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Anatomical Notes on Two Species of the Colubrariidae
(Mollusca, Prosobranchia)

By W. F. PONDER,

Dominion Museum, Wellington, New Zealand.

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Abstract

THE anatomy of *Ratifusus mestayerae* (Iredale) and *Iredalula striata* (Hutton) indicates that the Colubrariidae is a distinctive family belonging to the Buccinacea. Unusual features of the alimentary canal are a very long stomach, a large non-introvertible proboscis sac in which lies the long, slender, coiled proboscis and the swollen mid-oesophagus with very glandular walls. The radula is relatively minute and rachiglossan.

INTRODUCTION

THE systematic position and status of the Colubrariidae Dall, 1904 has never been satisfactorily settled. Cernohorsky (1967, p. 326) has outlined some of the taxonomic history of the genus *Colubraria* Schumacher, 1817 as follows: "Schepman (1913) and Demond (1957) assigned it to the Buccinacea, Iredale (1929) to the Fusidae (synonym of the Colubrariidae), Kuroda and Habe (1952) retained the genus in the Cymatiidae and Thiele (1929) assigned *Colubraria* as a section of *Charonia* Gistel, 1848 with a query" (see Cernohorsky for references). In addition Wenz (1941) places the genus in the Cymatiidae and Dall (1904) suggests rachiglossate affinity.

Ratifusus Iredale, 1919 (type species *Ratifusus adjunctus* Iredale) includes a number of Australasian species of light build which resemble the small species of *Colubraria*. *Ratifusus* also closely resembles *Fusus* Helbling, 1779.

The Australasian species *Fusus mestayerae* Iredale, 1915 is more accurately placed in *Ratifusus* as indicated by Macpherson and Gabriel (1962) who include the genus in the Cymatiidae. It is a rare species in New Zealand but Mr M. J. Hancock kindly provided two specimens that were fixed in formalin. They were collected together at the Bay of Islands and kept in an aquarium for about ten weeks. However the animals were still in good condition, though some deterioration in the genital structures was apparent.

A single, half-grown specimen (1cm in length) of *Iredalula striata* (Hutton) (the type species of *Iredalula* Finlay, 1927) was collected by Mr E. Willis of the N.Z. Marine Department vessel *Ikatere* from a trawl made between Cape Runaway and Ohiwa Harbour. The animal was fixed in formalin.

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