

New Species of Pleurotomariidae, Volutidae, and Conidae from the Caribbean Sea and Namibia, Southwestern Africa

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ABSTRACT In preparation for a forthcoming monographic work on marine molluscan biogeography at the worldwide level, five new biogeographical index species are described here. These include: *Perotrochus sunderlandorum* n.sp. (Pleurotomariidae) from the Grenadian Subprovince of the Caribbean Province; *Athleta easoni* n. sp. (Volutidae) from the Namibian Province; *Jaspidiconus carvalhoi* n. sp. and *Jaspidiconus ferreirai* n.sp., both from the Nicaraguan Subprovince of the Caribbean Province; and *Jaspidiconus lindapowersae* n. sp. from the Antillean Subprovince of the Caribbean Province.

KEY WORDS Pleurotomariidae, Volutidae, Athletinae, Conidae, Conilithidae, *Perotrochus*, *Athleta*, *Jaspidiconus*, Caribbean Province, Namibian Province, Grenadian Subprovince, Nicaraguan Subprovince, Antillean Subprovince, Curacao, Namibia, Miskito Cays, Dominican Republic.

INTRODUCTION

The authors of this paper, along with Robert Myers of Florida, are in the process of completing a monographic treatment of the biogeography of the marine mollusks of tropical and warm temperate regions around the world. The volume will illustrate two thousand species of biogeographical index taxa, those whose ranges define the boundaries of the biogeographical units (regions, provinces, subprovinces, and infraprovinces). The biogeographical scheme defined in this forthcoming book is an expansion upon the concepts and definitions put forth by the senior author in a previous in-depth treatment of the biogeography of the tropical western Atlantic (“Biogeography and Biodiversity of Western Atlantic Mollusks”; Petuch, 2013). We here describe five new biogeographical index taxa, all of which are important additions to the new book. The new species include: a Slit Shell (*Perotrochus*) from the southern rim of the

Venezuelan Basin; a new volute (*Athleta*) from deep water areas off Namibia, southwestern Africa; two new cones (*Jaspidiconus*) from the Miskito Cays off Nicaragua; and a new cone (*Jaspidiconus*) from the Dominican Republic (eastern Hispaniola). These new taxa are important additions to the biodiversity of their respective areas and their discovery helps to strengthen the definitions of their component biogeographical units. The holotypes of these new species are deposited in the type collection of the Department of Malacology, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California and bear LACM numbers.

SYSTEMATICS

Class Gastropoda
Subclass Orthogastropoda
Order Vetigastropoda
Superfamily Pleurotomarioidea
Family Pleurotomariidae
Genus *Perotrochus* Fischer, 1885

Perotrochus sunderlandorum Petuch and
Berschauer, new species
(Figure 1A-D)

Description. Shell of average size for genus, trochoid in profile, solid, thick and heavy with approximate apical angle of 70-80 degrees; whorls slightly stepped, with early whorls being more acuminate and straight-sided; teleoconch with 8 whorls on adults, expanding in roughly linear progression; sutures clearly defined, with wide shallowly-indented subsutural area; base flat, with basal periphery strongly angular; anal slit approximately 20-25% of total circumference; selenizone flush with shell outline or slightly concave, positioned approximately 40% of way above edge of basal periphery, between 3 and 3.5 mm in width on adults; body whorl sculptured with 11-13 prominent rows of beads above selenizone and 6 rows of beads below selenizone, forming spiral cords that are occasionally staggered due to interrupted growth; base sculptured with 22-23 rows of strong spiral cords; umbilicus deep, open, and narrow, covered with large smooth nacreous callus; selenizone crossed by numerous fine crescent-shaped growth increments, ornamented with 2 thick central beaded cords bounded on either side by smaller beaded cord (Figure 1D); aperture broadly oval, flaring, nacreous within interior; protoconch and teleoconch yellow-cream or pale orange-yellow color overlaid with extremely numerous and closely-packed irregular axial flammules of dark reddish-brown or reddish-purple color; base less colorful, often with smaller or more reduced axial flammules; operculum proportionally small, 8-9 mm in diameter, thin and translucent, roughly circular, multi-spiral, light brown or golden-tan in color; periostracum absent.

Type Material. HOLOTYPE Height 49.1 mm, diameter 59.0 mm, LACM 3493; 250 m depth off Klein Curacao Island, Curacao, Dutch Caribbean.

Other Material Examined: height 54 mm, diameter 65 mm, same locality and depth as the

holotype, in the research collection of the senior author; height 50.0 mm, diameter 58.0 mm, same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the junior author; 5 specimens, with heights of 41.5 mm to 45.0 mm and diameters of 45.0 mm to 56.0 mm, in the Kevan Sunderland collection, Sunrise, Florida.

