

# *the Strandloper*

BULLETIN OF THE SHELL COLLECTORS SA



Strandloper 299 April 2021



## Shell Collectors SA

Founded 1958

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### FRONT PAGE

*Anachis kraussii* shells (Sowerby 1,1844)

Image: Renee Els

### OPPOSITE PAGE

Quirimba seashore at sunset

Image: Ken Brown

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# RARE STROMBIDAE FROM THE WESTERN PACIFIC

by Andre Meredith

Family Strombidae remains one of the most sought-after in conchology, presenting the collector and scholar with an array of handsome shells, many adorned with splendid apertural colours, flared lips (spreading into broader wings) and elegant fingers (digits). Another trait linked to this family is its relative size and abundance, making it possible for most Strombid collectors to actually complete a collection of at least one specimen of the entire family.

There are a few exceptions to this rule (as is the case with all shell families). This article deals with five such specimens of Strombidae found in the seas of the Western Pacific, including southern Japan, the Coral Sea off the east coast of Australia and regions spreading towards French Polynesia.



General Oceanic Region under Discussion

## *Thersistrombus thersites*

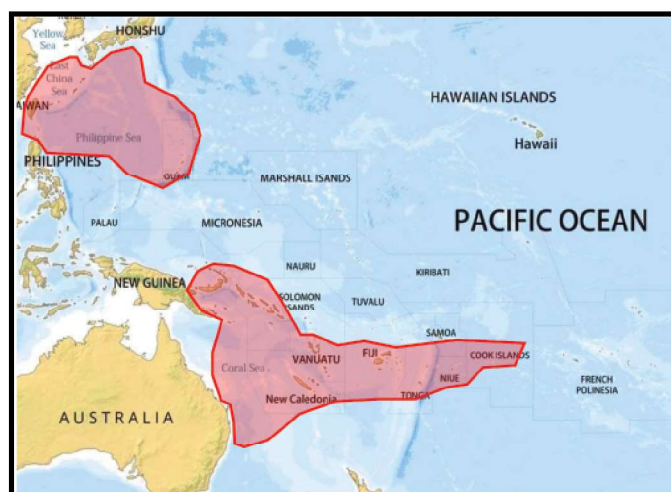
*Thersistrombus thersites* (Swainson, 1823) is a medium-sized Strombid and the only member within its own unique genus. It is ivory-white all over with narrow brown markings (blotchy lines) running axially along the dorsum and base, and onto the second body whorl. It is a very heavy shell for its size, and sports an elongated, elegantly-shaped spire and three large, smooth dorsal knobs on the main body whorl. Lips are typically fairly thick, and it has a pronounced Stromboid notch.

As can be seen from the distribution map, *T. thersites* is found across a fairly large area (in addition to the areas shown, it is also found off Vietnam).

However, what makes this shell rare is not necessarily difficulty in obtaining specimens (although remoteness of habitat remains a factor), but difficulty in obtaining specimens without blemishes.

*T. thersites* is notorious for extreme calcification and dorsal erosion, to the point where most specimens have badly worn and pitted dorsums, whorls and spires. Most specimens also have no discernible pattern.

This makes finding perfect or even respectable specimens quite a challenge, and those are considered rare (especially in context of Strombidae).



*Thersistrombus thersites*: general distribution area

Perfect / Gem Specimens of *T. thersites*



*Thersistrombus thersites*, 126 mm, Lihou Reef, Coral Sea, Queensland, Australia (coll. Vellies Veldsman); this Gem-grade specimen displays some algal discoloration where the lip merges with the spire, which has been completely glossed over by the animal.



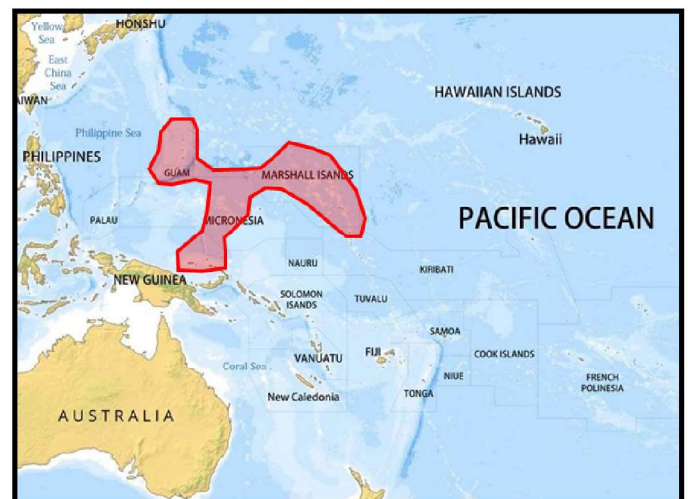
*Thersistrombus thersites*, 148mm, Nha Trang, Khánh Hòa Province, Vietnam (coll. Christian Börnke). This slender specimen displays dark, saturated dorsal and basal patterns, yellow stains on columella and yellow banding on the lip. [Source : www.stromboideade]  
 Specimens of this quality typically reach prices of between 100 and 160 Euro on the market.  
 For more information on this shell, refer to the article on the type : Meredith A. P (2014). 'Thersistrombus thersites: Ivory Gem of the Pacific'. *American Conchologist*, Vol 42 No 3, pp 4-7.

under the nacre, and the aperture is usually a deep purple within the deeper parts of the mouth.

