174. Praeprinsius Varol & Jakubowski (1989)

Type species: *Biscutum? tenuiculum* OKADA and THIERSTEIN, 1979.

Diagnosis: Elliptical to circular placolith consisting of a monocyclic distal shield and a double-cycled proximal shield. The single tube cycle is strongly birefringent, whereas the shields show no birefringence under cross-polarised light. The central area may or may not be closed.

Description: This small placolith is constructed of a monocyclic distal shield which generally possesses zig-zag sutures between its elements. In earlier forms the zig-zag sutures are very strong, but, later forms show weaker zig-zag sutures. The distal shield usually consists of approximately 8 to 20 non to slightly, sinistrally imbricated elements and is larger than the double-cycled proximal shield, which is formed by the same number of non-imbricated elements. The tube cycle is strongly birefringent whilst the shields are non-birefringent under cross-polarised light.

Remarks: *Praeprinsius* is distinguished from *Prinsius* HAY and MOHLER (1967) and *Toweius* HAY and MOHLER (1967) by possessing a single tube cycle and non-birefringent shields (under cross-polarised light) whereas *Prinsius* and *Toweius* have double tube cycles and birefringent proximal shields (under cross-polarised light). *Praeprinsius* differs from *Markalius* BRAMLETTE and MARTINI (1964) and *Geminilithella* BACKMAN (1980) by having a double-cycled proximal shield whereas *Markalius* and *Geminilithella* have only single cycle proximal shields. *Praeprinsius* is distinguished from *Biscutum* BLACK in BLACK and BARNES (1959) and *Neobiscutum* VAROL (1989) by its double-cycled proximal shield. *Futyania* VAROL (1989) has a single cycled proximal shield and a distally extended tube cycle whereas in *Praeprinsius* the tube cycle does not extend distally and it has double cycled proximal shield. Finally *Coccolithus* SCHWARZ (1894) and *Calcidiscus* KAMPTNER (1950) differ from *Praeprinsius* by possessing birefringent proximal shields. *Coccolithus* also differs in the greater number of elements on the shields, and the sutures between the elements are straight. *Calcidiscus* further differs from *Praeprinsius* in possessing a single cycle proximal shield and in lacking a tube cycle.

Varol, O. & Jakubowski, M., 1989. Some new nannofossil taxa. *International Nannoplankton Association Newsletter*, **11(1):** 24-29.