Type Locality. The holotype was collected by a commercial submersible vehicle, from 250 m depth off North Point, Klein Curacao Island, Curacao, Dutch Caribbean, in 2016.

Distribution. Known only from the upper bathyal zone of the southern rim of the Venezuelan Basin, eastern Caribbean Sea, in depths of around 200-250 m. The new slit shell is considered to be a classic deep water biogeographical index species for the western end of the Grenadian Subprovince of the Caribbean Molluscan Province. At present, this new pleurotomariid is known only from the southeastern Caribbean Sea, in the vicinity of Curacao and Klein Curacao Islands, but probably occurs elsewhere along the Dutch Caribbean islands and the islands off Venezuela.

Ecology. *Perotrochus sunderlandorum* is a component of the upper bathyal zone fauna (averaging 250 m depth) of the southern rim of the Venezuelan Basin. Here, it lives and feeds on sponges on the near vertical walls that drop precipitously into the Basin off the Curacao area. The new species occurs sympatrically with large specimens of another pleurotomariid, *Entemnotrochus adansonianus* (Crosse and Fischer, 1861), which also lives on the large sponge bioherms that cover the bathyal zone walls.

Etymology. Named for Kevan and Linda Sunderland of Sunrise, Florida, who kindly brought the new slit shell to our attention and who generously donated several specimens for study. The Sunderlands have amassed one of the

largest and most important collections of western Atlantic mollusks in the world and, through their decades of collecting, research, and exploration, have greatly expanded our knowledge of the molluscan faunas of Florida and the Caribbean.

Discussion. Of the ten known species of *Perotrochus* in the western Atlantic, *P. sunderlandorum* is morphologically closest, in size, shell shape, and color pattern, only to *P. atlanticus* Rios and Matthews, 1968 from southern Brazil (Figure 1E-H). The new species differs from its southern congener in having lower, less elevated whorls, and with the early

whorls of the Brazilian *P. atlanticus* being noticeably more elevated and more prominently stepped than those of the Curacao *P. sunderlandorum*. The new species is also a consistently more darkly-colored shell than *P. atlanticus*, having a darker base color of yellow-orange overlaid with dark reddish-brown axial flammules, as opposed to the white base color and paler brown flammules seen on the Brazilian species. Major differences in shell sculpture and the structure of the selenizone also exist between the two congeners, and these are summarized in the following Table 1:

	<i>P. sunderlandorum</i>	<i>P. atlanticus</i>
Ornamentation above Selenizone	11-13 rows of beads	20-22 rows of beads
Ornamentation below Selenizone	6 rows of beads	7-8 rows of beads
Selenizone width	averaging 3.0 to 3.5 mm	averaging 3.5 to 4 mm
Selenizone Ornamentation	2 large beaded cords between pair of smaller beaded cords	4 large beaded cords
Sculpture of Base	22-25 spiral cords	29-35 spiral cords
Operculum	Thin, translucent and smooth	Opaque and chitonous

Table 1. Comparison between *Perotrochus sunderlandorum* n. sp. and *P. atlanticus*.

Perotrochus sunderlandorum is also similar to *P. quoyanus* (Fischer and Bernardi, 1856), a wide-ranging species that occurs throughout the Caribbean Basin, from off eastern Yuacatan, Mexico and Cuba, throughout the Greater Antilles (Jamaica and Puerto Rico) and Lesser Antilles (Marie-Galante, Guadeloupe, and Dominica), to Barbados (Anseeuw and Goto, 1996: 132-133). Although similar in size and general shell shape, *P. sunderlandorum* differs from *P. quoyanus* in being a less sculptured shell, with only 11-13 rows of beads above the selenizone as opposed to 14 rows, and in having only 22-25 spiral cords on the base as opposed to 35-40. The selenizone of the new species is also wider than its pan-Caribbean congener, being 3 to 3.5 mm in width as opposed to only 2.5 mm.

The most obvious difference between *P. sunderlandorum* and *P. quoyanus* is seen in the structure of the umbilical region. In the new species, the umbilicus is perforate, with a very deep and narrow umbilical hole. In *P. quoyanus*, the umbilical region is imperforate and the entire area is sealed off with a thick nacreous callus. The two species also differ ecologically and bathymetrically, with *Perotrochus sunderlandorum* preferring depths of around 250 m (upper Bathyal Zone), while *P. quoyanus* prefers much shallower waters, with most specimens being collected in 190 to 200 m depths (lower Neritic Zone) (Anseeuw and Goto, 1996 at p. 133).

