

### Synonyms

- *Oliva olymptadina* ; Reeve (not Duclos, 1835) 1850
- *Oliva ponderosa* ; Zeigler & Porreca (not Duclos, 1840) 1969
- *Oliva tremulina olymptadina* ; Zeigler & Porreca (not *tremulina* Lamarck, 1811, not *olymptadina* Duclos, 1835) 1969
- *Oliva olymptadina* ; Kaicher (not Duclos, 1835) Card n°5513
- *Oliva pica* ; Petuch & Sargent (not Lamarck, 1811) 1986
- *Oliva pica* colour form *olymptadina* ; Petuch & Sargent (not *pica* Lamarck, 1811, not *olymptadina* Duclos, 1835) 1986
- *Oliva pica* ; Hunon, Hoarau & Robin (not Lamarck, 1811) 2009



*Oliva mascarena* Tursch & Greifeneder, 1966

### *Pica*, *olymptadina* or *mascarena*? History of a controversial name

The best way to identify a shell would be to compare it with the holotype and - or the original description made by its Author. But this correct procedure is rarely possible with the species named throughout the last Century. The holotype often does not exist and in its place sometime there is a not clear drawing. On the other hand the descriptions are only brief notes usually not sufficient to identify surely a species. In far back 1811 Lamarck described a large oliva (about 80mm) where the



**Plate 1.** *Oliva mascarena* Tursch & Greifeneder, 1996. Growth series from West coast of Reunion Is., India Ocean. Size from 44.05mm to 69.15mm.



the white background is overlaid with a brown pattern. White also the aperture, it had a cylindrical shape. He called it *Oliva pica*. There is no further information in Lamarck ( 1822 : 419, sp.n.4) and there is no reference illustration. Few years later, on 1835, Duclos described *Oliva olympiadina*, another large shell.

The 2 syntypes in the National Museum of Natural History, Paris have a size of 74 and 69 mm. One is almost solid ivory-white, the other has a brown pattern over a light background. Their shape is very similar to *Oliva miniacea* Roding, 1798.

In the following years, 1850, Reeve was studying a large series of specimens from Mauritius (Western Indian Ocean). Reeve selected a fine specimen (now in Natural History Museum, London – from the Cuming collection) to illustrate what he believed to be *Oliva olympiadina* Duclos, 1835. Reeve made a mistake giving that name to a large still undescribed *Oliva* species. After that mistake the recent Authors and many collectors used the Lamarck and Duclos' names in the wrong way.

The new *Oliva* from Western Indian Ocean was identified as :

- *Oliva tremulina* c.f. *olympiadina* Duclos, 1835 by Zeigler & Porreca, 1969
- *Oliva pica* c.f. *olympiadina* Duclos, 1835 by Petuch & Sargent, 1986
- *Oliva olympiadina* Duclos, 1835 by Kaicher, 1989 Card n°5513
- *Oliva pica* Lamarck, 1811 by Hunon, Hoarau & Robin, 2009

Even though Authors and collectors knew the existence of this rather obvious species after about 150 years it was still mistakenly identified.

Tursch and Greifeneder on 1996 studying the "*Oliva miniacea* complex" discovered the error made by Reeve. Consequently they realized that , at this point, the *Oliva* was still unnamed.

