

The Australasian muricid gastropod *Lepsiella* as Pleistocene visitor to southernmost South America

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Six shells belonging to a muricid gastropod species were recovered from a Pleistocene marine raised beach located on Navarino Island, in southern South America. None of the living species in the Beagle Channel or in the area is close, and none of the fossil species in the vicinity regions shows the diagnostic characters of the Navarino Pleistocene fossils. Our material resembles *Lepsiella baileyana* from southern Australia, although some differences in the suture and in the spire outline are recognized. Hastrinae were previously confined geographically to New Zealand and to the temperate coast of Australia, now extending its range of distribution to southern South America. This finding of *Lepsiella ukika* sp. nov. is best explained on the basis of transoceanic migration from Australasia by means of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current perhaps during a Quaternary glacial period. The presence of this Pleistocene visitor in southern South America is important because it clearly demonstrates that transcontinental traverse of taxa with direct (non-planktonic) development might have happened by rafting on kelp that served as transport platforms.

Key words: Gastropoda, Muricidae, Pleistocene, Beagle Channel, Australasia connection.

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