

Phyllonotus bellettii range extension

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ABSTRACT A newly discovered population of *Phyllonotus bellettii* Petuch, Berschauer & Powell 2024, has been identified on St. Vincent Island. These specimens were collected just South of Kingstown off Indian Bay Beach on St. Vincent Island. Their location is approximately 211 kilometers south of the recently reported habitat range from Guadeloupe Island in the French West Indies to Martinique, and constitutes a range extension of the species.

KEY WORDS Muricidae, *Phyllonotus*, *Phyllonotus bellettii*, St. Vincent Island, range extension

INTRODUCTION

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, sometimes referred to as Saint Vincent Island (or "SVG"), is an island in the eastern Caribbean. It is located in the southeast Windward Islands of the Lesser Antilles, which lie in the West Indies, at the southern end of the eastern border between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. To the north lies Saint Lucia, to the east is Barbados, and Grenada to the south.

Spanning a land area of 369 km² (*i.e.*, approximately 142 square miles), most of its territory consists of the northernmost island of Saint Vincent, which includes the capital and largest city, Kingstown. To the south lie two-thirds of the northern part of the Grenadines, a chain of 32 smaller islands; the remaining southern third make up Grenada. Seven of the islands are inhabited.

Christopher Columbus was the first European to reach the island in January of 1498 and named it after St. Vincent of Saragossa. Prior to the arrival of the Spaniards, the Kalinago natives called the island Youloumain, in honor of Youlouca, the spirit of the rainbows, who they believed inhabited the island.

The type locality of these specimens is reported by Petuch, Berschauer & Powell as:

"Off Pointe-Noir, Guadeloupe Island, French West Indies at 7 meters on coral rubble and sand. Its range was reported as "endemic to Martinique and Guadeloupe Islands of the French West Indies, but also may occur on the surrounding smaller islands..." (Petuch, Berschauer & Powell 2024: 202) This paper extends that range to St. Vincent Island.

METHODS

The specimens used in this study were diver-collected in the 1970's from St. Vincent Island, south of Kingstown off Indian Bay Beach.

Approximately 26 shells were collected, with 21 of those having an average length of 110.6 mm. Five of these specimens exceed 120 mm, with the largest being 134.0 mm.

SYSTEMATIC PART

Original Description: Petuch, Berschauer & Powell describe *P. bellettii* as:

"[S]hell large for genus, averaging around 93 mm in length; shell extremely inflated, heavy, with rounded sides and shoulder; spire elevated with sloping subsutural areas; suture encircled

by strong fimbriated rounded cord, equal in size to body whorl; shell widest around mid-body, ornamented with four proportionally low, wide, rounded, encircling ribs, and numerous fine, wavy, closely-packed strong longitudinal fimbriations; large, well-defined siphonal fasciole short, truncated, with shallow umbilicus; calcite frilly outer shell layer, color tan to ivory-white; aperture proportionately large, almost as large as body whorl, widely flaring; edge of lip sculptured with numerous thin tooth-like ribs; interior of aperture white, columella pale orange-tan.” (Petuch, Berschauer & Powell 2024: 202)

COMMENTS

The specimen shells shown in Plates 1 and 2 were diver collected by Dan Madura in 1975-77 from St. Vincent Island, south of Kingstown off Indian Bay Beach. These specimens constitute a significant range extension, and this extends the habitat range of *P. bellettii* another 211 kilometers south of Martinique and 355 kilometers south of Guadeloupe Island.

Phyllonotus bellettii is one of nine Muricidae species that inhabit the West Indies and whose range is now extended from the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique south to St. Vincent Island.



Figure 1. Map of the island chains from the Dominican Republic to Trinidad and Tobago. The French West Indies is identified with the red marker. From this marker, extending south are the islands of Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. St. Vincent is identified by the red arrow (Google Maps).