Subclass Sorbeoconcha
 Order Prosobranchia
 Infraorder Neogastropoda
 Superfamily Volutoidea
 Family Volutidae
 Subfamily Athletinae
 Genus *Athleta* Conrad, 1853

Athleta easoni Petuch and Berschauer,
 new species
 (Figure 2A, B)

Description. Shell large for genus, with adult shells averaging 67 mm in length; shell moderately heavy and thickened, elongated, distinctly fusiform, with high protracted spire and proportionally-narrow body whorl; shoulder at extreme posterior end of body whorl, angled, bordered by large rounded cordlike carina; subsutural area distinctly flattened, shelf-like; spire whorls rounded in profile, noticeably stepped and scalariform; body whorl sculptured with 32-35 large, very prominent, evenly-spaced spiral cords; shoulder carina cord larger than other body whorl cords, separated from next cord by wide smooth area that is equal in width to 2 body whorl cords; spiral cords on body whorl crossed by numerous fine, low irregular longitudinal growth increments, producing faint beaded appearance on individual cords; shell color uniform pale orange-tan, often stained with rusty red deposits of iron sulfide; parietal area with proportionally-large, tightly-adherent, polished shield that extends outward to cover entire columellar and basal area; aperture proportionally narrow, long, smooth within interior, with some specimens having few scattered small, faint rib-like plicae; columella with 9-10 small tooth-like plicae, with third from anterior end being largest in size; some columellar plicae bifurcate, forming close pair; interior of aperture pale orange-tan, contrasting greatly with pure white color of columellar plicae; outer edge of lip thin, crenulated.

Type Material. **HOLOTYPE** Length 88.6 mm, width 40.1, LACM 3492; 370 m depth off Walvis Bay, Namibia. **Other Material Examined:** 2 specimens, length 72.2 mm and width 32.1 mm, and length 70.4 mm and width 30 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the senior author; 2 specimens, length 80.3 mm and width 38.0 mm, and length 47.5 mm and width 23.3 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the junior author; 2 specimens, lengths 67.4 mm and 68.5 mm, from the same locality as the holotype, in the collection of Robert Eason, Paris, Tennessee.

Type Locality. The holotype was dredged by commercial deep water fishermen from 370 depth off Walvis Bay (Walvisbaai or Whale Bay), Namibia.

Distribution. The new species is confined to deep water areas (300-400 m) off the Namib Desert coast of Namibia, from approximately Terrance Bay in the north to Luderitz in the south. The new species is most commonly collected off the Walvis Bay area.

Ecology. *Athleta easoni* prefers muddy, organic-rich sea floors in depths of 300-400 m. The reducing, acidic environment produced by these organic sediments allows thick deposits of iron sulfide and manganese sulfide to form on the shell surface, often obscuring the shell sculpture. The new species is part of a rich fauna of deep water mollusks which includes other Namibian endemics such as the umboniid *Callumbonella namibiensis*, the aporrhaid *Aporrhais peggallina*, the large pseudomelatomid *Comitas saldanhae*, the cypraeid *Cypraeorbis namibiensis*, the cone shell *Sciteconus patens*, and the athletine volutes *Athleta abyssicola massieri* Petuch & Berschauer, 2017 (Figure 2C, D) and *Athleta disparilis*.

Etymology. Named for Robert L. Eason, Sr. of Paris, Tennessee, inspired amateur naturalist and malacologist and an admirer of the Volutidae.

Discussion. *Athleta easoni* has been collected on a regular basis for over a decade now and frequently has been a featured item on many of the commercial shell dealer's price lists and auction sites. Because of its similarity to two or three other southwestern African *Athleta* species, the new species has often been misidentified as a hybrid between *A. abyssicola* (Adams and Reeve, 1848) and *A. lutosa* (Koch, 1948) (referred to as "*A. abyssicola* X *A. lutosa*"), or as a hybrid between *A. abyssicola massieri* Petuch and Berschauer, 2017 and *A. lutosa* (referred to as "*A. abyssicola massieri* X *A. lutosa*"). Since the "hybrid" occurs outside the general ranges of both *A. abyssicola* and *A. lutosa*, along central and northern Namibia, the probability that this high-spined volute is a cross between these two is very low. *Athleta easoni* also occurs along with *A. abyssicola massieri* and no morphological intermediates are known to exist, strongly indicating the validity of this new taxon (Petuch and Berschauer, 2017).

