

***Pupoides coenopictus* (Hutton, 1834) from an archaeological site in the southern Negev, Israel**

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A single shell of *Pupoides coenopictus* is reported from the excavation of a PPNB-site in Nahal Issaron, southern Negev, Israel. It is the second find of this palaeotropical species at an archaeological site in Israel.

A settlement in Nahal Issaron was excavated by Nigel Goring-Morris (Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem) and Avi Gopher in 1980-1981 as part of an archaeological rescue operation in Biq'at 'Uvdah, southern Negev, Israel. The excavation resulted among others in the find of a rich molluscan assemblage, especially in layer C, which was dated to the Pre Pottery Neolithic „B”-period (PPNB). Most of the molluscs are from the Red Sea and show traces of manipulation i.e. they were transformed into either shellbeads or shellpendants (Goring-Morris & Gopher, 1983). These molluscs are currently being studied in more detail by Mrs. D. Bar-Yosep (Cambridge, U.S.A.). A landsnail among that material was submitted for identification to the author.

This shell turned out to belong to *Pupoides coenopictus* (Hutton, 1834) (fig. 1) (Fam. Pupillidae), a rare palaeotropical element in the fauna of Israel.

It is not the first time that this species is reported from a archaeological site in Biq'at 'Uvdah. Recently I was able to report several specimens from an Early Bronze site in the same area (Mienis, 1990).

Living specimens of *Pupoides coenopictus* have been found so far only near 'En Gedi, on the west bank of the Dead Sea (Mienis, 1974), however, it is most probably also living elsewhere since empty shells are known from drift of the Dead Sea at quite a number of other localities (Mienis, 1974 & 1979).

Since the PPNB-period is dated in the Near East by means of a large number of C-14

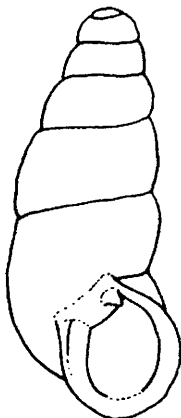


Fig. 1: *Pupoides coenopictus* (Hutton, 1834) Actual height 4.6 mm.

analyses to 7800/7500 – 6000/5800 BCE (Bar-Yosef, 1985), the shell from *Nahal* Issaron proves that *Pupoides coenopictus* was already present in the area some 8000–9000 years ago.

I like to thank Mrs. D. Bar-Yosef for allowing me to study the discussed shell.

Literature

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