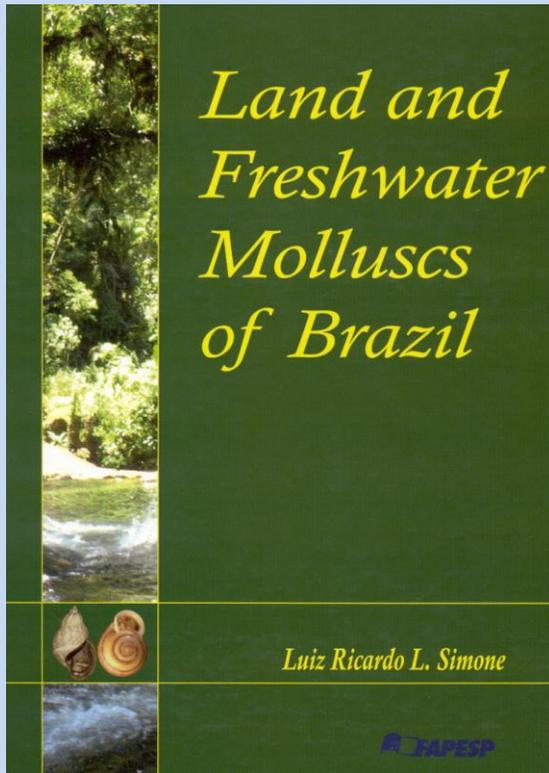


Luiz Ricardo L. Simone. 2006. *Land and Freshwater Molluscs of Brazil*. Museu de Zoologia Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil. 390 pp. including over 1100 text figures. ISBN 859066700-6. 8.5 by 11 in. Hardback; in English. \$125.00 from US booksellers; 92.5 to 94 Euros in Europe.



This large-scale work is a timely and sorely-needed remedy for one of the most stark deficiencies in the global inventory of molluscan biodiversity. The author has recruited no less than 70 identified collaborators and used the resources of 27 prominent institutional collections to formulate a presentation of 1074 native and 33 introduced species level molluscan taxa inhabiting the land and fresh waters of Brazil and/or nearby areas. The composition of this native nonmarine fauna: about 700 terrestrial and over 370 aquatic; over 950 gastropods and 116 pelecypods, invites comparison with others such as the USA, where freshwater clams are notably more speciose, and nonmarine snails occur in roughly comparable diversity.

The work is organized thus: a one page Introduction, four pages of legends and acknowledgements, a Table of Contents, which is a systematic outline of taxa treated, 278 pages of consistently-formatted illustrations and companion text blocks in telegraphic style, a bibliography of 2696 titles, and a index of all taxa from phylum to

species-level, the later presented trivial name first.

The format is simple and efficient. The Introduction indicates the method of presentation of taxa, each consecutively numbered in a conventional phylogenetic sequence (genera non-alphabetical in family unit, but species alphabetical within genus). The reiterative eye-catching marginal icons (up to four) in each text block are explained: geographic distribution (blue globe); literature citations (red printed page); source of companion figure, each of which is like-numbered (green eyeball); a non-critical synonymy (equal sign on orange); and “N.B.” for random notations when appended. The English diction is deficient on this page, but the author’s intent is generally comprehensible.

One defining feature of the work is enunciated in the Introduction: Simone characterizes the figures a “normally based on type specimens.” Close perusal confirms this as the case, with name-bearing types from virtually all of the cited (27) institutional collections being depicted in dedicated photographs. For the exceptions, it is apparent that paratypes, voucher specimens, iconotypes, and other levels of authenticity were assiduously pursued and exploited; for the slug groups this proved generally impossible. The photographs are generally of high fidelity, with appropriate magnification to facilitate identification. About three dozen photographic vignettes, mostly of living snails, appropriately placed at various points add a dimension of vitality.

Bibliographic citations are arranged in near flawless alphabetical-chronological sequence and numbered consecutively. One or more such numbers appear in each text block, and an attempt is made to them with one to six lower case code letters indicating if the work contained a description, figure, etc. Regrettably there are many omission of the important “o” code, which indicates “original,” as in description. The concerned reader must alphabetically search the bibliography using author and date expressed after the binomen at the heading of such entries. Perhaps unfortunately, the works of d’Orbigny and Pilsbry are particularly prone to this oversight. The fidelity of the citations appears to be excellent, although *Bahiensis miliola* (no. 591) appears to date from d’Orbigny, 1837 rather than 1835 as stated (Pilsbry, 1901:32; Sherborn and Griffin, 1934). A minor and easily remediable bibliographic nuisance is the lack of identification of the G. B. Sowerbys by generation.

In the course of the work several generic reassignments (clearly marked as “n. comb.”) are installed and *nomina nuda* revealed. Species no. 1071 *Byssanodonta riograndensis* (Ihering and Morretes, 1949) is thus designated, but a photograph of an ANSP specimen accompanies this entry. Even though the Code (ICZN, 1999: Article 13.1.1), since 1930, has not recognized a binomen and figure indication in the absence of a written description as basis for an available name – in this instance attributable to Simone - an explanation for his treatment of this apparent taxon would be welcome by the reader. Simone think this is a valid, un-named taxon?

The specimen figure on p. 309 captioned *Lamellaxis clavinulus* (Potiez and Michaud, 1838) appears not to be that species but *L. micrus* (d’Orbigny, 1835), which is treated as *Allopeas micra* [sic] on p. 184. On p. 312, Europe is given as the origin of the non-native *Bradybaena similaris* (Férussac, 1821). It is more likely from east Asia.

There are technical problems with the typesetting like wholesale deletion of dozens of single letters, particularly noteworthy on page 23, and the occasional misspelling or improper diacritical mark can be a minor distraction.

The foregoing minor critique notwithstanding, Simone’s book is monumental. It is a prodigious work in both scope and the quality of the research. It is certain that all serious workers will find it indispensable in the understanding of the extensive and complex Neotropical malacofauna. On another plane, its application to the analysis of other major world faunas will impel us to a better appreciation of the systematics, evolution, zoogeography, and macroecology of nonmarine Mollusca on a global scale.

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