

More on *Conus chytreus*

by JOHN K. TUCKER

Recently, I authored a brief paper concerning the identity of *Conus chytreus* Tryon (HSN July 1977:9). This called attention to Arthur Hopwood's paper (J. Conchology, 1920, vol. 16:101) which pointed out the identity of *C. chytreus*. Subsequent authors have either ignored this paper or have not been aware of it.

I also mentioned that *C. lucirensis* Paes-Da Franca is a junior synonym of *C. chytreus*.

A number of European collectors have since suggested that I was in error and that *C. chytreus* is in fact a synonym of *C. figulinus*. Tryon originally described *C. chytreus* as a variety of *C. figulinus*, and Wagner and Abbott (1967, Van Nostrand's Standard Catalog of Shells, 2nd ed.) listed *C. chytreus* as a synonym of *C. figulinus*.

I would hope that the accompanying figure of the holotype of *C. chytreus* (kindly made available by Dr. June Chatfield and published by permission of the National Museum of Wales) will finally lay this problem to rest some fifty-eight years after Hopwood pointed out the true identity of this species. As can be seen, the holotype of *C. chytreus* is in fact the West African species I associated it with and the same species that Paes-Da Franca later described as *C. lucirensis*.



Holotype of *Conus chytreus* Tryon in the Melvill-Tomlin collection, National Museum of Wales, X 2.

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Resignation Sparks Uncertainty Over San Diego Museum

SAN DIEGO — Charges that the San Diego Museum of Natural History is in the midst of staff and policy turmoil were aired recently in the local press. The reports followed disclosure that Dr. Thomas Fritts, curator of reptiles and amphibians, had resigned, effective March 31. Dr. Fritts was said to be the third museum curator to resign in less than a year.

In reporting Dr. Fritts' resignation, the San Diego Union said that the step reflected unhappiness among many museum staff scientists and technicians over museum policies.

The main source of this discontent was said to be a recently instituted "income incentive policy" that puts scientists under pressure to obtain research grants and, allegedly, "provides for salary reductions should they not be effective in obtaining grants."

Museum Director John B. Davis, Jr., Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired), denied this interpretation, declaring, "The only thing I said was that scientists should conscientiously seek grants. Nothing was said about reducing pay. But if a scientist brings in a grant, this will be included in his evaluation, together with other capabilities, in establishing whether he receives a merit pay increase."

The museum's department of malacology suffered serious loss late in 1977 with the death of Dr. George Radwin, curator of marine invertebrates. No replacement has been named. Presently in the status of acting curator is Anthony D'Attilio, who collaborated with Dr. Radwin in producing *Murex Shells of the World*.

Amalda lactea Kuroda, a Problem Ancillid

by

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Ancilla lactea Kuroda, 1960 was based on a single specimen collected on Miyako Island in the Ryukyu group, Southwestern Japan.

It has not been reported subsequently and, indeed, would be unrecognizable from the brief original description, which was unaccompanied by a figure. Through the courtesy of Dr. Masuoki Horikoshi we are able to present photographs of the holotype. Our grateful thanks are also due to Dr. Tokubei Kuroda, custodian of the holotype, and to Kuraji Nagura, who took the photographs.

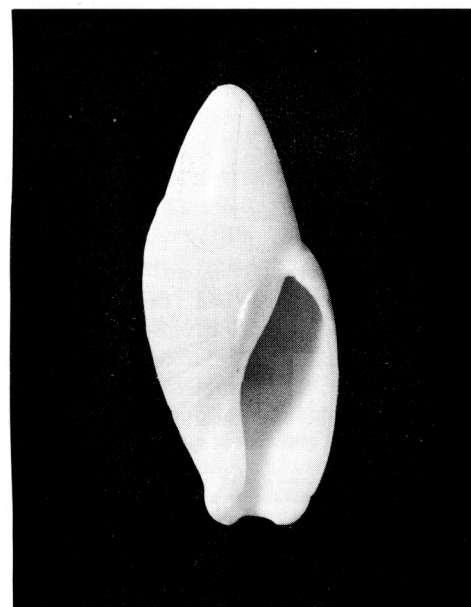


Photo: K. Nagura

Amalda (Baryspira) lactea (Kuroda, 1960). Holotype, T. Kuroda collection. Dimensions 23.4 × 10.6mm.

According to the latest classification of the Ancillinae, *lactea* must be referred to genus *Amalda*, subgenus *Baryspira*. It appears to be very close to the Japanese *Amalda hinomotoensis* (Yokoyama, 1922), but differs in its pure white color and slightly greater breadth, and in the spire callus forming a gently rounded cord where it overlaps the body whorl.

There is also some resemblance to the small form (*okawai* Yokoyama, 1922) of the Japanese *A. albocallosa* (Lischke, 1873). It should be noted that pure white forms occur in several normally brown ancillids, (e.g., *Amalda similis*, *Ancilla albisulcata*, *Anolacia tumida*), and some variation in proportions within a species is normal.

The validity of *Amalda lactea* must certainly be questioned, but actual specimens will be the deciding factor. Can any HMS members help?

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