

Araripe Basin conchostracofaunas

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The Araripe Basin conchostraceans comprise Cyzicidae and Limnadiidae specimens of Aptian - Albian ages. The Cyzicidae family specimens are the most common and abundant conchostraceans, represented by four species: *Cyzicus abaetensis*, *Cyzicus brauni*, *Cyzicus codoensis* and *Cyzicus pricei*. The Limnadiidae family shows a unique species *Estheriina ? costai*. These families are also found in the neighbouring Lower Cretaceous basins of northeastern Brazil since Neocomian (Rio da Serra local stage). The conchostraceans are usually freshwater living organisms in small ponds, abundant in alkaline and nutrient-rich waters of hot climate regions. Such environmental conditions are inferred for the Aptian - Albian strata in the eastern region of Araripe Basin, where are found the Cyzicidae and Limnadiidae specimens. Despite the Araripe Basin conchostracofaunas have been considered as endemic of Northeast Brazil, some of them show great similarities with those ones of the African Cretaceous basins. *Cyzicus brauni* denotes similarities with *Cyzicus anomala*, *Cyzicus kitariensis* and *Cyzicus anchietae*. *Cyzicus pricei* is similar to the Congo Basin species *Cyzicus sambaensis* and *Cyzicus kasaiensis*. The *Estheriina* species present morphology analogous to the african conchostraceans *Cyzicus lerichei* and *Cyzicus malangensis*. The use of this fossil group can be a good working tool to the biostratigraphic correlation of Gondwanan basins and to the understanding of the terrestrial Cretaceous ecosystems changes.