

## MOON SHELLS

### List of species

1. *Mammilla simiae* (Deshayes, 1838)
2. *Naticarius alapapilionis* (Röding, 1798)
3. *Natica buriasiensis* Récluz, 1844
4. *Natica vitellus* (Linnaeus, 1758)
5. *Neverita didyma* (Röding, 1798)
6. *Notocochlis gualteriana* (Récluz, 1844)
7. *Paratectonatica tigrina* (Röding, 1798)
8. *Polinices albumen* (Linnaeus, 1758)
9. *Polinices mammilla* (Linnaeus, 1758)
10. *Sinum javanicum* (Gray, 1834)
11. *Tanea lineata* (Röding, 1798)

### Other species reported from Sri Lanka

- Conuber conicum* (Lamarck, 1822)  
*Mammilla kurodai* (Iw. Taki, 1944)  
*Polinices powisianus* (Récluz, 1844)  
*Sinum planulatum* (Récluz, 1843)  
 - Kirtisinghe, 1978  
*Tanea undulata* (Röding, 1798)  
 as *euzona* (Récluz, 1844)  
 - de Silva, 2006

## NATICIDAE Guilding, 1834

### Moon shells

Shells globular or oval, sometimes ear-shaped, spire small or depressed, and the body whorl large with a large semi-circular or pear-shaped aperture. Usually a large open umbilicus, sometimes partially or completely closed by callus or with an internal rib. Outer lip thin, the inner lip usually with some callus. Operculum entirely corneous or with an external layer of calcification. Glossy and polished or with low ornamentation. Found on sand or mud substrates. Carnivorous, preying on small burrowing bivalves and gastropods by drilling a hole through the shell.

The family is divided into several subfamilies, of which one (Ampullospirinae Cox, 1930) contains only fossil species.

- The subfamily Naticinae Forbes, 1838 contains species with a calcified, corneous operculum and an open umbilicus.
- The subfamily Polinicinae J. E. Gray, 1847 contains species with a corneous operculum and often a partly covered umbilicus.
- The subfamily Sininae Woodring, 1928 contains species with a thin, ear-shaped shell and a corneous operculum that is smaller than the aperture.

There are numerous genera; described below are members of the three extant subfamilies described above in the Malik Fernando collection.

(Poutiers, 1998; de Bruyne, 2003; Siddiqui et al, 2007.)





***Mammilla simiae***  
Actual size 27mm



***Naticarius alapapilionis***  
Actual size 18mm



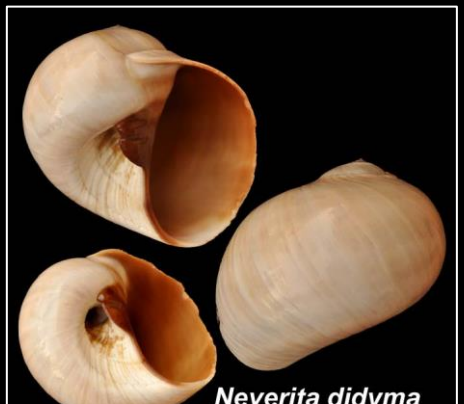
***Natica buriasiensis***  
Actual size 13.6mm



***Natica buriasiensis***  
Actual size 17.5mm



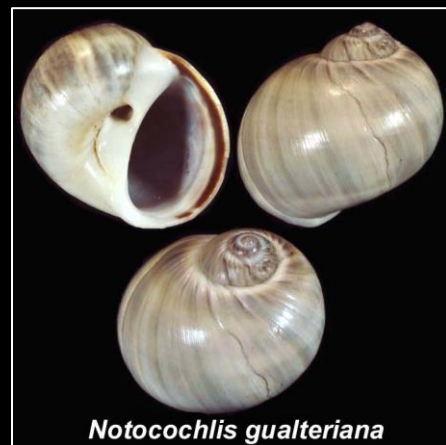
***Natica vitellus***  
Actual size 35mm



