactan Island, about two dozen people under observation. But we suspect few are tested. The government is doing its best to keep the population inside, but this is not always easy with

Filipinos who are extremely social and not very conscient or understanding in things about bacteria, let alone about viruses.

ABOUT CONCHOLOGY

Conchology, Inc.: Philippe goes alone to the office with a special permit every morning to take care of the current affairs and to answer emails, pay the wages like yesterday, processes the orders, etc...

Few orders came in, but they help to pay the basics such as the rent and the salaries. So, A GREAT THANKS for these people patient enough to wait some weeks until the post office will be busy again.

We have 4 ladies still working constantly at home. We could finish completely two special numbers of Visaya and one normal issue will go to Germany in the coming three days, with 8 articles. So, things advance, slowly but surely. Big advancement and ameliorations on the databases have been made and we can add a list of the families, by systematic and by alphabet, somewhere on the homepage in the coming days. So, for the ones getting bored, you will be able to bring the necessary ameliorations in the systematics of your collections.

Finally, the very good news is that Conchbooks made an exception and published my book on "Oyster Plates." It concerns a 290 pages coffee-table book depicting about 400 oyster plates in big format, full color. All these oyster plates are either Belgian or French, and the big majority are in faience. I sporadically collected oyster plates for the last 15 years and find it a constant pleasure. Few are still made today, and the book glorifies the work of so many potters in Belgium and France who made these many different oyster plates mainly between 1880 and 1950. Oyster plates were popular collectibles in the USA, but the collecting of them in Europe is rather seldom seen.

I just got an email from Carsten that delivery of the book is scheduled 15 May!

Sincerely Yours,

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For Conchology, Inc.

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