Of the known Namibian athletine volutes, *A. easoni* is most similar to *A. lutosa* (Figure 2E, F), which ranges from the Namaqualand coast of southern Namibia to Cape Province, South Africa. Both species share a rough-textured shell sculpture and a distinctly angled shoulder and flattened subsutural area that forms a characteristic shelf. The new species primarily differs from its more southerly congener in being a much narrower, elongated, and less inflated shell and in having a much higher and more protracted spire. Although both species have an approximate number of strong spiral cords on the body whorl, those of *A. easoni* are uniform in size and shape, while those of *A. lutosa* are often different in size, with a thinner rib being present between pairs of larger ribs. The columellar plicae also differ greatly between the two volutes,

with *A. easoni* having 9-10 plicae, which often occur in bifurcated pairs, and with *A. lutosa* having only 5-7 plicae, which are proportionally smaller and generally are simple and not bifurcated. Large specimens of *A. lutosa* frequently have numerous strong, well-developed ribs along the labial side of the aperture (shown well here on Figure 2F). These interior apertural ribs are generally missing in *A. easoni* and, if present at all, are very weak and poorly-developed, often confined to the deep interior of the aperture.

Superfamily Conoidea
Family Conidae
Subfamily Conilithinae
Genus *Jaspidiconus* Petuch, 2004

Jaspidiconus carvalhoi Petuch and Berschauer,
new species
(Figure 3A, B)

Description. Shell of average size for genus, fusiform, with slightly rounded sides; shoulder sharply-angled, edged with large, thin, prominent carina; spire elevated, subpyramidal, distinctly stepped and scalariform; spire whorls slightly concave and obsoletely canaliculate; body whorl shiny, completely ornamented with 16-18 deeply-incised spiral sulci, with sulci becoming more deeply-impressed toward anterior end; body whorl pale pinkish-white, overlaid with wide bands and large amorphous patches of darker pink or pinkish-tan; white band generally present around mid-body, separating wide color bands and flammules; spire whorls white, marked with proportionally-large, widely-scattered dark pinkish-tan oval flammules; some flammules extend over shoulder carina and connect with large patches and bands on body whorl; aperture proportionally wide, widening slightly toward anterior end; interior of aperture pale pink; protoconch pale pink in color, proportionally large, bulbous, domelike,

composed of 2 whorls; periostracum thin, smooth, transparent yellow.

Type Material. **HOLOTYPE** Length 17.7 mm, width 8.9 mm, LACM 3489; from 12 m depth between Maras Cay and Cayo Mayor, Miskito Cays, Nicaragua. **Other Material Examined:** length 19.0 mm, width 10.0 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the senior author; length 18.4 mm, width 9.1 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the junior author.

Type Locality. Collected at night by diving, on sand and coral rubble sea floor, in 12 m depth, between Maras Cay and Cayo Mayor, Miskito Cays, Nicaragua.

Distribution. Known only from the Miskito Cays, Nicaragua, to which the new species is apparently endemic.

Ecology. *Jaspidiconus carvalhoi* prefers clean carbonate sand in shallow water, averaging 10-12 m depth. Here it occurs on open sand sea floors with coral rubble and small patch reefs of living coral.

Etymology. Named for Carlos Duraes de Carvalho, of Alvaizere, Leiria, Portugal, an enthusiastic amateur malacologist, diver, and collector, known specifically for his explorations along East Africa.

Discussion. Of the known *Jaspidiconus* species of the southern Caribbean Sea (Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama; the Nicaraguan Subprovince of the Caribbean Province), *J. carvalhoi* is similar only to *J. kellyae* Petuch, Berschauer, and Poremski, 2017 from the San Blas Islands of Panama (see Petuch, Berschauer, and Poremski, 2017). Both species have a pink or salmon-pink base color and also share a similar color pattern of two broad bands

of a darker orange-tan color separated by a pink or white band around the mid-body. The new species differs from its Panamanian congener, however, in being a much stockier, more compact, and less elongated shell with a much lower, far less protracted spire. *Jaspidiconus carvalhoi* is also a much more heavily-sculptured shell, with pronounced spiral sulci covering the entire body whorl. *Jaspidiconus kellyae*, on the other hand, is a far less sculptured shell, having incised spiral sulci only around the anterior two-thirds of the body whorl.

Jaspidiconus ferreirai Petuch and Berschauer,
new species
(Figure 3C, D)

Description. Shell of average size for genus, stocky, inflated, with rounded convex sides; shoulder sharply-angled, bordered by low, rounded carina; spire proportionally low, subpyramidal, only faintly stepped; body whorl shiny, most often (as in holotype shown here) ornamented with 16-18 large, evenly-spaced raised beaded cords; anterior 1/3 of body whorl with deeply incised sulci between beaded cords; some specimens smooth or only partially ornamented with beaded cords; shell color pale lavender or violet overlaid with very numerous small, amorphous brown flammules, which become darker and more concentrated anterior end; areas between individual beads on spiral cords marked with very small, dark brown dots, giving body whorl speckled appearance; shoulder carina marked with large, widely-spaced brown dots; spire whorls pale violet, marked with scattered large, narrow radial flammules; edge of suture marked with row of very small, closely-packed brown dots; aperture proportionally wide, dark purple-brown within interior; protoconch exerted, mamillate, rounded, composed of 2 whorls, reddish-tan in color; periostracum smooth, transparent yellow.

