

Short communication:

**OCCURRENCE OF *NAUTILUS POMPILIUS* IN THE EASTERN PART OF
INDIAN OCEAN - ANDAMAN SEA**

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ABSTRACT

A dead *Nautilus pompilius* with the soft body in undecayed condition has been encountered in the Andaman Sea. The finding is the first record of its kind and gives circumstantial evidence that *Nautilus* is living in this area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sawata *et al.* (1983) concluded that the *N. pompilius* shells found on a beach of the Tarutao Island might have originated in the Indian Ocean-Andaman Sea and not from the Philippine sea area as suggested by Toriyama *et al.*, 1965.

In order to provide stronger evidence, a reward was offered for the discovery of living *Nautilus*. However, live specimens have not been obtained but a *Nautilus pompilius* with soft body was handed over to the junior author by a sea gypsy in March 1992. The *Nautilus* (Fig. 1) was found floating dead near the Raja Island off the Phuket coast (Fig. 2), southern Thailand. This finding gives circumstantial evidence that *N. pompilius* occur in this area and indicated that *N. pompilius* shells found on the beach of Tarutao, Langawi and Penang islands should have come from the eastern part of Indian Ocean-Andaman Sea, rather than from the Philippine sea area.

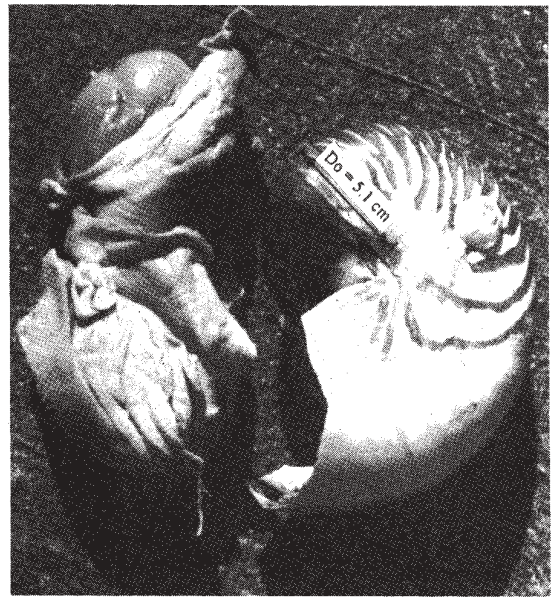


Figure 1. *Nautilus pompilius* collected near Racha Noi Island. The length of a line from the adoral end of the black band to the umbilical center (DO) is 5.1 cm. The soft body weight was 552 g.

REFERENCES

- Sawata, H., A. Tanchotikul and N. Phongsuwan. 1983. *Nautilus* observation on Tarutao Island, Southern Thailand. - Proceedings of the Annual Technical Meeting 1982, Department of Geological Science, Chiangmai University, Thailand, Special Publication 4: 133-142.
- Toriyama, R., T. Sato, T. Hamada and P. Komalarjun. 1965. *Nautilus pompilius* drifts on the west coast of Thailand. - Japanese Journal of Geology and Geography 36: 149-161.

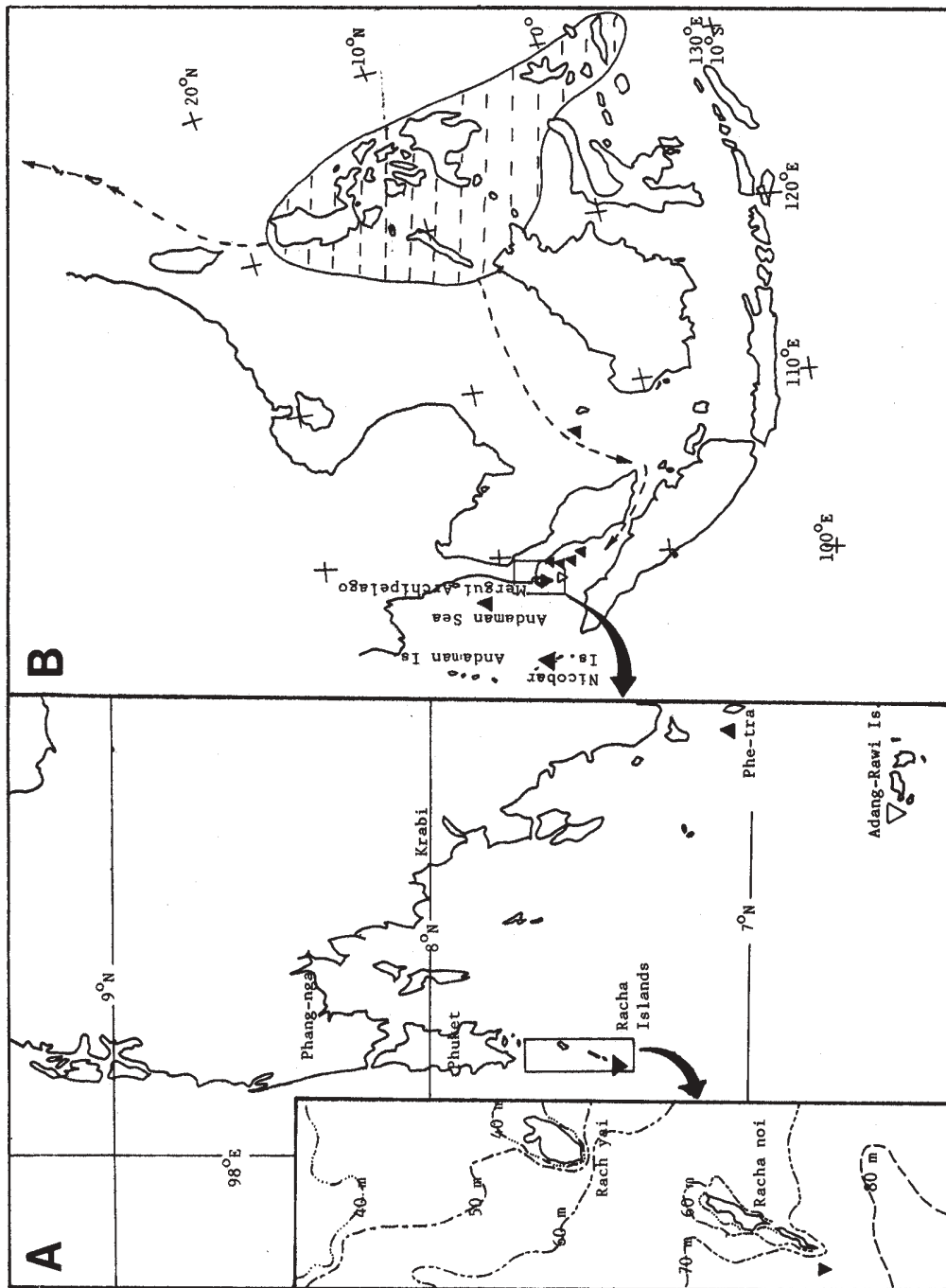


Figure 2. A. Map shows location of living *Nautilus* specimen near Racha Island.

B. Potential *Nautilus* habitat (\square) and transportation routes (- - - - -) suggested by Toriyama et al., 1965.

(\blacktriangledown) living *Nautilus* obtained; \blacktriangle *Nautilus* shell obtained; ∇ information on living *Nautilus* obtained but not specimen obtained