

Live *Conus ventricosus* GMELIN, 1791

Last August I collected a few *Conus ventricosus* at Marina di Pulsano, about 15 km South of Taranto, Ionian Sea. The cones were partially buried in the sand near the reef, about 50 metres offshore and 3-5 metres depth; because of their good mimicry I had many difficulties to find them.

It took me very long to collect a few of them so I think they are rather rare in those waters. Curiously two specimens were near sea urchins (do cones feed on them?). Almost all the specimens had the periostracum covered by calcium carbonate incrustations and showed deep scars, evidence of the attack of other animals. The size of the specimens was 43 to 53 mm. I didn't find juvenile specimens.

I photographed the cones in aquarium with sea water and on a bed of their own sand.



43 mm. Thin and clear periostracum, no scars.



47 mm. Opaque periostracum, collabral growth marks.



53 mm. Opaque periostracum, deep scar.



53/41 mm. Opaque periostracum, calcium carbonate incrustations.