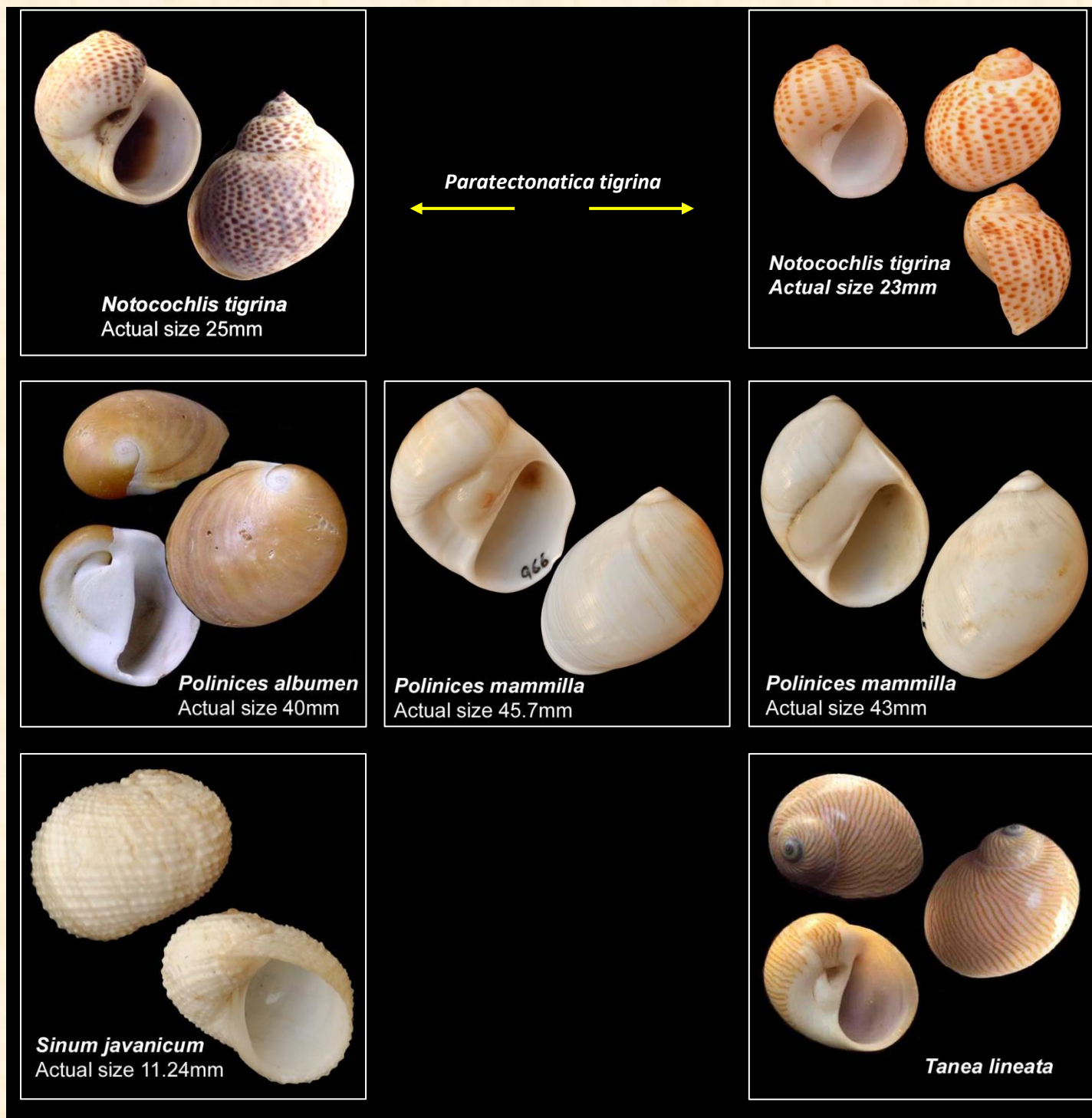
***Neverita didyma***  
Actual size 40mm



***Notocochlis gualteriana***  
Actual size 17.9mm



***Notocochlis gualteriana***



1. *Mammilla simiae* (Deshayes, 1838)

Monkey sand shell

Polinicinae

[*Natica simiae* Deshayes, 1838; *Polinices simiae* (Deshayes, 1838)]

Shell oval with pointed apex, spire minute. Aperture very large, columella callus obscuring umbilicus. Smooth and glossy, fine growth lines. Broad pale band at mid-body edged with maroon-brown, areas above and below mottled and axially striped with same colour over greyish background. A white sub-sutural band. Columella maroon-brown. Juvenile shell has a pale mid-body band over a light orange base, white sub-sutural line and pigmented columella.

26.85 x 23.42 mm (ht x w)

Kayankerny, Thennadi Bay, beached.



