

*What the author's
Comments*

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M A L T E S E N A M E S
O F L O C A L M A R I N E
M O L L U S C A

BY

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MALTESE NAMES OF LOCAL MARINE MOLLUSCA

by GUIDO LANFRANCO

We have about 500 species of marine mollusca around our islands, but only just over a 100 have Maltese names. Many species of mollusca are rare, others very similar to each other, and the undiscerning layman does not find much difference to justify new names. In my opinion, every one of the local mollusca (and for that matter all other organisms) should have a Maltese name. If a shell does not have a name, it means that it is either too similar to others which have, or else it is a new discovery; in any case, once it is distinguished, and if we intend to make use of Maltese to indicate it, it will be ridiculous to accept that a name already belonging to a known species, should be used also for a similar or new shell; equally so would be, not to have a name by which to refer to it. Since time has not produced vernacular names for all the species around us because of the said or other reasons, we cannot expect names suddenly to develop now, but such names could be given by those who know the species concerned, and their peculiarities. In this short work, my intention is merely to state what already exists, but this is a basis, on which later on I intend to make proposals for a Maltese nomenclature to distinguish the unchristened species. The present list, though brief, has taken some effort to complete. It embraces the known names which have either appeared in conjunction with a scientific name, therefore validated as to what they really refer to, or else names which have been used in natural history writings, which may have lacked the technical terms, but had some ~~other~~ clear indication. In other cases I have included with references, names of doubtful value, which don't indicate which species they define; they are usually names applicable to more than one similar species, and unless accompanied by some specific scientific

name, cannot be said to pin-point any particular species of seashell. The scientific names I have used, are in current use, and supersede the old. The synonymous names I have included, constitute only the technical names used by the past writers involved in this list, in conjunction with the Maltese names. This will clarify which species is indicated. In actual fact, if I were to list all the synonyms for each species, these would normally be very numerous and unwieldy, occupying most of the paper space. It will be obvious that there has been a lot of confusion amongst authors with reference to local names. Some were applied to the wrong species, others, by far the larger amount, have been very loosely used for several similar species, as, for example, in the case of those falling under *Glycimeris*, *Ostrea*, *Lima* (*Mantellum*), *Lucina*, *Cardium*, *Venerupis*, *Cephalopoda*, etc.. The foreign authors (16, 17) have generally played havoc of vernacular spelling, and created other misplacements. It is not my intention to enter into etymological problems, but this list may prove useful to local linguists, and also others who wish to bring up to date the older scientific nomenclature of the species involved here. Eventually I hope to provide proposals for names in Maltese for all our mollusca, so that those we find will no longer be strangers, but part of one, big, family of Maltese.

Note: Numbers in brackets indicate references at the end of the list.

GASTROPODA ("Univalves")

- 1 *Haliotis lamellosa* Lam. (13, 16, 17)
 = *H. tuberculata* Linn (5, 7, 9, 11, 18).
 Mhara imperjale (5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18)
- 2 *Diodora graeca*, L = *Fissurella graeca* Lam. (7, 11)
 Mhara (7) *Mhara tat-torok* (11)
- 3 *Diodora italica* Depr.
 = *Fissurella costaria* (5, 11, 18) *Mhara tat-torok* (5, 11, 18)