***Sinustrombus taurus***

*Sinustrombus taurus* (Reeve, 1857) is a smallish shell, and one of three shells in the genus *Sinustrombus* Bandel, 2007. It is adorned with two beautiful long, elegant spikes extending from the lip where it joins to the main body whorl on the posterior edge. The spike closer to the body whorl is always the longer of the two. The lip is usually slightly flared.

Dorsal colours and patterns include brown axial patterns (similar to those found on *T. thersites*), with pink and purple swathes sometimes visible on the dorsum and banding around the spire. The columella can display vibrant purple



*Thersistrombus thersites*: general distribution area

Although the distribution range for *S. taurus* is markedly smaller than its Western Pacific cousin, suffers from the same fate as *T. thersites*, in that it is most often found with severe calcification, string erosion and pitting, and wear on the spire and main spike. Colours are also often faded and patterns missing or faded due to the natural erosion prevalent

on this species. As with *T. thersites*, rarity is therefore not so much a matter of scarcity, but a factor of condition; finding perfect or gem specimens can be a challenge.

Perfect / Gem Specimens of *S. taurus*



*Sinustrombus taurus*, 95.2mm, Saipan Island, Marianas Archipelago, Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, collected on sandy rubble at 20m (coll. Doug Brennan). Awesome specimen with vibrant pattern and lots of pinks and purples; splendid main spike. [Source [www.stromboideade](http://www.stromboideade)]



*Sinustrombus taurus*, 96mm, Orote' Cliffs near Barracuda Rock, Guam Island, Mariana Islands, Micronesia, 95 ft in silt and rubble, 1984 (coll. Paul Merrill). Specimen with more common brownish pattern, but with a very long, curved main spike. [Source [www.stromboideade](http://www.stromboideade)]

Perfect specimens with good colour and pattern can reach prices in excess of 200 Euro.

## *Harpago rugosus*

*Harpago rugosus* (Sowerby II, 1842) is the most uncommon of the three species within genus *Harpago*. The other two within the genus (*H. chiragra* and *H. arthriticus*) are exceptionally common within their distribution areas. *H. rugosus*, on the other hand, is less common – and is also the most striking of the three. It exhibits characteristics of both of the others within the genus, but the bright orange inner lip, prominent black lirae on the columella and inner lip and the long, curved digits (most prominent on the females) set it apart from the other two species.

Rarity is probably linked to remoteness and relative inaccessibility due to this. The distribution map below indicates that it is found from the Australian East Coast, and in the seas around many of the small islands that lie dotted within the southern Pacific Ocean. This is quite a large expanse of ocean, but one that is probably less frequented and therefore least likely to deliver specimens on a regular basis.



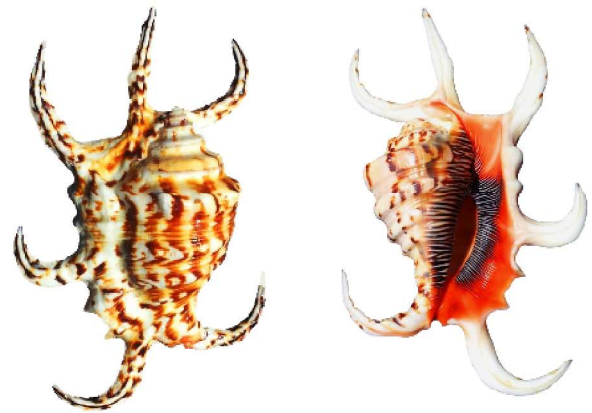
*Harpago rugosus*: general distribution area (includes the Pitcairn Islands further east)

For many years it was believed that *H. rugosus* was the smaller, male form of *H. chiragra*. Smaller *H. chiragra* are usually males, but there are simply too many unique morphological characteristics attributed to *H. rugosus* to group it with *H. chiragra*. In fact, it is morphologically closer to *H. arthriticus*, but the differences here are also too far removed to group it with the latter.

The earlier confusion (and grouping with *H. chiragra*) has possibly led to a reduced interest in this shell – even from many avid Strombid collectors – but it should be regarded as a true species in its own right.

Desirability will inevitably increase if this is understood and recognised.

Perfect / Gem Specimens of *H. rugosus*



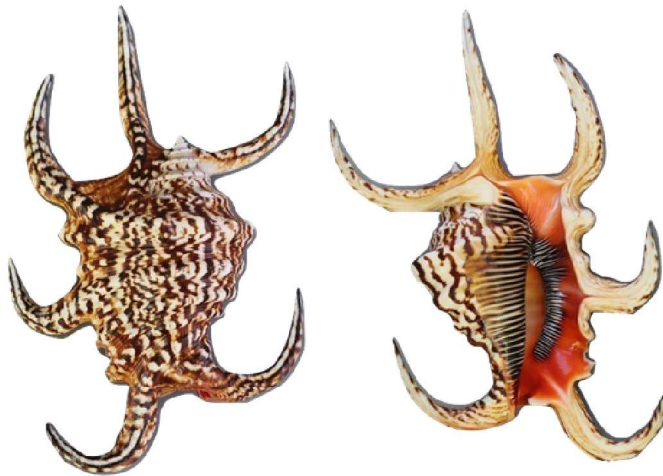
*Harpago rugosus*, 155.5mm, Le Sourmois Reef, Nouméa, New Caledonia, dived at 13m in 2013 (coll. Roy Aiken). The specimen features slightly stockier digits and a slightly larger body whorl, indicating that it could be the male form of the species.