## 2. *Naticarius alapapilionis* (Röding, 1798) Butterfly moon snail Naticinae

[*Natica alapapilionis* Gray, 1825; *Glyphepithema alapapilionis* (Röding, 1797)]

Shell wider than tall, large body whorl, low spire and large semi-circular aperture. Suture channelled. The umbilicus is large with an internal rib occupying the posterior part. Greyish-pink in colour, with darker oblique axial bars, broken up into two spiral bands by off-white areas below the suture and mid-body and a white base. Characteristic of this species are four narrow spiral bands of white with brown dashes. In this specimen the upper band is quite distinct, the lowest merges with the white base, the other two are obscure. Outer lip and columella white, interior pinkish-brown.

The wide spiral white bands that interrupt the ground colour seen in this specimen are probably an aberration or variation in the pattern.

18 x 19 mm; 16.4 x 17.2 mm (ht x w)

Galle Harbour, "Pipe Wreck" site, 7 m, empty, by diving; Kalpitiya, no collection data, Coll. ACM Niyas.

- Eisenberg, 1989 p. 75; Kirtisinghe, 1978 p. 59, Abbott & Dance, 1982 p. 109. de Bruyne, 2003 p. 127

## 3. *Natica buriasiensis* Récluz, 1844 Traill's moon snail Naticinae

[*Natica trailli* (Pfeiffer, 1855)]

Shell bulbous with low spire, taller than wide, suture incised. Lip thin, smooth. Columellar callus spreads onto body whorl leaving a circular umbilical opening. Aperture pear-shaped with a shelly operculum. Ground colour white with a dense covering of pink-red to brick-red spots in various sizes: a row of large irregular blotches below the suture, two or three narrow white spiral bands with medium sized round to oval coloured spots, the upper band at mid-whorl, the others below. The intervals between these spiral bands show as dark bands as the small spots covering the rest of the shell are placed closer together. Interior and columella white, umbilicus and its anterior border reddish brown.

18.8 x 14.5 mm; 13 x 12.9 mm; 9.47 x 8.3 mm (ht x w). Shelly operculum 5.74 mm.

Mount Lavinia, Bellangala, 5 m, empty and live collection; Colombo, Palagala, 11 m, empty; all by diving.

- Abbott & Dance, 1982 p. 106 as *N. trailli*

## 4. *Natica vitellus* (Linnaeus, 1758) Calf or yolk or banded moon snail Naticinae

Shell swollen, low apex, large semi-circular aperture, inner lip callus, umbilicus widely open. Pinkish with a pale spiral band, base, aperture, interior white. Periostracum remnants reddish. Operculum calcareous on the outside, the straight edge serrated (left-hand image; inside, right-hand image).

35 x 38 mm.

Mannar Island, Pesalai anchorage beach, fishing trash - dead with operculum.

- Eisenberg, 1989 p. 75; de Bruyne, 2003 p. 129; Dance, 1977 p. 100 (not illustr), Hardy's Sea Shells accessed 29.3.2013.

## 5. *Neverita didyma* (Röding, 1798) Hepatic or bladder moon snail Polinicinae

[*Polinices didyma* (Reeve, 1850); *Polinices (Neverita) didyma*]

Shell wider than tall, large, inflated body whorl, low spire. Aperture pear-shaped. The umbilicus hidden by an overhanging tongue-shaped columellar callus with a deep median groove. Smokey-pink to honey coloured with axial streaks of grey or cream, spire grey, underside whitish, columellar callus honey, interior honey coloured.

40 x 41 mm; 32.14 x 45.34 mm

- Eisenberg, 1989 p. 76; Abbott, 1994 p. 48; Kirtisinghe, 1978 p. 59; Abbott & Dance, 1982 p. 102.

## 6. *Notocochlis gualteriana* (Récluz, 1844) Wrinkled moon snail Naticinae

[As *Naticarius rufilabris* (synonym) in Kirtisinghe, 1978]

Shell globular with low spire, pointed apex. Suture channelled. Whorls rounded. Aperture elliptical, outer lip thin, columella concave, posterior part of inner lip spreading onto body whorl, anterior part giving rise to a rib partially obscuring the umbilicus. Exterior smooth and glossy except for subsutural wrinkles fading into growth lines. Grey and cream axial streaks, inside of outer lip cinnamon, interior greyish, columella off white.

See also photo of Niyas collection specimen from Kalpitiya.