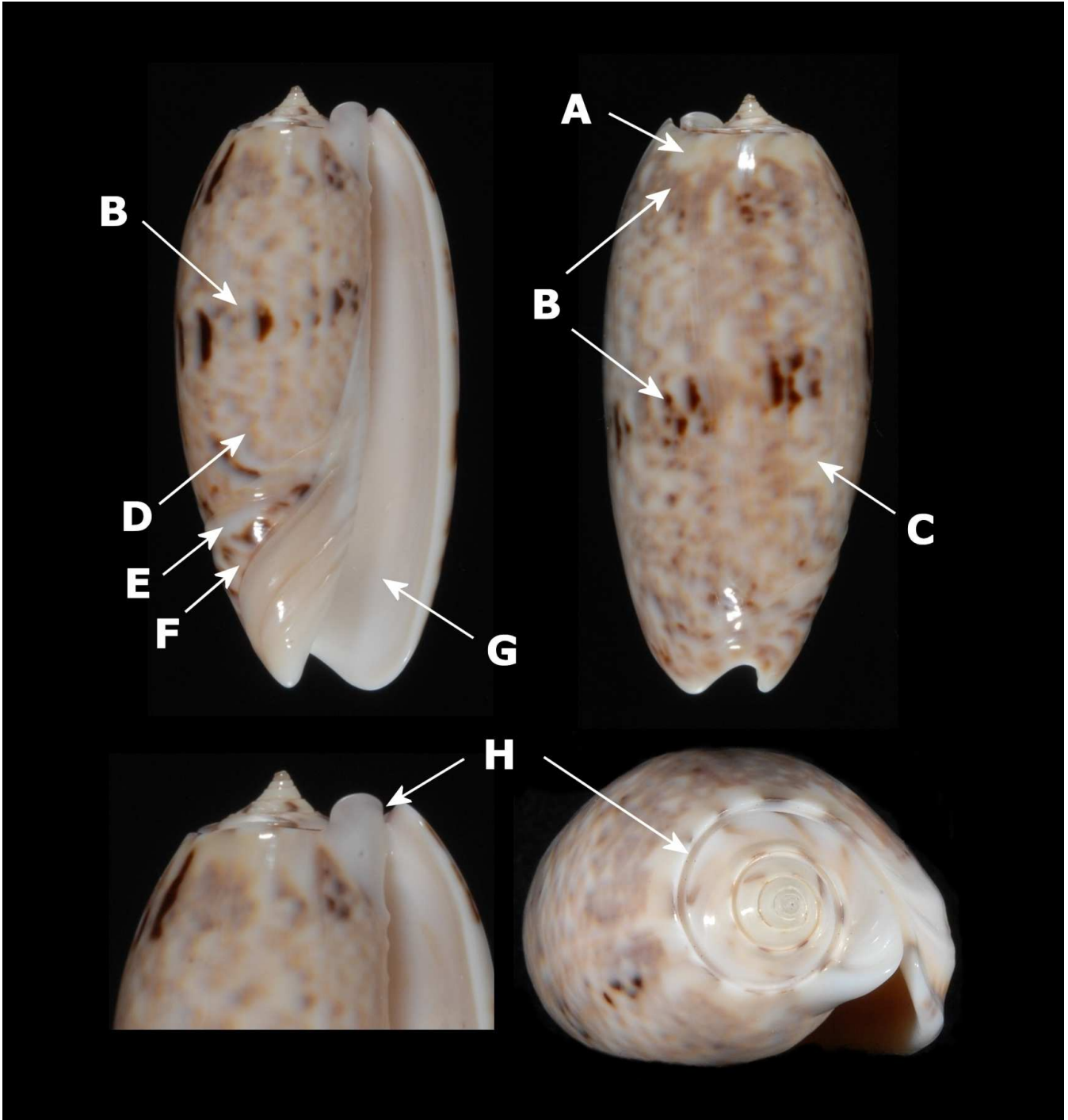
On APEX vol.11(1), 1996 p.24 they finally described the shell and called it *Oliva mascarena*. Etymology : named after Mascarene Islands. The rather cylindrical shell is of medium to large size. The protoconch and the width of the filament channel are similar to those of the other large *Oliva* species which occur in the Indian ocean, such as *Oliva miniacea tremulina* and *Oliva ponderosa*. The ground color is ivory white. Prevalent blurred and diffuse pattern elements are purplish-grey with marking brown to black.

About the Lamarck name "*pica*" it is now considered a "nomen dubium". About the Duclos name "*olympiadina*" it is now considered as a local color form of *Oliva miniacea tremulina* Lamarck, 1811.

**Plate 2.** *Oliva mascarena* Tursh & Greifeneder, 1996

**Live mollusk** No pictures available.

**Key Discriminators**



**Plate 3.** *Oliva mascarena* Tursch & Greifeneder, 1996. "A" Zone with reduced pattern. "B" Interrupted double spiral band. "C" Background white to cream. "D" Orange-blue color separation. "E" Reduced pattern. "F" Few strokes. "G" Aperture white to ivory. "H" Filament channel open.

## Range and size

This species is present on the coast of Central-East Africa, Zanzibar Archipelago, Mascarene, Seychelles and Chago Islands. The adult size rarely exceeds 80mm.



**Plate 4.** *Oliva mascarena* Tursch & Greifeneder, 1996

the **OLiVA**

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