*Harpago rugosus*, 152.3mm, dived live off Diamond Islet, Coral Sea, Australia (coll. Vellies Veldsman). The longer thinner digits and smaller body whorl indicate that this could be the female form of the species.

The shell is rarely offered on the market and this does make it quite sought-after, and is often missing in collections (or mis-labelled). Prices range from 25 to 70 Euro, depending on condition and the length and degree of elegance attributed to the digits. Superb specimens have sold for a high as 150 Euro.

For more information on this shell, refer to the article on genus *Harpago*: Meredith, A.P., (2013). 'The *Harpago* complex: a collector's guide'. *American Conchologist*, Vol 41 No 4, pp 10-16.



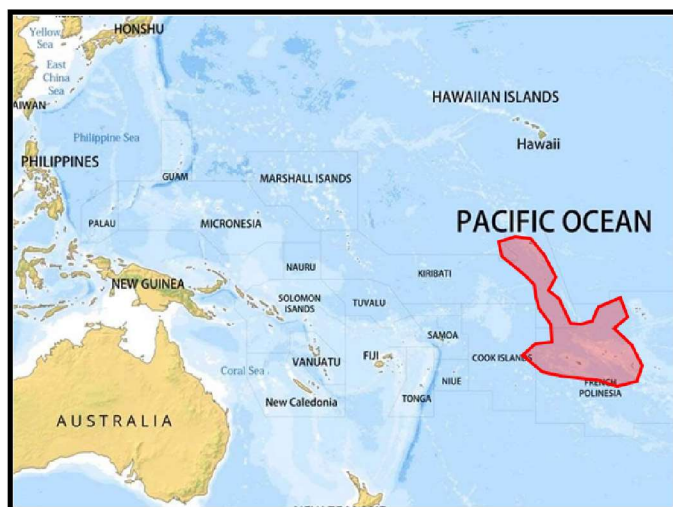
*Harpago rugosus*, 160mm, New Caledonia. Example of a specimen valued in excess of 150 Euro.

**Lambis robusta**

*Lambis robusta* (Swainson, 1821) resembles a thickened, more stocky *Lambis scorpius* with strong lirae on the base and inside the aperture. Like many of the other species within genus *Lambis*, it has seven digits (fingers), but they are decidedly more straight and fairly thick for their length (“less elegant”). The fourth (middle) digit is also characteristically shorter than the rest, and it sits closer to the third digit than the rest do in relation to each other.

The spire and parts of the dorsum is often pink-purple, and the tips of the digits are darker than the rest, often almost black at the tips.

*L. robusta* is only found in French Polynesia and the Line Islands, and in limited numbers, too, making it rare by Strombid standards. It is missing from many collections, probably also due to misidentification and confusion with other *Lambis* species.



*Lambis robusta*: general distribution area

*Perfect / Gem Specimens of S. taurus:*



*Lambis robusta*, 121.5mm, Pueu, Tahiti, French Polynesia. Unusual yellow dorsal colours, black-tipped digits, heavy lirae on columella and base.



*Lambis robusta*, 123mm, Pueu, Tahiti, French Polynesia. Striking dorsal colours and pattern, lovely aperture, black-tipped digits. Specimens of the quality shown above sell for anything between 120 and 350 Euro.

**Lambis pilsbryi**

*Lambis pilsbryi* Abbott, 1961, is arguably the rarest of the Spider Conchs, perhaps only rivalled by *Ophioglossolambis violacea*. The rarity attributable to *L. pilsbryi* is probably a factor of the remoteness of its habitat, and the fact that it is endemic to only a very small spot in the Central Pacific. *L. pilsbryi* is only found in the seas surrounding the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia.

There has been some debate around this fact, some



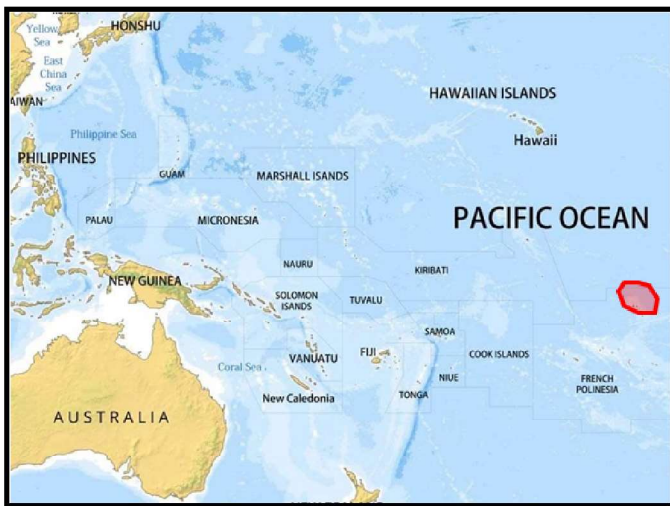
sources claiming to have found similar shells in certain Philippine locations and off Madagascar. However, these claims have not been substantiated and so, for the time being, *L. pilsbryi* is regarded as a true endemic to the Marquesas.

