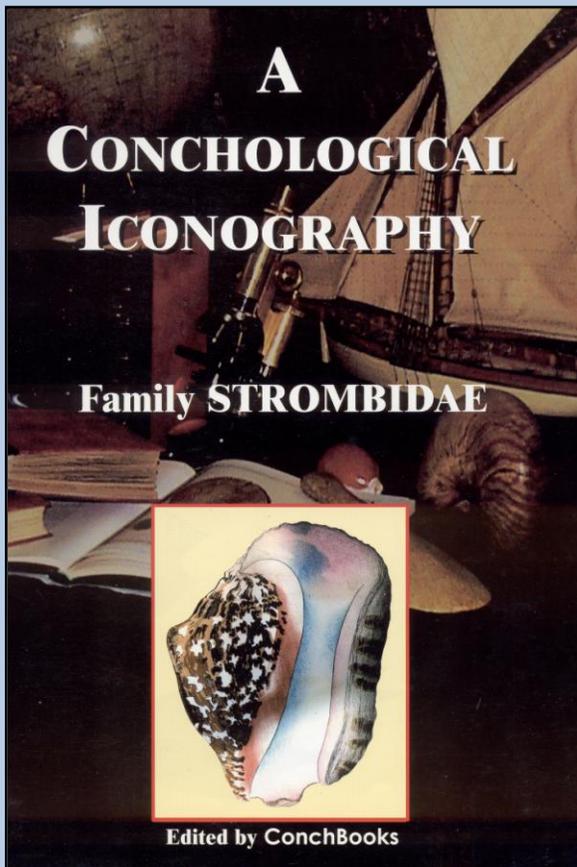


## Book Review

by Harry G. Lee, MD

*A conchological iconography [volume(?) 2] The family Strombidae* by Kurt Kreipl and Guido T. Poppe. ConchBooks, Hackenheim, Germany. pp. 1-60 with numerous b&w text figures + 130 color plates. 210 x 295 mm. Loose-leaf, four perforations, dedicated binder available. ISBN 3-925919-27-9 (masterwork); 3-925919-29-5 [this volume(?)], 1999. See reviews of *volume(?) 1 The family Harpidae* of this masterwork by Patty Jansen and by Richard E. Petit [*American Conchologist* 27(2):30; 30-31. Sept., 1999].

As I witness the evolution of this ongoing publication, arguably a renaissance of the traditional 19th century serial iconographies, I am immediately drawn to the profusion and excellence of the illustrations (attributed to Guido Poppe and various collaborators), especially the color images, which are deployed on a black background, single-side, full



page format. The images are crisp and accurate; the specimens outstanding. The plates are well-organized, and the captions reasonably accurate. Thus far, and I suspect for the perpetuity of this series, the pictures are the focus and strength of the masterwork.

The general poverty of text has been cited by several reviewers, but, I see an evolutionary trend toward more meaningful treatment of constituent species, especially from the standpoint of identification guidance. The Strombidae are nicely iterated in generic, subgeneric, and specific sequence, first in tabular format, then with descriptive text including entries for range, size, description, and remarks - most helpful is the juxtaposition of a fine b&w image of the shell to the text. This emphasis is a welcome improvement over *volume(?) 1. The Harpidae*. Slightly dismaying is the failure to arrange species-level taxa in consistent alphabetical order.

Like *volume(?) 1*, the work does not include diagnoses of generic-level taxa, offers only the briefest treatment of general biological, paleontological, and historical aspects. Likewise it offers only summary nomenclatorial data (generally lacking are synonymies and citations to taxonomic literature). The bibliography is a bit more extensive and better edited, but far from exhaustive, lacking **any** work over 39 years old, let alone Dillwyn (1817) and Lightfoot (1786); see below. The index is quite serviceable. The pagination does NOT include the 130 color plates [unlike *volume(?) 1*]. Family names continue to appear consistently in boldface, a convention I hadn't encountered previously, but authorship parentheses (denoting generic reassignment after original nomination) are

employed; this convention was scrupulously avoided in volume(?) 1. Leo Man in't Veld contributed a minichapter (in a somewhat personal style) on the taxonomic position of *Strombus listeri* (page 55).

