

## NEW LOCALITIES FOR *MICRARIONTA* *ROWELLI MCCOIANA* WILLETT

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The only site which has been reported for *Micrarionta rowelli mccoiana* is McCoy Well, in the McCoy Mountains of Riverside County, California. Willett (1935) in designating this site as the type locality for *mccoiana*, offered no indication that the snail was to be found elsewhere, and Pilsbry (1939) provided no additional records. Collectors since that time may have found specimens of *mccoiana* at the type locality and in other locations, but no published mention has been made of the fact. The purpose of this paper is to identify sites at which *mccoiana* can be found in the McCoy Mountains, and to report that this snail has been collected in the adjacent Big Maria Mountains.

As part of a study supported largely by the Council for Faculty Research, Eastern Illinois University, I conducted a series of explorations into the McCoy, Big Maria and other nearby mountains during the academic year, 1967-1968. The type locality for *mccoiana* was one of the first sites investigated but no specimens were found and no evidence was turned up to indicate that they might still be found in the vicinity of the well. Subsequently, about a quarter of a mile to the east of the well and about 300 feet above it, on a steep, northwest-facing slope, numerous shells were found at a depth of about two feet under broken rock. This site, which is in section 22, township 6 south, range 20 east (USGS map NI 11-9, Salton Sea quadrangle), is at the base of large, vertically fractured blocks. No living snails were found here, but some relatively recent peristome 'seals' were seen on subsurface rocks, suggesting that live specimens probably could have been collected had more time been spent at the site.

Southwest of McCoy Well about seven miles, in section 17, township 5 south, range 20 east, another locality for *mccoiana* was discovered. The site is about 200 feet above the entrance to the 64-Mine, currently owned by Reserve Oil and Minerals Corporation, and permission should be obtained before entering the area. Many shells were found in the course of several trips to this site, but only two live specimens were collected and these were found at a depth of about fifteen inches in a heavy rockslide at the base of a large, overhanging face. The snails were sealed to the undersides of rocks which projected into an 'air space' opened up by careful removal of the surface rock.

Several trips were made into the McCoy Mountains at various times during the year in an effort to determine something of the extent of the distribution of *mccoiana*. My most valued field helper and companion was a retired Army officer, Colonel John Mosley, who made the initial find of live spe-

cimens above the 64-A site and accompanied me on much of the exploration in the adjacent mountain ranges. Together, we looked in vain for other localities in the McCoy range before moving on to the Big Maria Mountains, which lie about ten miles to the northeast. This range can be entered most easily from the Blythe-Midland road on the west, via several mining trails. We chose to follow a trail which leads to the Eagle Nest Mine, located in section 27, township 3 south, range 21 west, and it was near the end of this trail that *mccoiana* was discovered. About a half-mile by foot from the end of the negotiable portion, the trail crosses a prominent quartz dike and leads to an area where considerable surface rock has been dragged from the surrounding slopes and removed commercially. The site is just about 200 yards north and east, on a north-facing slope. On our first visit to this location after considerable excavation, we found a number of shells and some peristome rings at depths of 6 to 18 inches below the surface, at the bases of projecting rock ledges. We also collected four living snails which were found sealed to the undersides of rocks, in air pockets such as had been found in the McCoy locality. A second visit to the same site later in the year revealed evidence of much erosion because of heavy rainfall and runoff, and our only finds were peristome rings and one lone shell. Other likely sites were explored, but after much hiking, climbing and digging we had found only a few shells and had seen none which appeared to be fresh.

*Micrarionta rowelli mccoiana* is probably to be found over all of the McCoy range, although it has been reported only from two localities therein. Its occurrence in the Big Maria range leads to the conclusion that it probably will be found in the Little Maria Mountains, between the McCoy and Big Maria ranges, and possibly also in the Palen Mountains to the west of the McCoy range. Additional likely localities for *mccoiana* may be found in the Mule Mountains just south of the McCoy's. My explorations into the Little Marias, the Palens and the Mules have not been successful, but information given to me by a mining geologist familiar with these ranges leads me to believe that *mccoiana* or some other race of *Micrarionta rowelli* will be found in them.

### LITERATURE CITED

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