The shell shares many similarities with *Lambis crocata* (Link, 1807). In fact, it was once regarded as a subspecies of *L. crocata* (formerly known as *Lambis crocata pilsbryi* Abbott, 1961); but it has since been promoted to full species status. The primary difference is its size; whereas *L. crocata* typically ranges from 100 to 150 mm, *L. pilsbryi* starts off at about 160mm, ranging all the way to sizes in excess of 250mm. The current world record size stands at 293mm, an enormous specimen collected in 2005 (refer to images on the right).

Perfect / Gem Specimens of *L. pilsbryi*: beautiful and enormous specimen with perfect long, elegant digits.



*Lambis pilsbryi* 293mm, World Record Size, Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia, 2005 (coll. PStimpson). A beautiful and enormous specimen with perfect long, elegant digits.



*Lambis pilsbryi*: general distribution area

As can be seen from the map above, *L. pilsbryi* has by far the smallest known habitat of all five species under discussion in this article.

It should therefore come as no surprise that it is a highly sought-after shell amongst avid Strombid collectors. Specimens in excess of 220mm are particularly rare.

It is not the most colourful of the Strombs, and could be easily mistaken for a large *L. crocata*.

It would not be uncommon to pay 150 Euro for small specimens below 200mm. Giants can sell for as much as 400 Euro.



*Lambis pilsbryi* 241mm, Northern French Polynesia, caught live during night dive, 2013 (coll. Paul Kanner). A spectacular one-of-a-kind specimen sporting an extra (8th) digit, beautiful orange aperture and long, elegant, curved digits.



*Lambis pilsbryi* 203mm, Nuku Hiva, Marquesas, French Polynesia, at 20m depth. A lovely "typical" specimen.

### Mystery shell

The mystery shell featured in our last Strandloper is *Platymma tweediei* Tomlin 1938.

It is only found in the cloud forests of the Cameron Highlands in central Malaysia, at altitudes above 1000m, and is one of the largest landshells of the country. It is known as the "fire snail" for obvious reasons. It is the shell's periostracum which gives the shell its intense black colour.



## Jeffreys Bay Shell Museum and Micro and Small Shell Display

By Petro Meyer

The Jeffreys Bay Shell Museum was originally build to house the collection of the late Charlotte Kritzinger which was purchased by the Kouga Municipality and opened on 15 September 1998. Over time the museum became neglected and left unlocked and a large number of items were removed or stolen from the collection.

This situation improved during 2016 when the Humansdorp Museum Association entered into a partnership with Kouga Municipality to assist with the day-to-day running of the Shell Museum. The Humansdorp Museum Association was formed in 1985 for the purpose of preserving the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage of the town and surrounding areas. Three of the original founding members are still involved to this day.



During the past couple of years the Shell Museum has received various donations, ranging from a single shell from a young boy, to a large donation of shells as well as whale bones from Bayworld, a quantity of shells from a Mpumalanga visitor and about 100kg of both local and overseas shells from a collector in Cape Town. Bruce Gold, a local surfer also recently donated a trunk full of shells to the museum.

The museum is almost in the position to start exchanging shells with other collectors or museums to extend the current number of species on display.

Meeste van die skulpe wat geskenk word is egter sonder name en om die skulpe te identifiseer 'n reuse taak. Philip Steenkamp, Ken Watson en Tana Kruger het vanaf 2017 as vrywilligers by die Humansdorp Museumvereniging betrokke geraak en begin met die uitpak en benaming van die skulpe en terselfdertyd die huidige uitstalling behoorlik georden. Later het lede van die skulpvereniging ook betrokke geraak.

Tydens 'n besoek deur Anton Groenewald van Shell Collectors SA is Jeffreysbaai Skulpvereniging gestig. Die vereniging kom maandeliks byeen en lede is ook betrokke met die identifisering van skulpe en help verseker dat skulpe in die huidige uitstalling se name verander soos skulpe herklassifiseer word a.g.v. DNS toetsing.

Die oorspronklike idee van 'n mikro/klein skulp uitstalling het gekom van Philip Steenkamp, geesdriftige skulpversamelaar en vrywilliger by die Skulpmuseum omdat dit sy passie was om die Jeffreysbaai skulpversameling so volledig as moontlik te maak. Prov Douw en Elise Steyn se boekie "The Sea Shells of Jeffreys Bay" is gebruik om skulpe te identifiseer en ook in af te merk watter skulpe reeds gekry is. Tydens hierdie proses is besef dat daar heelwat van die klein en mikro skulpe nie in die boekie opgeneem is nie.

Die versameling het gegroei soos groot hoeveelhede skulpgruis met 'n vergrootglas deurgegaan is en al meer van die klein spesies opgespoor is. Sover moontlik is die klein skulpies benaam en Markus Lussi in Durban is ook gekontak om te help met verdere uitkenning. Skulpe is heen en weer gestuur en sodoende het die lys van mikro skulpe wat nie in die Skulpmuseum verskyn nie, gegroei.

