

New bizarre micro-spiriferid brachiopod from the Early Carboniferous of China

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The verneuiliid brachiopod *Changshunella yangi* gen. et sp. nov. is described from the Early Carboniferous Muhua Formation of Guizhou, China. This rather unusual form is characterized by having very small shell dimensions (2.6-4 mm in length), a very high flat procline ventral interarea, and by having three prominent plications on both valves that are arranged in opposed folding; the last feature is characteristic for the family Verneuiliidae. We suggest that the family has been derived from an offshoot of the stock that produced the superfamilies Spiriferoidea, Paeckelmanelloidea, and Brachythyridoidea by developing opposed folding and loss of dental plates or dental adminicula as exemplified by *Verneuilia* and *Changshunella* gen. nov.

Key words: Brachiopoda, Verneuiliidae, Early Carboniferous, China.

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