- 4 Diodora gibberula Lam.
= *Fissurella gibba* (7,11,14); *Imhara tat-Torok*(11);
Mhara(7); *Imhara imperjali* (14).
- 5 Undefined species: *Fissurella* sp., *Mhara* (8)
- 6 Patella coerulea L.(16,17)
Mhara tas-Samma(16); *Mhara tal-Furhan*(16); *Imhara* (16);
Imhara(17) must be an error.
- 7 Patella aspera Lam. (7,11,14)
Imhara tal-Furhan(11,14); *Mhara* (7)
- 8 Patella aspera Var. tarentina v.Sal
= *P. tarentina* (7,11); = *P. scutellaris*(5,11,18); = *P. vulgata* Lam.(2)
Imhara tal-Furhan (5,11,18); *Mhara* (2,7)
- 9 Patella lusitanica Gmel. (5,11,14,18)
Imhara tal-Furhan(14); *Mhara tas-samma* (5,11,18)
- 10 Undefined species: *Imhara tas-samma*(14); *Imhar* (11);
Mhar (var. spec.) (13); *Inhar* (1) for 'patelle'.
- 11 Monodonta turbinata Born (17)
Sgorra (17) should be *Sgorra*; but still this name does not apply.
- 12 Clanculus corallinus Gmel
+ *Monodonta corallina* L. (5,18); = *Monodonta* (11);
Frawla (5,18); *Frawla tal-Bakar* (11).
- 13 Lemintina arenaria L.
= *Vermetus gigas* Biv.(5,7,18); = *Serpula arenaria* (11,14);
Farrett (5,7,11,14,18).
- 14 Undefined species: *Vermetus* sp.(11); *Farrett* (11)
- 15 Pirinella conica Blainv.
= *Cerithium mammillatum* Riss. (7); = *Cerithium conicum* Blainv.(7);
Brankutlu (7)
- 16 Bittium lacteum Phil
= *Cerithium elegans* Blainv.(7); *Brankutlu* (7).
- 17 Gourmya vulgata Brug.
= *Ulgocerithium vulgatum* Brug.(16); = *Cerithium vulgatum*(3,4,5,7,8,
Brankutlu(3,4,5,7,8,15,16,17,18). 15,16,17,18)

- 18 Gourmya rupestris Riss.
= *Cerithium mediterraneum* Desh. (7)
= *Cerithium fuscatum* Costa (7); Brankutlu (7)
- 19 Undefined Species: *Cerithium* = Barnkutlu (7,9,10,14)
- 20 Janthina fragilia Lam.
= *Janthina bicolor* Menke (3,11,14); Bebbuxa kahla (3,11,14)
- 21 Janthina janthina Linn.
= *Janthina nitens* (3); Bebbuxa kahla (3).
- 22 Fossarus ambiguus L.
= *Fossarus adansonii* Phil. (5,18); Rokkalja (5,18).
- 23 Capulus hungaricus L.
= *Pileopsis hungarica* Lam. (5,11,14,18)
Kapoć (31,14,18); Kaboć (5) misprinted, must be Kapoć.
- 24 Crepidula unguiformis Lam. (5,7,9,11,14,18)
Papoć (5,7,9,11,14,18)
- 25 Aporrhais pes-pellicani L.
= *Chenopus (Strombus) pes-pellicani* L. (5,18)
= *Chenopus pes-pellicani* Phil. (7).
Trikorri (5,18); Trikolpi (7,10,13); Trianglu (10,13); Settikolpi (7,10)
- 26 Trivia europaea Mtg. (7)
= *Cypraea coccinella* Lam. (3,11,14); Bahbuha ramlija (3,7,11,14)
- 27 Luria lurida L.
= *Cypraea lurida* L. (3,5,7,9,11,14,18,19);
Bahbuha (5,9,18); Bahbuha tal-Ghajnejn (3,7,11,14,19)
- 28 Erosaria spurca L.
= *Cypraea flavicula* Lam. (3,11,14); Bahbuha ittigrata (3,11,14).
- 29 Zonaria pyrum Gmel.
= *Cypraea rufa* Lam. (3,11,14); = *Cypraea pyrum* L. (3);
Bahbuha hamra (3,11,14).
- 30 Undefined species: Bahbuha (1).
- 31 Neverita josephina Riss.
= *Natica josephina* Riss. (7); Ghakrux il-Bahar (7).
- 32 Naticarius millepunctatus Lam.
= *Natica millepunctata* Lam. (5,7,18); Ghakrux (5,18); Ghakrux il-Bahar (7)