As the shells range from about 4.5mm to 15mm in size it was realized that for the exhibit to be of any value, one would have to not only display the shell, but also attach a good quality photograph to appreciate the finer detail of each shell. The group decided to contact Alwyn P. Marais, well-known conchologist and author of several



shell books. Alwyn kindly agreed to supply all the photos and has also been invaluable in checking and correcting our information and supplying new genus and species names where necessary.

Gedurende Desember 2019 is 'n uitstalling van die eerste tagtig van 'n beoogde 160 mikro/klein skulpies van Jeffreysbaai, bekendgestel. Sover bekend is die uitstalling enig van sy soort in Suid-Afrika en regtig iets baie besonder. Tana Kruger was verantwoordelik vir die uitleg van die uitstalling.

A huge thanks to Alwyn and Shell Collectors South Africa: without their support and assistance the completion of this new exhibit would not have been possible. The second phase of this project will shortly commence. Philip Steenkamp also enhanced the collection in the museum with the addition of separate displays of: hard corals, South African Cypraeidae, Crustacea and Echinodermata.

Other exciting projects in the pipeline: exhibits of South African marginellas, deep sea shells, fresh water shells and land snails. We are also constantly looking for ideas for interesting displays.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for all the input, effort and enthusiasm of all involved at the Shell Museum and it would be remiss of us not to also give recognition to Kouga Municipality for the support, financially and otherwise received.

## Miniature Master of Colour and Design - *Anachis kraussii* (Sowerby 1, 1844) from Port Alfred

“But during my 1923-4 visit there was a pleasant reminder of former days, as two leopards ( I suppose on a visit from Pondoland) were shot in the neighborhood, one in December 1923, only a few miles from Port Alfred, at Glendower, and strange to say not that far from the sea. I am glad that it did not take an interest in shells and come down to the beach:

WH Turton, *The Marine Shells of Port Alfred, South Africa.*

By Mike Els, photography by Renée Els.

The above extract is from the delightful and extensive book written by the (often much-maligned by various academics) Lt.-Col. WH Turton who was in the Royal Engineers. He first visited Port Alfred in 1902 at the close of the Boer War since he had “heard it was a good place or shells.” We greatly enjoy his book to this day and encourage all who can, to read ,and in close conjunction with modern literature, use it.

His is a palpable presence when walking the shell beaches within the strictly designated 10 miles he had allocated for his collecting activities, between the Kasouga river in the west and the `West Kleinmond river in the east.

All shell collectors have had the experience of walking along a South African beach looking for shells washed up into rows along the sand. After a while, we sit or lie down to have a welcome break and whilst on the sand, run our fingers through the myriad of colourful shell surrounding us, each a telling a story that no-one will ever hear, but filling our imaginations.

We first focus on the larger shells, but soon we notice many more tiny specimens - the microshells, lying between and beneath the larger shells, like jewels between larger rocks. The more we look, the more we see - Muricids, Marginellids (broadly speaking), Trochids, juvenile shells of all families and of course - the Columbelloidea!

Along our eastern seaboard one of the most abundant Columbelloid species will almost certainly be *Anachis kraussii* (Sowerby 1, 1844), lying colourful, shapely and shiny between the sand grains. Although small, this species shows such a bewildering range of colours, shapes and sculpture that it has received a fair number of names that have fallen into synonymy. Looking at some of these forms I think that the authors may at times be forgiven for naming new species. Any given locality may yield a variety of forms and an even wider variation may be found at different points along our extensive coastline beyond those of Port Alfred figured in this article.

The purpose of this article is mainly to illustrate the beauty of this tiny species, so abundant but so seldom closely admired, but also to show some of the forms. We found them in an explosion of miniature beauty all along our coastline, with the Port Alfred area a highlight. As is so often the case, as abundant as they are on the beach, just as difficult they may be to find alive in the intertidal zone. I have found the occasional specimen under rocks or on coralline algae intertidally but never in any numbers. Their prime habitat appears to be subtidal, but judging by the numbers of beach shells, not at great depths and probably in areas of turbulence. Many of the beach specimens are very fresh, but still show evidence of damage under magnification from being rolled around before beaching.

After turning over many thousands of rocks both intertidally and at Scuba depths to 40m, I can confidently say that their prime habitat is not under rocks and suspect they will be found in colonies on coralline or other algae in the subtidal zone.

Most of the specimens illustrated in this article were beach collected from the Port Alfred area where microshells, as shown by the determined Turton, can at times be found in generous quantities. All of the forms illustrated can be found together at one locality but do vary in relative abundance between the forms. After looking through our specimens over time, we felt it would be interesting to try and allocate some of the forms a name according to existing synonymy. This was not as easy as we expected since some were described from a single specimen, with the result that little variation from this single description could be accommodated.

This species is so variable in sculpture (almost completely smooth to strong axial ribbing) and colour (near-white with small brown markings to extensive areas of rich red-brown markings which may vary from broad blotches to wavy zig-zag lines) that many cannot be precisely allocated to any one of the named forms.

However, it has been enjoyable to try this exercise and despite the rigid constraints of scientific taxonomy, which remains the accepted world standard, many collectors find it a worthwhile exercise to have a form name to give to the shells they have in their collections, either for ease of recognition or in discussions or shell exchanges with fellow collectors. It is simpler to refer to an *Anachis kraussii* form *io* than to send an elaborate description of the shell and how it varies from the others in your collection in any correspondence or discussion.

