



***Oncomelania* spp.**

Diagnostic features

The shell is tall spired and some forms develop axial ribs. The aperture



Oncomelania hupensis quadrasi (adult size 5-6 mm)

is reflected and bears an external varix.

Classification

Oncomelania Gredler, 1881

Class Gastropoda

Infraclass Caenogastropoda

Order Littorinida

Suborder Rissoidina

Superfamily Truncatelloidea

Family Pomatiopsidae

Subfamily: Pomatiopsinae

Genus Oncomelania Gredler, 1881 (Type species: *Oncomelania hupensis* Gredler, 1881) (Synonyms *Hemibia* Heude, 1890; *Katayama* Robson, 1915; *Schistosomophora* Bartsch, 1936).

Original reference: Gredler, V. (1881). Zur Conchylien- Fauna von China. *Jahrb. Deutsch. malakoz. Ges.* 8: 110-132.

Type locality: U-tschang-fu, China (found in Yangtze River drainage)

Biology and ecology

This is a seasonally amphibious species which lives in lakes, rivers, marshes and rice paddies. Sexes are separate, with males (5mm length) smaller than females (6mm length). *O. hupensis* start to lay eggs within 2 to 3 months of copulation. Adulthood is reached 1 to 2 months after hatching.

Distribution

This subspecies we have chosen to illustrate occurs in the Philippines. Several other subspecies of *O. hupensis* occur in other parts of Asia (China, Taiwan) (see below).

Notes

These freshwater snails are of medical significance as it can serve as a vector for the blood fluke *Schistosoma japonicum* that causes schistosomiasis and the lung fluke parasite *Paragonimus*.

Several species of *Oncomelania* are recognised including:

O. hupensis Gredler, 1881. This is often treated as a polytypic species with several subspecies: *O. h. quadrasi* (Möllendorff, 1895) (Philippines) and *O. h. hupensis* and several others from China and Taiwan.

O. h. quadrasi is sometimes recognised as a distinct species. There are others that are usually treated as separate species including *O. minima* Bartsch, 1936 and two other species from Japan, and *O. lindoensis* Davis & Carney, 1973 from Lake Lindu, Sulawesi.

Species of *Oncomelania* have not yet been recorded from Australia but it is mentioned here in the event it could reach this country.

Oncomelania is closely related to *Pomatiopsis* from North America.

Further reading

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