- 33 Naticarius hebraeus Martyn
= *Natica hebraea* Chemb. (7,8); Ghakrux il-Bahar (7,8)
- 34 Undefined Species: *Natica species* (9); Ghakrux il-Bahar (9,10).
- 35 Charonia nodifera Lam.
= *Tritonium nodiferum* Lam. (5,18); Bronja (5,18)
- 36 Charonia sequezuae Ar. & Ben.
= *Triton variegatum* Lam. (2,3,11,14).
Bronja (2); Bronja tal-Midhna (3,10,11,13,14).
- 37 Tonna galea L.
= *Dolium galea* L. (11,14); Tina tal-bahar (10,11,13,14)
- 38 Trunculariopsis trunculus L.
= *Murex trunculus* L. (3,5,7,8,9,11,14,15,16,17,18)
Bekkum (1,3,5,7,8,9,11,14,15,16,17,18)
- 39 Murex brandaris L. (2,3,7,8,9,11,14,15,17);
Bekkum (2); Sultan il-bekkum (3,7,8,9,10,11,13,14,15,17)
- 40 Muricopsis cristatus Brocchi.
= *Murex cristatus*, Brocc. (7,11,14); = *Murex blainvillei* Payr. (7);
= *Murex fortis* Riss. (7); Bekkum kekni (7,10,11,14)
- 41 Thais haemastoma L.
= *Purpura haemastoma* Lam. (3,10,11,14); = *P. haemastoma* Linn (8);
Bronja (3,8,10,11,13,14)
- 42 Undefined species: Bronja (1).
- 43 Ceratostoma erinaceum Linn
= *Murex erinaceus* Linn. (17); = *Tritonella erinacea* Linn. (17);
Bekkum (17); apparently a name given to the wrong species.
- 44 Euthria cornea Adams (15)
= *Fusus* (*Murex*) *corneus* L. (5); = *Fusus* (*Murex*) *miliacea* (18);
= *Fusus lignarius* (11); = *Fusus corneus* Linn. (8,9); Form of *Fusus* (10)
Gharus (7,9,15); Gharusa (8,10); Zigromblu (8,10);
Zigromblu tal-Bahar (7,9); Harus (5,18) mistake by 5, repeated by 18.
- 45 Gibberula miliaria Linn.
= *Marginella* (*Uvularia*) *miliacea* Lam. (5,18);
= *Marginella miliaris* Lam. (7); Lewlu (5,7,18)

- 46 Gibberula clandestina Brocchi
= Marginella clandestina (7) Qamha (7)
- 47 Hyalina secalina Phil
= Marginella secalina Phil. (5,7,18); Qamh (5,18); Qamha (7).
- 48 Undefined species: Marginella species, (11)
Lewlu (11); Kamla tal-bahar (11) must be a mis-spelling of Qamha
"...il-felua" = Vulva (1)(italian) (Volvula)?; no indication as to
where this should be in this list, as it is incomplete.
- 49 Conus mediterraneus Brug. (5,7,9,18)
= Vonus mediterraneus (18) must be a misprint.
Sgorra (5,7,18); Zgorra (9).
- 50 Haminea hydatis Linn.
= Bulla hydatis L. (5,7,9,11,14,18)
Bajdet tas-serduk (5,18); Bajdet tal-Bahar(7); Bajda tal-Bahar(9,11,14)
- 51 Aplysia depilans L. (5,6,14,18)
Serduk (5,18); Serduk il-Bahar (6,14)
- 52 Chiton olivaceus Spleng.
= Chiton siculus Gray (5, 18); Hanzir il-Bahar (5,18)
- 53 Dentalium (Antalis) dentalis Linn.
= Dentalium dentalis (7,11,14); Xifa tal-bahar (7,11,14)

B I U A L U J A

- 54 Solemya togata Poli
= Solemya mediterranea Lam. (5,18); Fazola tal-bahar (5,18)
- 55 Barbatia barbata Linn.
= Arca barbata (7,9,11,14,15); Spardokklu (7,9,11,14);
Fardokklu (7,9); Pjediport supi (11,44); Masklu tal-alka (15)
- 56 Arca noae Linn (11,14,15,17)
= Arca noae Lam. (5,18); Pedipork (1,5,11,14,15,17,18)
- 57 Glycimeris violaceus Lam. (16)
= Pectunculus stellatus Lam. (5, 18); Arzella tal-Bellus(5,16,18)
Gandoffla tal-bellus (16); Gandoffla bellusija (16).