Type Material. HOLOTYPE Length 20.9 mm, width 11.4 mm, LACM 3490; from 10 m depth off Cayo Mayor (Miskito Cay), Miskito Cays, Nicaragua; **Other Material Examined:** length 22.0 mm, width 11.0 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the senior author; 2 specimens, length 20.2 mm, width 10.7 mm, and length 19.3 mm, width 9.4 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the junior author.

Type Locality. Collected at night by diving, on muddy sand and scattered, sparse sea grass, in 10 m depth off the southeastern coast of Cayo Mayor (Miskito Cay), Miskito Cays, Nicaragua.

Distribution. Known only from the Miskito Cays of Nicaragua, where it is apparently endemic.

Ecology. *Jaspidiconus ferreirai* prefers muddy sand sea floors near, or in, sparse sea grass beds, in depths of 5-10 m.

Etymology. Named for Vitor Ferreira of O Porto, Portugal, amateur naturalist, diver, and collector, who has conducted extensive diving and collecting in West Africa.

Discussion. Of the known *Jaspidiconus* species of the Nicaraguan Subprovince, *J. ferreirai* is closest only to *J. masinoi* Petuch, Berschauer, and Poremski, 2016 from the Utila Cays off Honduras (*see* Petuch, Berschauer, and Poremski, 2016), but differs in being a larger and broader shell, that is noticeably wider across the shoulder, and in being a much more highly-sculptured shell, with numerous rows of strong beaded cords. The Utila Cays *J. masinoi* is more variable in color than is *J. ferreirai*, often being pink, lavender, or mixtures of pink and violet. The new Miskito Cays cone, on the other hand, only exhibits a violet or lavender base color and appears to be much less variable in color pattern. The beaded

cord sculpture of *J. ferreirai* is also a variable character, as some specimens are relatively smooth, with a subdued corded pattern, others are gradational, with beaded cords on half of the body whorl, and others are heavily-sculptured morphs like the holotype.

Jaspidiconus lindapowersae Petuch and
Berschauer, new species
(Figure 3E, F)

Description. Shell of average size for genus, stocky, broad across shoulder, with slightly rounded sides; spire proportionally low, subpyramidal, with only slightly stepped whorls; shoulder sharply angled, bordered with large, prominent, rounded carina; body whorl shiny, with 12-13 deeply-incised spiral sulci around the anterior half; body whorl color deep khaki-brown or solid dark reddish-brown, overlaid with 16-18 widely-separated spiral rows of dark brown dots and dashes; small amorphous dark brown flammules and patches sometimes present on body whorl (as in holotype shown here); anterior tip of body whorl dark purple-brown; spire brown, often with large scattered patches of white and darker brown (as seen on holotype), but frequently solid dark brown; shoulder carina marked with row of large brown dashes; suture marked with row of tiny dark brown dots; aperture proportionally wide, dark purple-brown within; protoconch (missing on holotype) dark brown, rounded and dome-like, composed of 2 whorls.

Type Material. HOLOTYPE length 19.1 mm, width 10.3 mm, LACM 3491; Punta Salinas, Peravia Province, southern coast of the Dominican Republic, Greater Antilles. **Other Material Examined:** 4 specimens, lengths 19.0 mm to 21.0 mm, widths 9.0 mm to 10.5 mm, from the same locality and depth as the holotype, in the research collection of the senior author; 3 specimens, lengths 16.0 to 22.1 mm, widths 8.3 to 10.8 mm, from the same locality and depth as

the holotype, in the research collection of the junior author.

Type Locality. The type lot of *Jaspidiconus lindapowersae* was collected, fresh dead, on the beach at Punta Salinas, Peravia Province, southern coast of the Dominican Republic.

Distribution. At present, known only from the southern coast of the Dominican Republic, Greater Antilles.

Ecology. Although the type lot was collected on the beach, the adjacent shallow water areas (the probable habitat of the new cone) were composed of dark-colored muddy sand areas with scattered beds of sea grasses. The new species is a faunal component of the Antillean Subprovince of the Caribbean Province.

Etymology. Named for Linda Riley Powers of Englewood, Florida, amateur naturalist and malacologist, who collected the holotype and type lot at Punta Salinas and kindly donated this important material to the authors.