The result is the following article and we hope you enjoy the shells as well as a look back into the older literature and descriptions. Wherever possible we have placed a photo from the original description as well as a significant part, or the entire, original description to allow ease of understanding of the. It is often fascinating to read these descriptions and follow the thoughts of the original authors looking at similar specimens all those years ago!

We apologize in advance if a few of our Latin interpretations are not as precise or as fluent as they could be. Neither of us are Latin scholars.

### *Columbella kraussii* Sowerby, 1844

"Shell oblong ovate, smooth, whitish, marked with undulating chestnut coloured lines ; whorls 5—6 rather ventricose, with small longitudinal ribs, which are distant, and the interstices smooth ; aperture broad ; canal very short.

Found at Natal by Dr. Krauss: in the British Museum"

Synonyms include:

- *Buccinum cereale* Krauss, 1848
- *Pleurotoma (Mangelia) fulgurans* F. Krauss, 1848
- *Columbella cerealis* Reeve, 1859
- *Columbella fulminea* Gould, 1860
- *Columbella (Anachis) io* Bartsch, 1915
- *Columbella (Seminella) alfredensis* Bartsch, 1915
- *Columbella helena* W. H. Turton, 1932

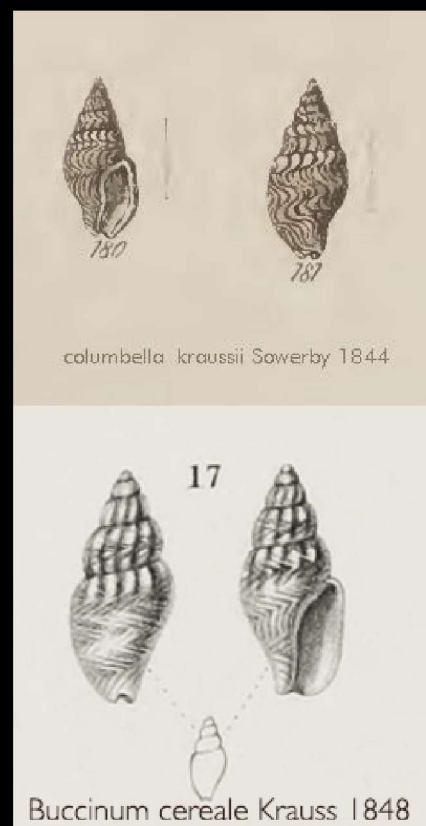


Figure 1. Top: Sowerby 1844 illustration. Bottom: Krauss' illustration of *Buccinum cereale* 1848.



Figure 2. Two examples we regard as “average fit” for the original description of *A. kraussii* Sowerby 1844.

***Buccinum cereale*** Krauss, 1848:

“Shell small, ovate-oblongate, “subturrita” (precise interpretation unclear), yellowish, bright, undulating angular lines, painted brown and white markings, longitudinally ribbed, 8-9 oblique ribs, blunted; 6 convex whorls, ribs lower on the final whorl, the ribs medially shortened, aperture ovate-oblongate, lip acute/sharp, columella arcuate. Length 2.7, width 1.2.Ln. Cape littoral.” (5.7mm 2.5mm)

*C. kraussii* var. *albanyana* Turton, 1932

Almost a hundred years later, Turton described 2 forms, *albanyana* and *helena*.

*C. kraussii* var. *albanyana* Turton, 1932

“Near *cerealis*, but with brown squares on every alternate rib, the intermediate ones being all white. It may be a different species” Size 6mm. Port Alfred

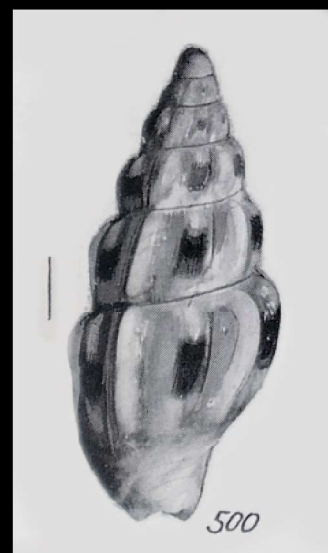


Figure 3. Turton’s figure of *C. kraussii* var. *albanyana*

We found the species to be incredibly variable and can understand the need of Turton and Barch to identify forms. However, the forms are not clear-cut, but show a continuous morphing into the standard/ average *A. kraussii*.



Figure 4. The closest we identified to Turton's specimen of *A. kraussii* var. *albaniana*.



Figure 5. *Kraussii albaniana* denticulate: Although the "brown squares" morph into an oblique pattern, with a tendency to form a connection across alternate ribs, the specimen shows 2-3 denticles of its inner lip, an occasional finding as noted by Kilburn, Marais & Seccombe



Figure 6. A slender form with a mixture of features

*Pleurotoma fulgurans* Krauss, 1848: page 109, pl. 6, fig. 11.

We struggled to translate from the Latin.

