

Recent Records of *Pholas dactylus* (Bivalvia: Myoidea: Pholadidae) from the Romanian Black Sea, with Considerations on its Habitat and Proposed IUCN Regional Status

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Abstract: This is the first published record of living *Pholas dactylus* in the Romanian Black Sea since over 34 years. Small but viable populations have been found at Agigea, Costinesti and Vama Veche. Habitat fragmentation, sudden extinction events and predation by both native and alien predators are the major threats to this rare species in the Romanian Black Sea. The regional IUCN status of Critically Endangered is proposed for *Pholas dactylus* in the Romanian Black Sea, in accordance with the newest IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. This finding, besides the high value of *Pholas dactylus* survival in itself, illustrates the regeneration of biodiversity in the Romanian Black Sea.

Key words: piddock, Romanian Black Sea, IUCN regional status.