Genus Armiger Hartmann, 1840 (family Planorbidae)

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The genus Armiger is one of the most species-poor in the family Planorbidae. At the same time it is one of the two genera of the family, which are characterized by a Holarctic distribution. The genus includes 15 nominal species and infraspecific forms: Nautilus cristina Linnaeus, 1758; Turbo nautilus Linnaeus, 1767; Planorbus imbricatus Muller, 1774; P. cristina Draparnaud, 1805; P. cristina var. spinulosus Clessin, 1873; P. cristina var. bietzi Kimakowski, 1884; P. annandalei Germain, 1918; Armiger jagellonensis B. Dybowsky et Grochmalicki, 1922; A. sobieskianus B. Dybowsky et Grochmalicki; 1922, A. gedyminis Pis B. Dybowsky et Grochmalicki, 1922; A. vitoldianus B. dybowsky et Grochmalicki, 1922; A. paravitoldianus B. Dybowsky et Grochmalicki; 1922, Planorbus cristina var. inermis Lindholm, 1926, Armiger schamaricus Izzatullaev, 1972; A. jankovskjajae Izzatullaev, 1984.

The majority of malacologists regards all (or almost all) these names as synonyms of Armiger cristina. In fact it is nearly so. Lindholm [1926] clearly demonstrated that Turbo nautilus and Planorbus imbricatus are synonyms of the typical Armiger cristina. As for the latter name, it is supported by reference to Linnaeus [1758] and Rosel [1755], who published pictures, on which the Linnaeus’ description has been based. Planorbus cristatus is also evidently a synonym of Armiger cristina, judging from both the diagnosis and the picture. Clessin’s P. cristina var. spinulosus is a strongly sculptured A. cristina. Planorbus cristina var. bietzi differs from A. cristina not only in the absence of periostral ribs but also in the position of rounded peripheral angle, which is disposed near the periphery but not near the upper surface. After the study of rich European material, we may state that both A. cristina and A. bietzi have ribbed and ribless specimens. Ribbed specimens of the former species have widely spaced ribs (7-19 on the last whorl), whereas those of the latter have more crowded ribs (26-32 on the last whorl).

Three of the five Armiger species described by B. Dybowsky and Grochmalicki (A. jagellonensis, A. sobieskianus, and A. gedyminis) are doubtless synonyms of A. cristina, whereas the two other (A. vitoldianus and A. paravitoldianus) are synonyms of A. bietzi, as it is evidenced by the descriptions and photographs. Formally Planorbus cristina var. inermis was established for ribless specimens of both A. cristina and A. bietzi as a new name for P. nautilus auct. non Linnaeus, 1767. However the specimen in the collection of Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint-Petersburg, identified by Lindholm himself, belongs to A. bietzi.

Summing up, we may state that only two species were described from Europe. A careful