Numerous spelling errors and occasionally stilted English notwithstanding, the text of the second issue is quite readable, and the scientific editing appears to have improved (no gender-bending *Morum amabilis* [sic] and *M. strombiformis* [sic], and the parentheses matter mentioned above is fairly well-remedied). Some technical and identification errors warrant mention: in volume(?) 1 there are two text plate 6's. Color plate 35 fig. 6 (two views) and color plate 36, fig. 6 (2 views) are *Morum uchiyamai* and *M. grande* respectively, not vice-versa as captioned. The faux *M. u.* is recapitulated in the otherwise marvelous kaleidoscopic composite on color plate 48. In volume(?) 2 the tabulation of species includes the proper attribution of *Lambis truncata truncata* to Lightfoot, 1786 [sic; parens improperly omitted]; Dillwyn (1817; vol II, p. 659) miscredited *Strombus truncata*, mentioned first in the *Portland Catalog*, to Humphreys [sic], and nearly all subsequent authors have perpetuated the error. Regrettably and inexplicably, in the ensuing treatment of *L. t. t.* in volume(?) 2, credit relapses to Humphrey. *Strombus sinuatus* and *S. tricornis* are consistently misattributed to Humphrey through the same Dillwyn (*ibid.*, pp. 662-3) machination. *Rimella* was erected by Agassiz in 1840; not "Röding, 1798." *Strombus microurceus* Kira, 1959 and *S. pipus* Röding, 1798 need rehabilitative parentheses. On color plate 7, figure 2 (3 views) looks like a form of *Rimella cancellata* (Lamarck, 1816) seen in several parts of its range rather than *R. tyleri* H. and A. Adams, 1863 as captioned. *Lambis chiragra chiragra* form *rugosa* (G. B. Sowerby I, 1842) is erroneously assigned to *L. c. arthritica* on color plates 27 and 28. A colleague of mine, who has more familiarity with the family, pointed out a few other misidentifications and will publish his findings elsewhere.

Attribution to the somewhat Byzantine organization of contributors to *A conchological iconography* continues to be a challenge. My first step, and I lay no claim to infallibility here, is to treat the work as a **journal** (ISBN should be an ISSN?) with Guido Poppe and Klaus Groh the editors. The authorship of the **text** should be considered the author of each **volume** (I shall hereafter omit the "?"), i.e. "Dance, S. P. and G. T. Poppe, 1999. The family Harpidae. *A conchological iconography 1*: 1-69." The vignette by Poppe and Brulet in *A conchological iconography 1*, and the polemic/taxonomic note by in't Veld in volume 2 can be cited as "Poppe and Brulet in Dance and Poppe", and "in't Veld in Kreipl and Poppe," etc. The production of the plates (Guido T. Poppe and Thierry Brulet for volume 1; Poppe, Leo Man in't Veld, and Koenraad de Turck for volume 2), although of paramount value, need not be cited for bibliographic purposes; the author(s) of the text should be considered accountable for the plate captions.

The long and short of it: long on illustration; short on text. These two volumes perform a task admirably; they summarily depict, beautifully and with sufficient accuracy, the Recent fauna of two popular groups of Recent marine gastropods. The price is high, but the quality is worth it. Perhaps a leaner approach to the illustrations with, say, 30-40% fewer images per species might reduce costs commensurate with a significantly more affordable price tag yet with minimal loss of value to the user. Two caveats; one: once armed with this iconography, don't consider for a moment any serious immersion into these groups of mollusks without beefing up your library with the scientific monographs that are the necessary underpinnings of a more thorough

understanding of their natural history. Two: ignore the bargain prices advertised in the order form positioned behind p. 60, at the end of my copy of volume 2; they're simply too good to be true.

Volume 2 is available from several U. S. dealers at \$70.00; volume 1 at \$45.00; special binder (commodious enough to store about three volumes but below the standard of *Indo-Pacific Mollusca*) at \$13.00. Future volumes are expected soon; topics include the Ficidae, Acavidae (in part), *Calliostoma*, Neritidae, etc. European customers may wish to contact the publisher, ConchBooks, Mainzer Str. 25, D-55546, Hackheim, Germany. <<http://www.conchbooks.de>>.

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