

BOOK REVIEW

Malakozoologie in Stichworten by Klaus-Jürgen Götting. 2014. E. Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung (Nägele und Obermiller), Stuttgart, Germany, 2014, ISBN 978-3-510-65286-0 292pp, paperback. €29,90

Numerous books and vast amounts of scientific literature on molluscs and mollusc-related topics have been published in the past, covering a broad spectrum of different aspects, such as taxonomy, morphology, ecology and conservation biology, just to name a few. Despite the wealth of specialized literature, this recently published book is the first to combine an easy to understand introduction to molluscs, molluscan anatomy and current systematics combined with an extensive glossary of malacological terminology.

In the first section, the author briefly explains the general bodyplan of the phylum Mollusca, discusses its distribution and provides interesting historical background information, before introducing each of the eight classes of molluscs in more detail.

A set of schematic high-quality drawings give a simplified overview of the bodyplan of each taxon. The drawings are printed in colour, making comparisons of the internal morphology amongst different taxa very easy, especially for all those who are new to molluscan anatomy and want to know more about these highly diverse animals. The drawings are followed by introductory paragraphs for each of the classes, providing basic information on their eidonomy and anatomy as well as some ecological background. The text is supplemented by drawings and colour photographs of typical representatives of the respective taxa.

The most important and extensive part of the book is the comprehensive glossary of malacological terms, giving it the style of a "pocket dictionary of malacology". A wide range of terms used in molluscan morphology, development, physiology, ecology, taxonomy, behavior and linked to their cultural significance is covered. A couple of illustrations give the reader an impression how, for example, certain morphological features of the shell or different types of molluscan larvae look like. The dictionary section is not only useful when it comes to find out the meaning of a certain technical term that has turned up in scientific literature – it also piques the reader's curiosity and invites to thumb through and come

across terms like "toheroa", the Maori word for edible mesodesmatid bivalves, or "dongo", West African money made from *Achatina* shells.

The author has included and linked old termini that are hardly used anymore to their recent counterparts, which is especially helpful for non-professionals, students and upcoming malacologists who start working on old literature. The latter is, as the author emphasizes, the basis for all kinds of current research, making it necessary to prevent impending loss of knowledge on the terminology used in the "classical disciplines" anatomy and eidonomy amongst young scientists.

In addition to malacological terms, names of numerous marine and continental taxa down to generic level are included in the list, each with a brief description. Both scientific and common names (if available) are included in the glossary, and again linked to each other.

The book concludes with a couple of suggestions for further reading supplemented by a few internet sources and journals. An extensive appendix provides an overview of higher molluscan systematics, including tables of families in the context of higher taxonomic levels, separately for each class.

Malakozoologie – Weichtierkunde in Stichworten is well written and gives a nice and concise introduction to molluscan morphology, not as detailed as a zoology book (which was not the intention of the author), but ideal for all those interested in molluscs and zoology, amateur malacologists and biology students alike. The comprehensive and well-made dictionary section is the central part of the book and makes it a useful tool for working with malacological literature, as it explains scientific terms in an easily understandable way. Unfortunately the book is only available in German, which prevents it from being used by a much broader audience. All in all I can recommend the book — it contains a lot of helpful information, is easy to use and available at a very modest price.

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