

## Juvenile shells of *Elona quimperiana* (Férussac, 1821) (Gastropoda: Elonidae)

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**Abstract:** Shells of juvenile specimens of *Elona quimperiana* are described, showing a remarkable ovulid outline in the first stages of grow, much different from adult specimens.

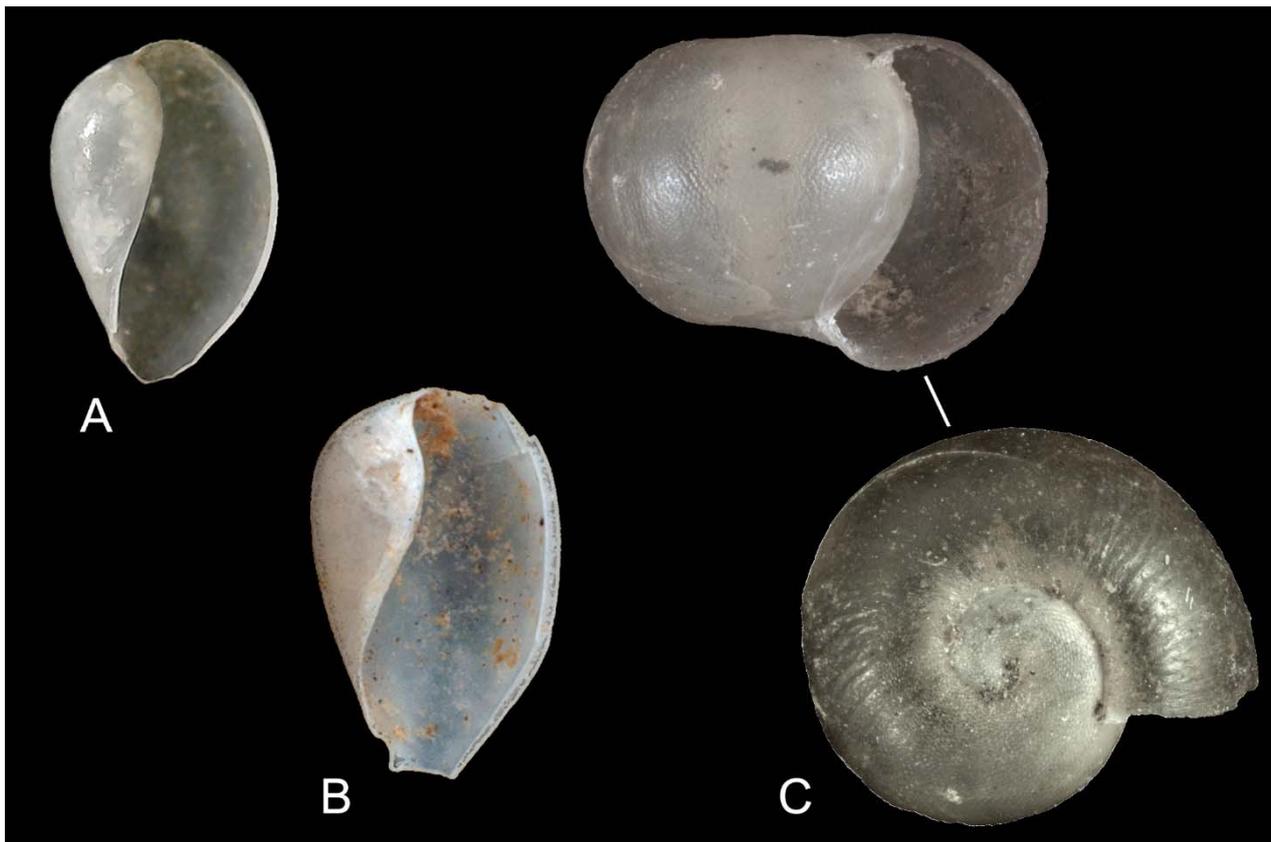
### Conchas juveniles de *Elona quimperiana* (Férussac, 1821)

**Resumen:** Se describen las conchas de individuos juveniles de *Elona quimperiana*, que presentan un aspecto ovuliforme en las primeras etapas de crecimiento, muy diferente de los individuos adultos.

Our magazine is called after an easily recognised genus, *Elona* H. Adams & A. Adams, 1855 with a single species, *Elona quimperiana* (Férussac, 1821). Its shell is easily recognisable and well known, relatively large (diameter to 3 cm), flat, smooth, with slightly reflected apertural margin and several varices marking earlier growth stops. The species lives in humid and shady environments, in woods and between shrubs, often between herbs, under stones or pieces of wood or at cave entrances. It is widely distributed along the Cantabrian Coast, besides which it occurs in Brittany (France) (Welter-Schultes, 2012; Cadevall & Orozco, 2016).

Juvenile specimens, however, are less easily found and much less known. Despite being very different and interesting, only one figure of a young specimen was found: a drawing in Prieto *et al.* (1980: fig. 3), showing a specimen the size of that of Fig. 1C. The earliest stage, likely representing the shell formed inside the eggs, has an outline like ovulids (Figs. 1A, 1B). These shells are very thin and extremely fragile, but can be quite abundant in soil samples taken near the entrances of caves, a habitat much favoured by this species. With growth the diameter of the shells expands very quickly, giving it a look like certain planorbids (Fig. 1C). The shape of the initial whorl is vaguely

visible through the semi-transparent shell. The early whorls have a special sculpture of very fine pits (left hand image of Fig. 1C). No living specimens of this size have been seen, but fig. 3 in Prieto *et al.* (1980) confirms the supposition that these are hair pits. Prieto *et al.* call this the embryonal shell, but it clearly was formed outside the egg. The right-hand image of Fig. 1B shows that at least 3/4 of the next whorl is not completely smooth, but has weak radial riblets, between which the hair pits gradually reduce. The following whorls are smooth, after which the varix is formed, which re-enforces the aperture. The inner whorls with hair pits are visible in well-preserved adult specimens. The challenge is now to find living juvenile specimens and to photograph these.



**Figure 1.** *Elona quimperiana* (Férussac, 1821). A. From soil at Costales cave (Ramales de La Victoria, Cantabria), leg./col. Á Alonso, H 1.6 mm. B. From soil sample taken just outside the El Mazu cave, 2 km SW of Porrúa (Llanes, Asturias), leg. Á. Alonso, col. Han Raven, H 1.8 mm. C. From soil sample taken from the entrance of Cueva de las Herrerías, La Pereda (Llanes, Asturias), leg./col.. Han Raven, W 4.3 mm.

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