17.85 x 19.1 mm (ht x w)

Kalkudah, beached, crab occupied; Kalpitiya, collected by ACM Niyas.

- Eddie Hardy website; Kirtisinghe as *Naticarius rufilabris* p. 92 (Synonym).

## 7. *Paratectonatica tigrina* (Röding, 1798) Tiger moon snail Naticinae

[*Natica tigrina* Gray, 1825; *Notocochlis tigrina* (Röding, 1798); *Natica maculosa* Lamarck, 1822]

Shell taller than wide, small spire with pointed apex, about 3 whorls, aperture pear-shaped, umbilicus open and partly filled by an internal rib. Ground colour cream overlaid by numerous small spots or dashes, forming oblique spiral rows in some, crowded and random in others. The spots dark brown or lighter-coloured, tending to be brownish-pink in faded shells. Underside and interior whitish.

Kalpitiya 21 x 18 mm; Palavi 5 nos.: 24 x 21, 24 x 22 19 x 16 mm; Serakkuli 31 x 25 mm (ht x w)

Kalpitiya, beached, Coll. Upali Mallikarachchi; Puttalam, Palavi salterns, roadside ditch, empty, faded; Puttalam, Vanathavillu, Karativu, Serakkuli, fishing trash.

- Apte, 1998 p 42; Siddiqui et al, 2007 p. 138.

8. *Polinices albumen* (Linnaeus, 1758)

[*Neverita albumen* (Linnaeus, 1758)]

Egg-white or albumen moon snail

Polinicinae

Flattened shell with a distended body whorl and a flat underside. The spire depressed, suture channelled. A thick callus fills the underside, the umbilicus ending in a curved groove. 4 cm.

Flattened shell with a distended body whorl and a flat underside. The spire depressed; suture channelled. A thick callus fills the underside, the umbilicus ending in a curved groove. Surface smooth, pinkish-brown on the upper side, white underneath. 40 mm.

Katukurunda, beached specimen, Gamini Gamage collection, Biodiversity Secretariat.

- Eisenberg, 1989 p. 75; Abbott, 1994 p. 49; Kirtisinghe, 1978 p. 59.

9. *Polinices mammilla* (Linnaeus, 1758)

[*Polinices pyriformis*, *P. tumidus*]

Pear-shaped moon snail

Polinicinae

Shells taller than wide, oval, thick and heavy, the aperture semi-circular. Spire protrudes to varying degrees. Suture barely visible. Glossy and polished (all shells collected were empty ones). Umbilicus covered by a thick callus. White.

14 x 12, 16.8 x 14, 22.62 x 18.48, 25.2 x 19.22, 45.62 x 41.58 mm (height x width).

Mount Lavinia, Hotel Bay, beached, crab occupied; Maggona, Thudawa Bay, SBFH, fishing trash; Galle Harbour, "Pipe Wreck" site, 6 m, empty; Kayankerni, Thennadi Bay, beached, the largest collected.

Kirtisinghe, 1978 illustrates *P. conica*—a synonym of *Conuber conicum* (Lamarck, 1822)—that appears indistinguishable from *P. pyriformis*. Internet images show a horn-coloured shell similar to *mammilla* but with a small umbilical opening below the thick callus.

- Siddiqui et al, 2007 p. 141 as *P. tumidus* (Swainson, 1840): Eisenberg, 1989 p. 76; Abbott, 1994 p. 48; Kirtisinghe, 1978 p. 58 as *P. pyriformis*; Abbott & Dance, 1982 p. 102.

10. *Sinum javanicum* (Gray, 1834)

Flat baby ear moon snail Sininae

Shell wider than tall, small and light with flat spire and large aperture. Suture deeply channelled. Umbilicus open. Ornamented with spiral cords crossed by growth lines, the intersections granular. Exterior and interior white, the protoconch purple-brown. Operculum thin and transparent.

11 x 12 mm. Said to grow up to 60 mm (Eisenberg, 1989).

Mount Lavinia First Reef, 1/2 mile south of Bellangala, 5 m, on rock, live collected.

- Eisenberg, 1989 p. 76; Kirtisinghe, 1978 p. 58; Abbott & Dance, 1982 p. 103.

11. *Tanea lineata* (Roding, 1798)

[*Naticarius lineatus* (Röding, 1798)]

Lined moon shell

Naticinae

Not collected by the author. A photograph of a shell in the A.C.M. Niyas collection from Kalpitiya is illustrated.

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