

A REVISION OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPECIES OF THE RISSOELLIDAE. (MOLLUSCA: GASTROPODA)

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SUMMARY

The Rissoellidae is tentatively included in the Heterogastropoda. The 14 Australian species and subspecies of *Rissoella*, 11 of which are new, are separated into 4 subgenera. Their known distributions, radulae and opercula, and in some cases the external features of the animal, are described. A key to the Australian species is given.

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INTRODUCTION

The family Rissoellidae consists of small, rather featureless gastropods found living mainly on algae in the lower littoral and shallow sublittoral zones throughout the world. It is in general, a poorly known group and contains only one genus. The anatomy of only 2 species has been described (Fretter, 1948) and the radulae of a few species have been described by Thiele (1912, 1925), Sars (1878), Troschel (1858) and Robertson (1961) but only the New Zealand fauna has been fully investigated (Ponder, 1966, 1968). Robertson (1961, 1962) has listed the taxa included in the Rissoellidae and discussed the generic units involved.

The two British species studied by Fretter (1948) were shown to have two pairs of tentacles, brightly pigmented spots on the mantle area and no ctenidium. They are hermaphroditic and a few adults survive the winter and produce hemispherical egg capsules from which emerge the crawling young, there being no pelagic larval stage. They feed on micro-algae and detritus and have a simple alimentary canal.