"Shell small, elongated turreted, apex acute; whitish, painted with dark angular lines, longitudinally plicated ribs; simple suture; 8 convex body whorls; 11 blunt penultimate ribs with the oblique interstices smooth. Base transversely striated, aperture white, lip sharp, Siphonal canal short.

This specimen was found in the byssus of a *Pinna squamifera* Sowerby 1,1835 at Knysna. Length 2.9 Ln, width 1Ln." (6.1mm, 2.1mm)

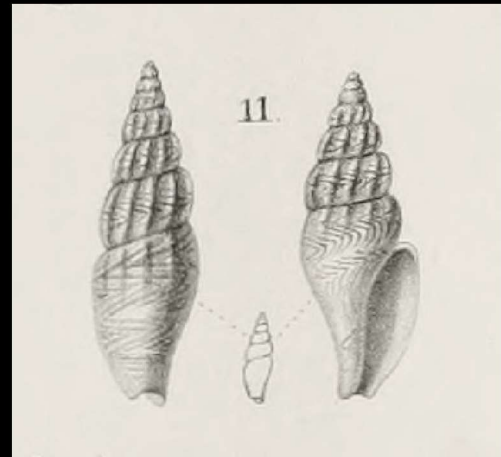


Figure 7. Krauss' illustration *Pleurotoma fulgurans*



Figure 8. A specimen closest we could find to Krauss illustration of *Pleurotoma fulgurans*.

We did not find a specimen with 8 whorls or any specimens from Port Alfred, thus none fitted the description precisely.

This ratio (W:L) of the *kraussi* specimen is 1 : 2.9 The 7mm specimen's ratio is 1 : 2.5. For a 7mm specimen with a 1:2.9 ratio, the width will need to be 2.4 mm.

The 7mm specimen has a similar shape and relative aperture as Krauss's illustration. The lip of the 7mm specimen is mature. It is unclear from Krauss's illustration if the lip is mature. If it was an immature lip, the specimen may well have added the fraction of the mm to be comparable.

See also Figure 18 fm *alfredensis* 6.6 x2.7mm.





Figure 9. The same measurements as the *C. fulgurans*, but less whorls, different shape, markings and ribbing



Figure 10. Unnamed variety, entirely smooth with no ribs, a terminal form of variety *io*.

***Columbella (Anachis) io*** Bartsch, 1915: Plate 37 Fig.4.

“Shell elongate-conic, light brown, variegated with flesh color. Nuclear whorls smooth, well rounded. Postnuclear whorls well rounded, feebly shouldered at the summit, the first three marked by a few ill-defined, broad, decidedly retractive axial ribs, the rest smooth, excepting fines of growth and irregularly disposed, fine spiral striations. Sutures moderately constricted.

Periphery of the last whorl well rounded. Base rather long, marked by lines of growth and a few spiral striations. The columella bears seven lirations which become successively weaker from the insertion to the pit. Aperture moderately large. Posterior angle acute; outer lip thin. The type, Cat. No. 250469, U.S.N.M., comes from Port Alfred (Coll. No. 1342). It has five postnuclear whorls, and measures:

Length, 6.5 mm.; diameter, 2.2 mm.”

Turton 1932: "This has the first 3 whorls ribbed, the rest smooth, which is rather remarkable\*, as the smooth whorls generally come first. There are unusual zig-zag markings, Size 6.5 X 2.2 mm. Rare." From Bartsch's illustration the lip looks immature. It is not clear if the protoconch has worn away. We have found slender forms, varying from almost completely smooth through variations of increasing ribbing, to heavily ribbed.

Our observation is that the first whorls are usually ribbed.

Figure 11. Original Bartsch illustration of *Columbella(Anachis) io*.

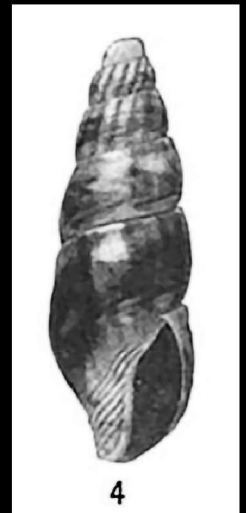


Figure 13. Variations in pattern, with sculpture features compatible with *Columbella(Anachis) io* Bartsch



Figure 14. Further variation of specimen attributable to *Columbella (Anachis) io* Bartsch. Note variation in early ribbing.



Figure 15. Specimen showing multiple characters with particularly strong ribbing, probably closest to *C. alfredensis* Bartsch

### *C. helena* Turton, 1932

Described from a single specimen from Port Alfred. "The shape of the shell is narrowly conic; 1 smooth nuclear whorl, the remaining 5 slightly convex with impressed sutures. The surface is marked by strong axial ribs, about 10 on the last whorl. The colour is dirty white with a light brown band round the middle of the whorls; and the size 6 X 2.4 mm."

"Near *io*, but differs in having a plain band, no zig-zag marks, and much stronger axial ribs."

Barnard 1959 remarked "Turton said his *helena* had no zig-zag lines, but his photograph shows the

Figure 17. *Columbella helena*, original illustration from Turton 1932.

