

COMMENTS ON PLEUROBEMA COCCINEUM (CONRAD, 1836)  
IN THE MUSKINGUM RIVER SYSTEM  
David H. Stansbery

The naiad specimen collected by Mr. David Presley from the Mohican River near its confluence with the Walhonding River, Newcastle Twp., Coshocton Co., Ohio on the annual 1969 Pittsburgh Shell Club field trip is a typical specimen of Pleurobema coccineum (Conrad, 1836), the Round Pigtoe Naiad. It is a good example of the compressed form of this species found in our smaller rivers. Further downstream (in the Walhonding River and Muskingum River proper, in this case) this species becomes increasingly wider, passing through an intermediate form called forma catillus and then into the widest form (in the largest rivers) called forma solidus. These last names mentioned are really environmental growth forms and not species at all.

This variable species (P. coccineum) belongs to a complex of four species which are superficially very similar. Fortunately, only the one species of the complex occurs in the Mohican and Walhonding Rivers. In the lower Muskingum, P. pyramidatum used to live and P. cordatum still does along with P. coccineum. In the Green River of Kentucky, all four species of the same complex live side by side on some of the same riffles. P. cordatum is one of the valuable commercial species used in the cultured pearl industry in Japan. This complex is one of the most interesting I have yet studied. I mimeographed a chart of comparative characters of this complex several years back in which I tried to help others to separate these "look alikes."

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