

Short Communication

First record of *Cantharus melanostoma* (Sowerby, 1825) (Gastropoda) from Andhra Pradesh Coast

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Abstract

A buccinid gastropod *Cantharus melanostoma* (Sowerby, 1825) is hereby reported first time from Andhra Pradesh along southeast coast of India. This species was earlier recorded from Erwadi, Tamil Nadu along the southern east coast, but not brought to light as first record from the east coast of India. The present record of this species extends its distributional range further north of Erwadi in Tamil Nadu. A systematic account of the species is presented in this communication.

Keywords: Andhra, Buccinidae, *Cantharus*, Gastropoda

Introduction

Cantharus undosus (Linnaeus, 1758) and *C. melanostoma* (Sowerby, 1825) (Buccinoids) are the most ecologically diverse and geographically wide spread clade within the sea snail group “Neogastropoda”. These snails appeared initially during the early Cretaceous period (Tracey *et al.*, 1993). They are usually predatory snails which have radiated to reside most benthic marine habitats ranging from the tropical regions to the poles and from the intertidal zone to deeper zone (hadal depth) (Clarke, 1962). Several species of the families Buccinidae and Nassariidae are known to invade freshwaters (Harasewych & Kantor, 2004). Buccinoideans are easily distinguished by their weakly sculptured, conical to fusiform shells and their distinctive rachiglossan radula with multicuspid lateral teeth, longer proboscis, by absence of accessory salivary glands and a rectal gland (Bouchet and Waren, 1986). It can be well assumed that arrangement of spiral cords can be a solid diagnostic feature for *Cantharus*-group, coupled with the convex shape of the teleoconch whorls

and the narrow siphonal area without constricted base. There are 26 species reported from other regions, while only 5 species from India, namely, *C. fumosus* (Dilwyn, 1817), *C. spiralis* (Gray, 1846), *C. tranquebaricus* (Gmelin, 1791), *C. undosus* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *C. melanostoma* (Sowerby, 1825) (Figure 1).



Figure 1. *Cantharus melanostoma* (Sowerby, 1825).

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Material Studied

Height of Valve: 31.14 mm; Width: 19.92 mm; Locality: Tummalapenta (Kavali); Shore collection, Andhra coast; Coll. Rajendar Kumar, Reg No. ZSI/MBRC/M-17 (Deposited at the National Zoological Collections repository of Marine Biological Research Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Chennai).

Systematic Account

Class GASTROPODA

Family BUCCINIDAE Rafinesque, 1815

Subfamily PISANIINAE

Genus *Cantharus* Röding, 1798

Species *C. melanostoma* (G.B. Sowerby I, 1825)

1825. *Strombus melanostoma* Sowerby, *Cat. Shell Tankerville*: 68

1942. *Cantharus melanostoma* Gravely, *Bull. Madras Govt. Mus. New Ser. (Nat. Hist.)*, 5(2): 56

1990. *Pollia melanostoma* Pinn, *Sea Snails of Pondicherry*. Nehru Sci. Cent., fig. 81, p. 81

Description: Shell -ovate, somewhat ventricose, if the shell is heavily encrusted it may be at first glance be taken

as *Cantharus tranquebaricus* (Gmelin, 1791). However, a look at the umbilicus will settle the identification, for it is dark brown and covers the whole length of the inner lip, body whorl larger, sutures deep, longitudinally plicately waved, transversely irregularly ridged and striated, aperture ovate, interior grooved and crenated; orange brown, stained here and there with spots of a darker brown, columella blackish brown, interior of the aperture white.

Distribution: India: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Manner. *Elsewhere*: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Cantharus melanostoma* is reported for the first time from Andhra Pradesh coast. Its distribution now extended northward to the Andhra Pradesh coast, away from reef area of the Gulf of Mannar (Tamil Nadu), where from it was reported earlier.

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