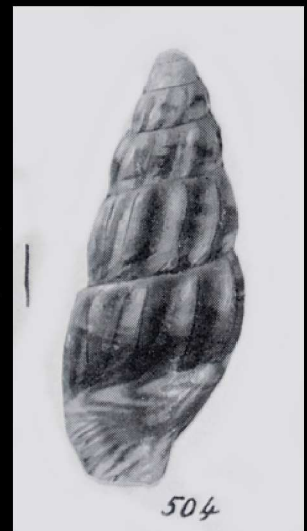


Figure 16. Specimen compatible with the Turton illustration of *C. helena*.



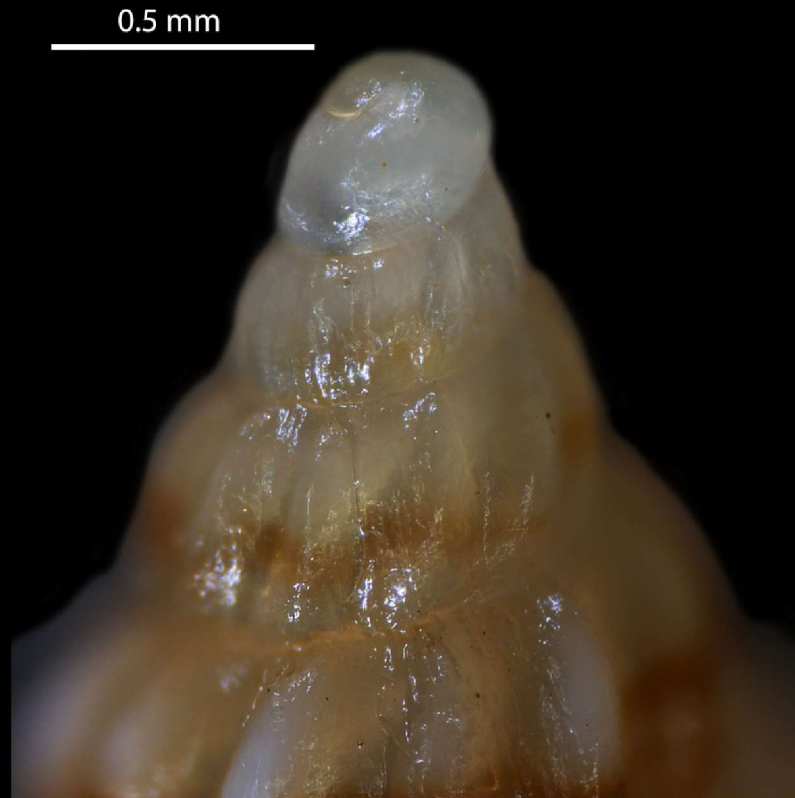


Figure 12 Protoconch of *A. kraussi* (not io variant)

***Columbella (Seminella) alfredensis*** Bartsch, 1915: Plate 37 fig. 5.

"Shell small, elongate-ovate, flesh colored, with fairly equally distributed, decidedly retractive slanting, brownish streaks on the middle of the whorls between the sutures and a few interrupted spiral lines of brown on the base.

Post-nuclear whorls strongly shouldered at the summit, marked by very strong, rounded, decidedly protractive axial ribs, which are about as wide as the spaces that separate them. These ribs extend prominently from the summit to the suture. On the last whorl they become evanescent at the base.

Spiral sculpture apparently absent. Periphery of the last whorl well rounded. Columella marked by two feebly developed spiral cords at its insertion. Aperture moderately large, channelled at the posterior angle and decidedly so anteriorly; middle of the outer lip drawn forward into a claw-like element; parietal wall and the inner edge of the columella glazed with a moderately thick callus."

Figure 18. Original Bartsch illustration of *Columbella alfredensis*.





Figure 19. Specimens corresponding with *C. alfredensis* Bartsch showing pattern variation compatible with *Columbella*(*Anachis*) *io* Bartsch



Figure 20. Top 2 rows show features compatible with typical *C. alfredensis*. Bottom row illustrates a similar variation, but with the ribbing confined to the shoulder and upper body whorl, largely sparing the base. *Columbella (Anachis) io* Bartsch

Specimens with internally denticulate lips (see also Figure 5 var *albanyana* with internal denticulate lip)



Figure 21. Typical *Anachis kraussii*, but heavy specimen with thickened porcelaneous lip showing three internal denticles



Figure 22. Specimen of *A. kraussii* with reduced markings but also showing a mildly denticulate inner lip.





Figure 23. Dark specimens of *A. kraussii* with confluent markings, beginning to resemble the West coast *Columbella kitchingi* Sowerby 1894



Figure 24. A beautiful robust, strongly patterned and dark *Anachis kraussii*.

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## **Society News**

The last year has severely restricted our movements, and we have had to curtail both our AGM as well as regional meetings. We have waived annual fees for the current year in view of the effects of covid on our Society.

It is anticipated that we will hold our AGM in September this year, and we will advise more about this in due course. A recent letter penned by our President has also been distributed to all members. We are glad to advise that the first meeting of the Pretoria Group will be taking place this month, and we anticipate that our other regional groups will soon follow suit.

Hopefully this time of self-exile has been a creative time for you - I know it has for me, and three books later, two on Conchology and one as a James Herriot-type autobiography have kept me out of mischief...I look forward to hearing from you all about similar exploits ( I hope!) when we meet again soon.

Kind regards

Ken