Discussion. With its dark brown or khaki-brown shell color and prominent shoulder carina, *Jaspidiconus lindapowersae* resembles no known congener in the Caribbean Sea. The morphologically-closest species to *J. lindapowersae* is *J. culebranus* Petuch, Berschauer, and Poremski, 2016, a similar cone shell that is endemic to Culebra Island off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico. Although being consistently a solid cream-white shell devoid of any markings, *J. culebranus* has the same general shell profile as the new species and the same basic type of shell sculpture. The Culebra Island endemic, however, has a slightly more elongated shell with a much higher and more protracted spire.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the following inspired amateur malacologists for their generous donation of research specimens: Kevan and Linda Sunderland, Sunrise, Florida (for specimens of *Perotrochus sunderlandorum*); Werner Massier, Swakopmund, Namibia (for extra specimens of *Athleta easoni*); Damaso Monteiro, O Porto, Portugal and Fortaleza, Brazil (for specimens of *Jaspidiconus carvalhoi* and *Jaspidiconus ferreirai*); Linda Riley Powers, Englewood, Florida (for specimens of *Jaspidiconus lindapowersae*). We also thank the reviewers for their work on this manuscript.

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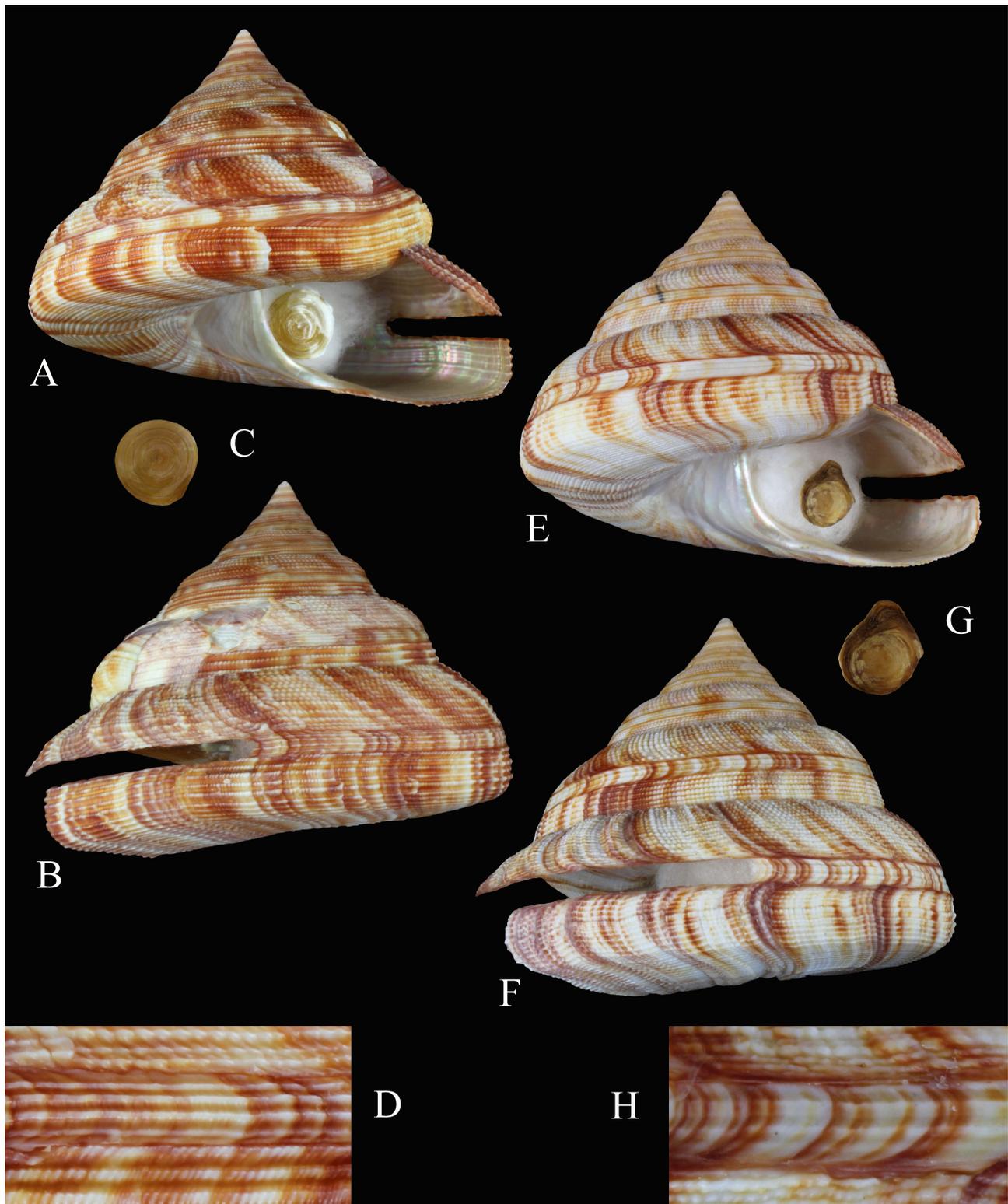


Figure 1. *Peritrochus* Species from the Southeastern Caribbean and Brazil.