LITERATURE CITED

Petuch, E.J., D.P. Berschauer, & C.L. Powell, II. 2024. Two New Muricid Gastropods from the Tropical Americas. *The Festivus* 56(3):201-207.
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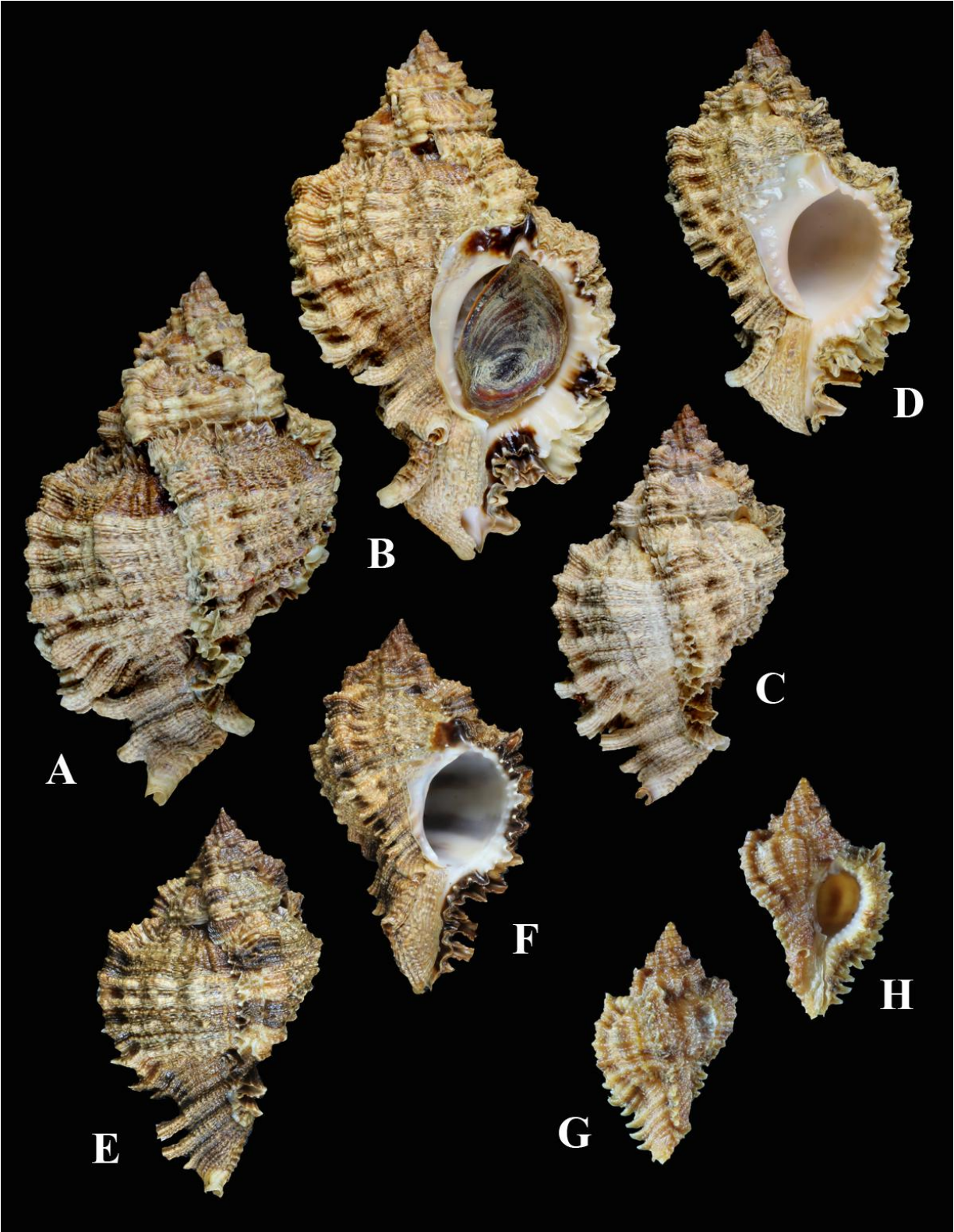


Plate1. *Phyllonotus belletii* from St. Vincent Island: A, B= 134.0 mm, C, D= 105.5 mm, E, F= 72.4 mm, and G, H= 23.0 mm.

