

SYSTEMATICS AND BIOSTRATIGRAPHY OF TROPHON MONTFORT, 1810 (GASTROPODA, MURICIDAE) IN THE CENOZOIC OF PATAGONIA

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TROPHON is a genus of muricid gastropods endemic to the southern oceans and recorded in many localities of southern South America since early Tertiary times. In this study we review the systematics of the group, and re-evaluate its biostratigraphical importance. Large collections of specimens from a wide range of localities throughout Patagonia were assembled, and all the type material was re-described and illustrated adequately, in order to better understand the evolution of this taxon and assess its potential importance as a biostratigraphical tool. Careful review of the material reveals that there are not more than eight variable species occurring in numerous stratigraphical units exposed in Patagonia, some of which may be useful in the formulation of local correlations, if the full variability of each taxa involved is accurately understood.