A-D = Holotype of *Peritrochus sunderlandorum* n. sp., height = 49.1 mm, diameter = 59.0 mm; C = macro image of operculum; D = macro image of selenizone. E-H = *P. atlanticus* Rios and Matthews, 1968, height = 51.5 mm, diameter = 61.3 mm; G = macro image of operculum; H = macro image of selenizone.

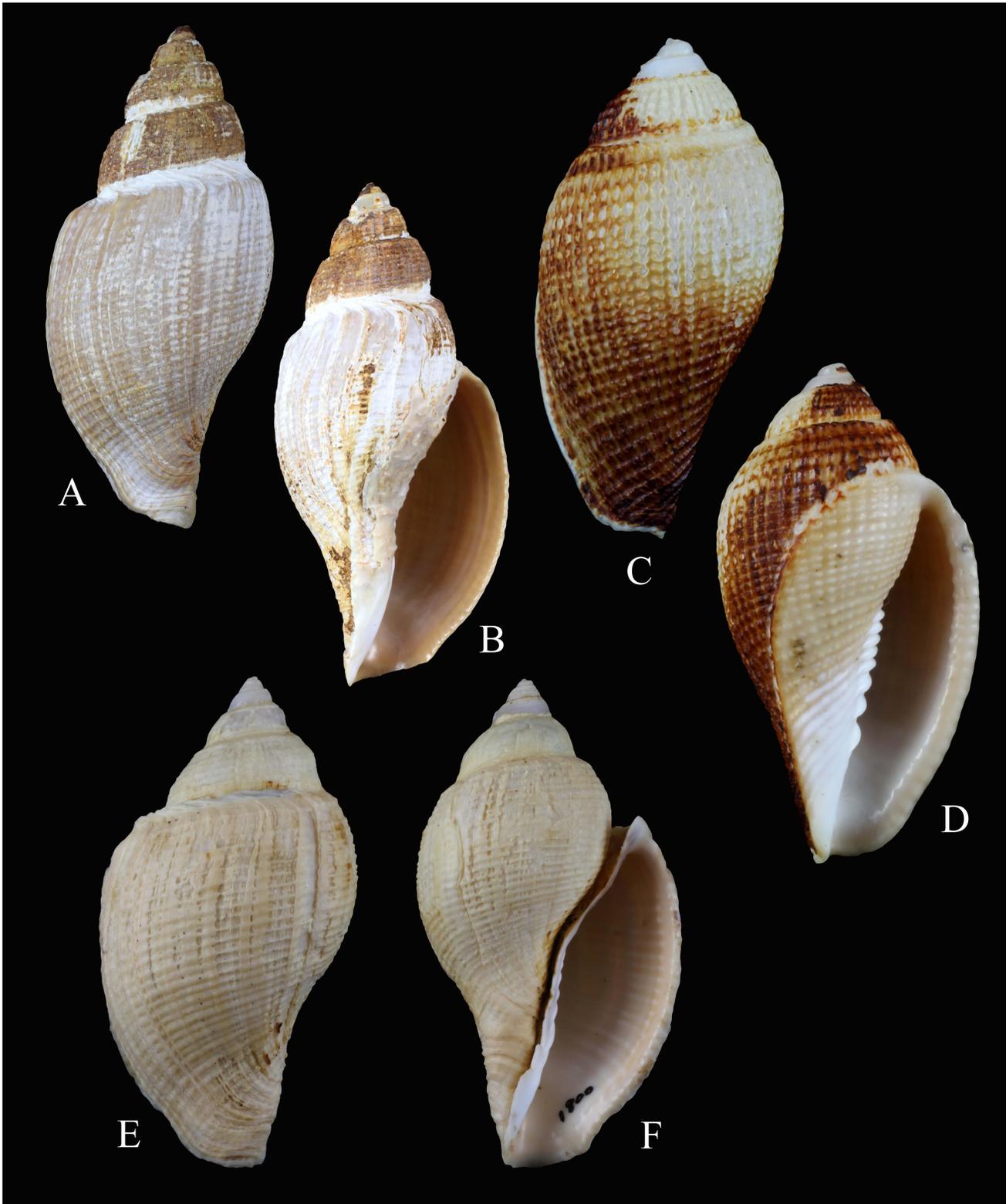


Figure 2. *Athleta Volutes* from Namibia, Southwestern Africa.