- 58 Glycimeris glycimeris Linn. (17)
 = Pectunculus glycimeris L. (17); = Pectunculus glycimeris Forb. & Hely (15)
 Arzella tal-Bellus (17); Gandoffla tal-bellus (15).
- 59 Glycimeris pilosa Linn
 = Pectunculus pilosus Lam. (3, 11, 14)
 Bellusa (3, 11, 14); Arzella tal-Bellus (11)
- 60 Mytilus edulis L. Var. galloprovincialis Lam.
 = Mytilus galloprovincialis Lam (5, 16, 17, 18)
 = Mytilus edulis Linn. (7, 11) with the varieties galloprovincialis
 and angulatus (14, 15); Masklu (5, 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18)
- 61 Modiolus barbatus Lam.
 = Modiola barbata Lam. (7, 11, 14, 17);
 Masklu tal-Alka (7, 11, 14, 17); Zinzla tal-Bahar (11, 14).
- 62 Modiola adriatica Lam.
 = Modiola tulipa Lam. 5, 8, 18); Tamra tal-alka (5, 8, 18).
- 63 Amygdalium (Modiola) agglutinans Cantr.
 = Modiola zizyphina Mamo (5, 18); = Modiola vestita Phil (5, 8, 12, 18)
 = Modiola agglutinans Cantr. (15); = Modiola ligatus Mamoi (2);
 Zinzla (2, 5, 8, 12, 15, 18); Tamra (18-p9)
- 64 Undefined species: Maskli (18); Masklu (9); Zinzla (10).
- 65 Lithodomus lithophaga Linn (7, 15, 16, 17)
 = Modiola lithophaga Lam. (2, 5, 7, 8, 11); = Lithodomus dactylus (5);
 = Lithophaga lithophaga (16, 17). Tamra (5, 15, 16, 17);
 Tamla (8); Tamar tal-Hagra (11); Tamla tal-Hagra (7);
 Tamar tal-Bahar (1); Tamar (2, 10).
- 66 Lithodomus caudigerus Lam. (7)
 = Modiola caudigera (11, 14); Modiolus caudigera (7); Tamla tal-Ponot
 Tamar tal-Ponot (11, 14); Tamar tal-Hagra (14). (7)
- 67 Undefined species: Tamar (13); Tamla tal-hagra (14);
 Nakku tal-hagar = Zbiba (14).
- 68 Pteris hirundo Linn
 = Avicula tarentina Lam. (5, 11, 14, 18); Farfett (5, 11, 14, 18).

- 69 Pinna nobilis Linn (7).
 Nakkra tal-Harira (7,10,13) It appears strange, that Mammo(5) did not give the vernacular name under this species which is common but under the next one which is rare; apparently it is a mistake by Mammo's editor during the compilation of the list.
- 70 Pinna rudis Lam.
 = Pinna rudis Linn. (5,18); Nakkra tal-Harira (5,18)(see No.69)
- 71 Pecten jacobaeus Linn (11,14,16)
 Arzella tal-Pellegrina (11,14); Pellegrina (16);
 Nakkra tal-Pellegrina (11, 14).
- 72 Pteropecten glaber Linn
 = Pecten glaber Linn. (7,15); = Pecten sulcatus Lam. (5,18)
 Tagen (5,15,18); Moxt (7).
- 73 Chlamys varia Linn. (16,17)
 = Pecten varius (7,15,16); Moxt tar-ramel(10); Makkru(16);
 Moxt (7, 10, 15, 17)
- 74 Spondylus gaederopus Linn. (3,5,8,7,11,14,18,20,21)
 Gajdra (1,3,5,7,8,10,11,13,14,18,20,21)
- 75 Lima squamosa Lam. (5,18)
 Zbiba (18); Nakkra tal-hagar = Zbiba (11); Sbiba (5).
- 76 Mantellum inflatum Chemn.
 = Lima inflata Lam. (7,8,15); Zbiba (7, 8, 15).
- 77 Anomia ephippium Linn. (3,5,7,11,14,15,17,18)
 Koccla tar-nar (3,5,7,10,11,13,14,15,17,18)
- 78 Ostrea edulis Linn.(2, 16, 17)
 = Ostrea tarentina (16); Koccla (16); Cocela(17)misprinted & (16);
 Gajdra(2)
- 79 Ostrea cristata Born
 = Ostrea cristata Lam.(3); Koccla (3,10); Ostrika (3,10).
- 80 Ostrea lamellosa Brocchi (5,8,15,18,20)
 Koccla (5,8,15,18,20)
- 81 Pychnodonta cochlear Poli
 = Ostrea cochlear Poli (3); Koccla (3); Ostrika (3).

