

THE STATUS OF *HELIX OREGONENSIS* LEA

BY G. DALLAS HANNA

Lea described *Helix oregonensis* in 1838¹ from an immature specimen collected by Thomas Nuttall near the junction of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers in Oregon. The type is now deposited in the U. S. National Museum but through some curious error it has catalogued with it an adult shell of typical *dupetithouarsii* such as grows only in the vicinity of Monterey Bay, California. How this happened may never be known. Certainly if they were collected together Lea would have described the adult shell. Whether the association of these two specimens influenced Binney or not may likewise never be known; but he placed *oregonensis* as a synonymy of *dupetithouarsii* in his writings and most conchologists have followed him.

Matters stood thus until 1912 when Henry M. Edson² revived Lea's name as a substitute for the widely known *Epiphragmophora mormonum* of central California. Some western conchologists have accepted his reasoning at its face value and have proceeded to change the names on their labels as a result. It would seem that Edson's article contains too many assumptions and misstatements to warrant such acceptance without further inquiry. I have attempted such an investigation and have arrived at a very different conclusion.

Edson appears to have relied upon Pfeiffer's original description of *mormonum* and had no authentic material for comparison. He states that the species has been collected at Klamath Falls, Oregon, "which is close to the original locality of *oregonensis*." The two places are across the state from each other, 250 miles apart. Moreover the Klamath Falls record is based upon reputed material in the "Washington State Museum, fide H[arold] Hannibal." Mr. F. S. Hall, Curator of that Museum has advised me (letter dated March 2, 1922) that there is no such material in the institution from Klamath Falls.

¹ Observations, Vol. II, p. 100, pl. XXVIII, fig. 9, Trans. Am. Phil. Soc., Vol. VI, p. 100, pl. XXIII, fig. 85, 1839.

² NAUTILUS, Vol. XXVI, p. 49.

Through the courtesy of Dr. Paul Bartsch I was permitted to make a careful examination of the type specimen *oregonensis* in Washington in January, 1922. It is unquestionably a young shell of the *fidelis* group. This might be suspected since it came from the heart of the *fidelis* country. It seems to belong to the small race afterwards called *minor* by Binney¹ and should replace that name. The small subspecies has been reported from Seattle and other places and the collection of the California Academy of Sciences contains many specimens from Portland, Oregon (near the type locality of *oregonensis*) The Dalles, Oregon and elsewhere in that state.

The name *mormonum* should therefore remain as it was before, applicable to the shells from Mormon Island, Sacramento California. It really represents a group of variants similar to *tudiculata*, *traskii* and *californiensis* groups and typical *mormonum* seems to be restricted solely to the type locality. Fortunately, through the aid of Dr. Emmett Rixford we have considerable collections from there for comparison and others from that general region, but it is not yet time to revise all of the various elements which may be grouped about *mormonum*; some other territory must be visited before the work can be done well. There is a small race of *mormonum* which is similar to the small race of *fidelis* and with a sufficient amount of material from intervening country the two species might be connected with intergrades. This however may be said of *arrosa*, *tudiculata*, *californiensis*, etc.

Lea described *H. nuttalliana* at the same time as *oregonensis*; and it is generally admitted that with the first he was dealing with *fidelis*, the same having been placed in the synonymy of that species for many years. It may seem strange that he did not place his *oregonensis* with his equivalent of *fidelis*. The two however are so different in the extremes that without a large series of specimens intergradation would probably not be suspected. With the same scanty material to-day, any reputable conchologist would probably duplicate Lea's action.

The following summarizes my conclusions:

¹ Man. Am. Land Sh., p. 121, fig. 91, 1885.

Epiphragmophora fidelis (Gray), Proc. Zool. Soc., London, 1834, p. 67. *H. nuttalliana* Lea, Observations, Vol. II, p. 88, 1838. Chiefly found in the Coast Ranges.

Epiphragmophora fidelis oregonensis (Lea), Observations, Vol. II, p. 100, 1838. *A. f. minor* Binney, Man. Am. Ld. Shells, p. 121, fig. 91, 1885. Chiefly found at some distance inland from the coast.

Epiphragmophora mormonum (Pfeiffer), Proc. Zool. Soc., London, 1857, p. 109. So far as known found only at the type locality. Subspecies *hillebrandi* (Newc.) *cala* Pilsbry and *buttoni* Pilsbry have been described.

Epiphragmophora dupetithouarsii (Deshayes), Rev. Zool. 1839, p. 360. Confined to the vicinity of Monterey Bay, California.

APEROSTOMATINAE

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As indicated below, three exceedingly unfortunate changes from the customary usage are necessary.

1. *Aperostoma* becomes the generic title of what is usually known as *Cyrtotoma mexicanum*.

2. *Poteria* (genus and subgenus s. s.) replaces both *Ptychocochlis* and *Plectocyclotus* as the name of the West-Indian group usually regarded as a subgenus of *Neocyclotus*.

3. The closely related mainland species forming the subgenus *Neocyclotus* (*Aperostoma* of authors), also take *Poteria* as their generic title. Gray allowed *Poteria* to remain as a nude name for ten years after its proposal, but finally defined it in the British Museum Catalogue of the Cyclophoridae (1850). Hermannsen (1852) and Pfeiffer (1852) recognized the name, but it appears to have been entirely omitted from later authors.

List of generic and subgeneric names

Megalomastoma Swainson (1840). Type (designated) *M. brunnea* "Guilding" Swainson (1840), from St. Vincent.

Aperostoma Troschel (1847). Type (Hermannsen, 1852) *Cyclostoma mexicanum* Menke (1830), from Mexico.



Hanna, G D. 1922. "The status of *Helix oregonensis* Lea." *The Nautilus* 36, 12–14.

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