A, B = Holotype of *Athleta easoni* n. sp., length 88.6 mm; C, D = Holotype of *A. abyssicola massieri* Petuch and Berschauer, 2017, length 52.2 mm; E, F = *A. lutosa* (Koch, 1948), length 57.7 mm.

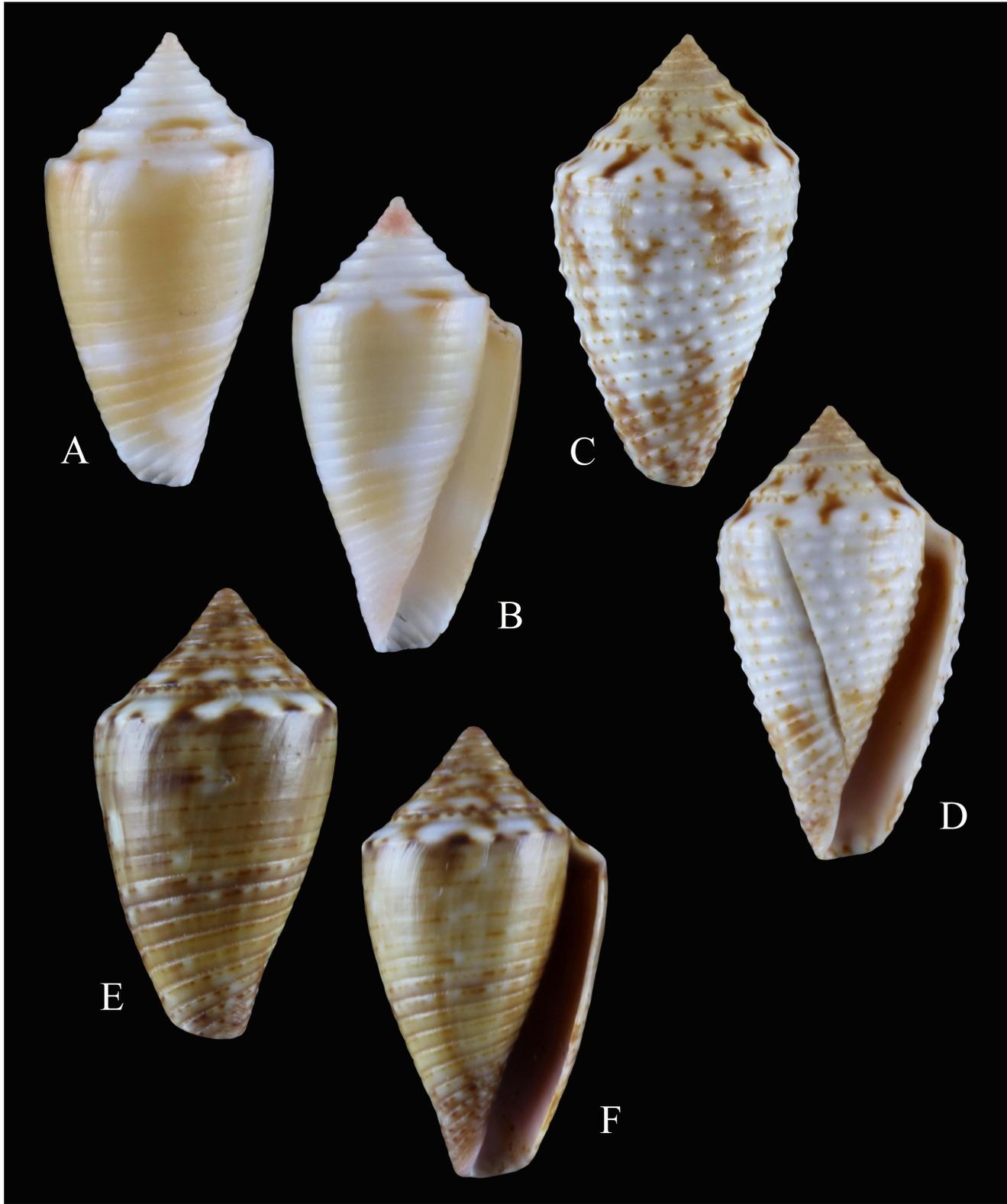


Figure 3. *Jaspidiconus* Species from the Miskito Cays and Dominican Republic.

A, B = Holotype of *Jaspidiconus carvalhoi* n. sp., length = 17.7 mm. C, D = Holotype of *Jaspidiconus ferreirai* n. sp., length = 20.9 mm. E, F = Holotype of *Jaspidiconus lindapowersae* n. sp., length 19.1 mm.