- 82 Undefined species: *Ostrea*, *Kocla* (13,14); =many types of *Gajdra* (14)
Nachra (1) = madre perla (italian)
- 83 *Digitaria digitalis* Linn.
 = *Lucina digitalis* Lam. (3); *Arzella tal-Fjuri* (3).
- 84 *Venericardia antiquata* L.
 = *Cardita sulcata* Brug. (5,7,8,14); = *Cardita costata* (11);
Lewza (5,8); *Lewza tal-Bahar* (11,14); *Lewza Qoxritha Roxna* (7);
- 85 *Glossus humanus* Linn
 = *Isocardia cor* Lam. (5,18); *Rawha* (5,18) not an appropriate
 choice of Maltese name for this shell.
- 86 *Loripes lacteus* Linn.
 = *Lucina* species (11,14); = *Lucina lactea* (3); *Arzella tal-Fjuri*
 (3,11,14)
- 87 *Chama gryphoides* Linn (5, 18)
Lewza (5, 18)
- 88 *Cardium edula* Linn (2,3,7,8,11,14,16,17)
 = *Cardium vulgare* Linn (15); = *Cardium rusticum* (3,5,18)
Arzella tal-Marsa (3,5,8,10,11,14,15,16,18); *Arzell* (2,7);
Lewza (16); *Arzil tal Matra* (17) (Misprinted).
- 89 *Sphaerocardium paucicostatum* Sow.
 = *Cardium paucicostatum* (5,7,11,14); = *Cardium ciliare* (5,7);
Lewza (5); *Lewza qoxritha rqiqa* (7); *Lewza tal-bahar* (11,14).
- 90 *Venus verrucosa* Linn (3,5,8,11,14,15,16,17,18).
 = *Venus rugosa* (2); *Gandoffla* (2,3,5,8,10,11,14,15,16,17,18)
Arzella nigra (18)
- 91 Undefined species: *Arzell abjad* (1); *Arzell Iswed* (1).
- 92 *Venerupis aurea* Gmel. (17)
 = *Venus aurea* (3,5,7,11,14,18); = *Tapes aureus* (16,17);
Arzella trapaniza (5,7,11,14,16,17,18); *Arzella nigra* (3).
- 93 *Venerupis decussata* Linn (17)
 = *Venus decussata* L. (3,5,8,11,14); = *Tapes decussatus* (15,17)
 = *Tapes (Venus) decussata* (7); = *Amygdala decussata* L. (16);
Arzella nigra (3,5,7,8,10,11,14,15,16,17)

