

SHELL COLOUR POLYMORPHISM IN *BULLA AMPULLA*

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Colour patterns of *Bulla ampulla* shells collected from Africa eastward to Pacific Islands were studied. Two common colour morphs were found. The typical morph is commonest. It is closely and finely mottled or all over with pinkish-gray on a creamy or flesh-tinted ground, with darker clouds, irregular, V-shaped, or as longitudinal bands. The colouration of the other common morph is more uniform. It is lacking the darker clouds or bands and the colour is more greyish. The entire shell surface is densely mottled all over with small brown spots on a grey or beige background. Both morphs seem to coexist over most of the distribution area. It is striking that many museum samples contain specimens of only one of the colour morphs. One possible explanation is that *Bulla ampulla* is a complex of sibling species. It should therefore be studied if the morphs for example occupy different habitats or exhibit other differences in biology.