

A new genus and species of an arionid semi-slug found on Haida Gwaii in British Columbia

by George P. Holm

A new terrestrial slug that is presumed to be a relict and endemic to Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), British Columbia, was recently described and illustrated by Kristiina Ovaska, Lyle Chichester and Lennart Sopuck. They named their new genus and new species *Staalaa gwaii*. "It differs from *Hemphillia*, by having a shell plate that is calcareous and completely covered by the mantle and by a pattern of papillae covering the entire body." Length measurements of sixteen live specimens ranged from 2 - 17 mm.

The authors report that the terrestrial gastropods of Haida Gwaii are poorly documented, and information has been largely restricted to observations as parts of studies of other organisms. From 2000 to 2004, they surveyed numerous sites on the two main Islands, Graham and Moresby, and on smaller islands of the archipelago for terrestrial gastropods. They detected eighteen native and four alien species. Results of their surveys and the description of the new genus and species can be found in *The Nautilus* 124(1):25-33, 2010.



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Staalaa gwaii Ovaska, Chichester, & Sopuck 2010

The names of the new species are drawn from the Haida language and honors the aboriginal heritage of the archipelago of Haida Gwaii. The generic name means "slug" and the specific name *gwaii* means "island" or "home".

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