- 94 Dosina exoleta Linn (15, 17).
 = Cytherea exoleta Lam. (3, 11, 14) = Artemis (Venus) exoleta (7);
 = Venus gallina Linn. (17); Gandoffia franciza (3, 7, 10, 11, 14)
Dajna (3, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17); Gandoffia tan-Nar (7).
- 95 Undefined species: Gandoffi = conchiglie (1).
- 96 Callista chione L.
 = Pitaria chione Linn. (17); = Meretrix chione Linn. (17)
Moxt tar-Rnella (17) probably misplaced.
- 97 Macra corallina Linn. (16, 17)
 = Macra stultorum (15, 16, 17); Arzella tar-Ramel (15, 16, 17)
- 98 Tellinella pulchella Lam.
 = Tellina pulchella Lam. (15); Moxt tar-Rnella (15)
- 99 Angulus planatus Linn.
 = Tellina planata L. (5, 7, 18); Moxt (5, 7, 18)
- 100 Donax trunculus Linn. (17)
Imhar (17) Obviously a misplaced name.
- 101 Undefined species: Imhar = Tellina var. spec. (15)
 Obviously misplaced.
- 102 Psammocola depressa Penn.
 = Psammobia vespertina (7, 15); Moxt (7, 15)
- 103 Abra alba Wood
 = Syndosmna (Macra) alba Wood (7); = Enycina renieri Br. (7)
Arzell tal-fjuri (7)
- 104 Solen marginatus Penn.
 = Solen vagina L. (5, 16, 18, 20); Stocč (5, 16, 18, 20)
- 105 Solen ensis Linn. (16, 17)
 = Ensis ensis L. (16, 17); Stocč (16, 17)
- 106 Solecurtus antiquatus ?ult
 = Solecurtus coarctatus Gmel (20); Stocč (20)
- 107 Undefined species: Stocč (10)
- 108 Rocellaria dubia Penn.
 = Gastrochaena polii (5, 11, 14, 18); Farrett b'nifsejn (5, 11, 14, 18)

- 109 Pholas dactylus Linn. (5,7,8,9,14,16,17,18)
 Tamra bajda (5,7,8,9,14,17,18); Thamel abiod, Thamra bejda (16) misprints
- 110 Clavagella aperta Sow.
 = Clavagella mamoi, Mamoi (5,18); = Clavagella aperta (11,14);
 Farrett bl-arzell (5,11,14,18).
- 111 Clavagella balanorum Scacchi (5,18)
 Broma (5,18)

C E P H A L O P O D A

- 112 Sepia officinalis Linn. (5,8,16,17,18).
 = Sepia filleuxi Lef. (16); Sicca (5,8,13,16,17,18); Dakar (14);
 Gheneb ii-bahar (the egg bunches) (10,13); Setcha (16) misprinted.
- 113 Sepioloa rondeletii Leach (5,8,16,17,18)
 = Sepioloa (10,11); Dakra (5,16,18; Dakar (8,10,11,13);
 Brimba tal-bahar (young) (3); Dachra (17) misprinted.
- 114 Sepioloa atlantica d'Orb. (3)
 Brimba tal-bahar (young) (3).
- 115 Loligo vulgaris Lam. (2,3,5,8,11,14,15,16,17,18)
 Klamar (2,3,5,8,10,11,13,14,15,16,17,18) (some spelt old style "Clamar")
- 116 Todarodes sagittatus St. (16)
 = Loligo todarus Delle Ch. (5,8,18); = Ommastrephas sagittatus (17)
 Totlu (5,8,10,13,16,17,18)
- 117 Octopus vulgaris Lam. (5,8,11,14,15,16,17,18)
 Qarnita (5,8,11,14,15,16,17,18); Qarnita komuni (13);
 Brimba tal-bahar (young) (11,13,14)
- 118 Octopus macropus Riss. (15,17)
 = Octopus ruber Raf. (5,18); Frajjel (5,15,17); Frajjel (18)
 Qarnita ragel (5,18)
- 119 Octopus tuberculatus Blv. (3,8,11,14)
 Frajjel (8,10,11,13,14); Qarnita ragel: (8,10,11,13,14)
 Brimba tal-bahar (young) (3)
- 120 Eledone moschata Leach (5,11,14,15,16,17,18)
 = Ozoena moschata (16); Qarnita tal-Misk (5,11,14,15,16,17,18)

121 Argonauta argo Linn. (3,5,11,18)

Dakar (5,11,14); Bajda tal-Qarnita (shell only)(3,5,14,18);
Qarnita tal-foşda (11,14); Qoxret il-qarnita (3,11,14);
Qoxret id-dakar (14).

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Note: It is regretted that in the reference, Nos. 4, 20 and 21 were inadvertently placed out of their chronological order; however, they have been left in their present position, not to disturb the text references.
