

A new discovery of a seabird (Aves: Procellariiformes) in the Oligocene of the „Menilitic Formation” in Moravia (Czech Republic)

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In the 2004, during the field excavation of the Tertiary fish fauna at the Litenci locality, the remains of a bird skeleton and a wing were discovered. This is the first discovery of bird remains in the assemblage of the marine fish fauna in West Carpathians flysh. In the past, only some feathers were found at the Kelc locality. The specimen is housed in the Department of Geology and Paleontology at Moravian Museum Brno, Czech republic.

The locality Litence is an important site of the marine Tertiary fish and shark fauna of the Menilitic Formation (Oligocene, Rupelian). All the members of the „Menilitic Formation” (Subchert beds, Chert beds, Dynow marlstones and Sitborice beds) appear there. The fish fauna is recorded in all the above mentioned members. Thus we can follow the evolution and the changes of the fossil assemblage on a relatively large profile of the Oligocene sediments. Besides Teleostei (cca 20 genera) and Selachii (4 genera) the remains of sea turtles (*Glariichelys knorri*) were discovered there.

The remains of the bird represent the distal part of a wing with the feather, tail and both distal parts of the lower limbs (part of tibiotarsus, tarsometatarsus and the phalanges). There are three toes formed by phalanges and minute hallux. The proximal phalanx of the fourth toe is widened. This is the typical characters of the other Oligocene genus *Diomedeoides* (family Diomedeoididae) known from the Rupelian of France, Germany, Belgium and Iran (Mayr et al., 2002; Peters, D. S. & Hamedani, A.,

2000). But like in recent Procellariidae the proximal phalanx of the third toe is shorter than that of the next two phalanges taken together (see Forbes, 1882). On the basis of this character and the presence of the minute halux this specimen is preliminary ranged to the order Procellariiformes and the family Procellariidae (Petrels). The following study will show the detailed taxonomical placement. The remains of the seabird were found in the fish assemblage of the high open ocean environment (representatives of the families of Gonostomatidae, Photichthyidae, Myctophidae, Trichiuridae).

References

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