

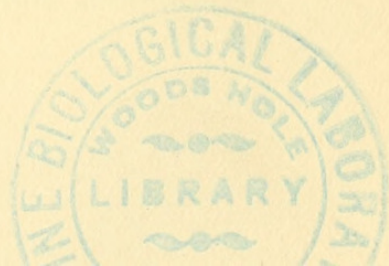
A CONCHOLOGICAL RIP VAN WINKLE

BY FRED BAKER

During my six months in Brazil as surgeon and conchologist of the Stanford Expedition in 1911 I paid a small sum to two laborers for bringing in to me 2000 specimens of a tree snail which I later reported (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil., 1913, p. 639.) as *Oxystyla pulchella prototypus* Pilsbry. The specimens were in all stages of growth with about one in ten full grown. It was curious that almost all the full grown specimens were aestivating on the tree trunks and lower branches while the younger specimens were nearly all crowded into crevices and knot holes in the trees. This impressed me so strongly that I was almost sure that the specimens represented two distinct species. Only a very careful study of all stages represented by the catch showed their continuity of growth. All were taken on the outskirts of Ceará-Mirim, State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, just a few degrees south of the Equator. The State of Rio Grande do Norte on the east coast of Brazil is an extremely dry country with an average rainfall not far from that of Southern California, although much warmer. So, when packing to return, I determined to try to bring a few specimens home alive. I packed a five gallon oil can full of them loosely in cotton. On arrival in California I found the shells dead, due most largely, as it seemed, to the cold of October in New York. Having a large supply, I have distributed these shells very widely to exchangers from Australia and New Zealand to Brazil, many parts of Europe, Mexico and the United States.

On March 23 I discovered a half-grown specimen, alive and apparently in fine health, calmly disporting himself on my back porch. We transferred him to comfortable quarters with abundance of food and water and he is active and seems inclined to live on, though we are not sure that he has yet eaten the kinds of food we have offered him. We have got a good photograph of him.

It seems almost absolutely certain that this snail is one of the original lot. The only other explanation would be that some of



these shells, surviving the trip to California in 1911, may have gotten out of the oil can before and may have established a colony. No such colony has been observed and I have been living on this lot since 1898, gardening and maintaining a gardener all the time. I am sure that such a colony would have been observed before. Should one appear I will immediately notify THE NAUTILUS and recede from my position; but I have no hesitation in stating at this time that this particular snail (which the children immediately christened Rip Van Winkle), is one of the original lot which has recently broken through his epiphragm and started out to see the world. The shells were collected in June or July, 1911, so it seems almost beyond question that Rip, Jr., is now, March 27, 1934, over twenty-three years old.

Tryon (Struct. and Syst. Conchology, vol. 1, pp. 144-148), discusses the "Duration and Tenacity of Life" in mollusks. He mentions a specimen of *Helix veatchii* which lived six years without food and a "Desert-snail from Egypt" which evidently had closed itself in its shell with an epiphragm in the British Museum, but had emerged at various times during a period of four years. I think I can safely claim an all-time record for my specimen.

Incidentally, Dr. Pilsbry, (*loc. cit.*, 1930, pp. 359, 360), on more careful examination of the set of *Oxystyla* which I left in Philadelphia, decided that they represented a new species which he has described as *Oxystyla capax*. Will any of my exchangers who happen to see this note please rename their sets as above? They will be safe to note that they are topotypes from the original lot.

Point Loma, California, March 27, 1934.

JAMAICAN LAND SNAILS

BY H. BURRINGTON BAKER

Unfortunately, the earlier writers seldom gave accurate localities in their descriptions of Jamaican mollusks. For this reason, locality records of the species, incidentally collected during the summer of 1933 in a search for anatomical material, may be of



Baker, Fred. 1934. "A conchological Rip Van Winkle." *The Nautilus* 48, 5–6.

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