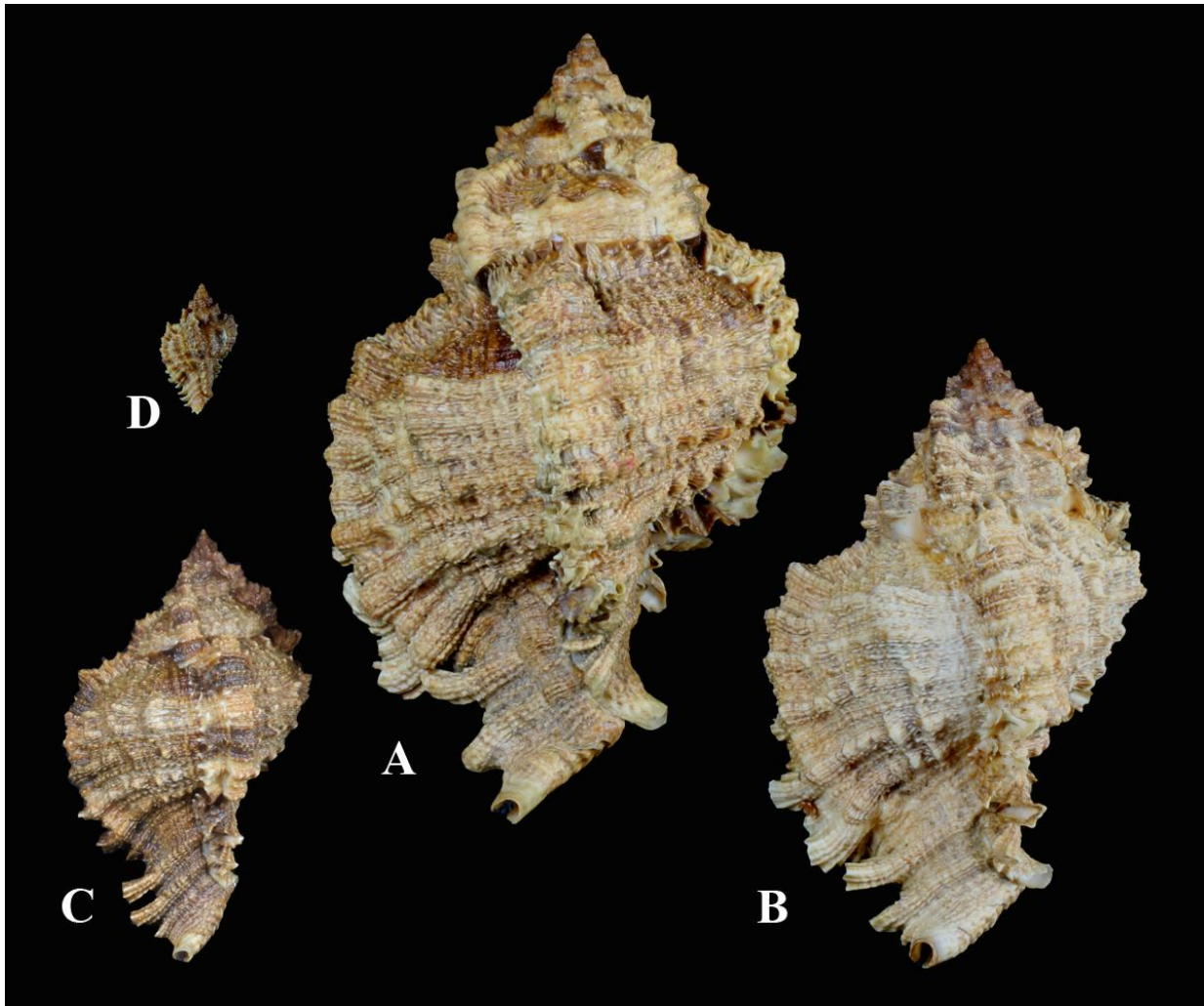


Plate 2. *Phyllonodus bellettii* size comparison of shells A-H shown in Plate 1: **A**= 134.0 mm, **B**= 105.5 mm, **C**= 72.4 mm and **D**= 23.0 mm.

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