

Keynote lecture

**SPECIES-LEVEL TAXONOMY OF MALESIAN MARINE MOLLUSCS AND
THE BIODIVERSITY CRISIS**

R. N. Kilburn

Natal Museum, PI Bag 9070, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, South Africa

"If taxonomists were a species, they would be classified as endangered" (Norse 1993)

ABSTRACT

All global biodiversity initiatives agree on the urgent need for each region to inventory its fauna. The Malesian region (Andaman Sea east to the Weber Trough and north to the Philippines and Gulf of Thailand) possesses the richest marine molluscan fauna in the world. However, no comprehensive faunal surveys have ever been undertaken, and there is also very little information on endemism. For those in a position to do such surveys, a few aspects of inventarisation are introduced from the viewpoint of the museum taxonomist, namely some basic principles of sampling and the use of identification resources.