

THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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MEETING

The next meeting of the Society will be held in the Lecture Hall of the S.A. Museum on Tuesday 24th March at 8.15 p.m. The shell family for display will be the Mitridae (Barnard p. 63). The foreign members of this family are colourful so we expect a good display. This is a "get together" evening, when shells can be exchanged and discussed. There will be films too. Will members please try to bring specimens of the shells mentioned in this circular for the benefit of those who may not know them. Your secretary will bring the trawled shells mentioned by Mr Elston.

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FIELD DAY - very important

We are holding a field day in conjunction with the Cape Natural History Club at Melkbosch Strand on Sunday 15th March. Low water is at 10.19 a.m. Meet at least an hour before this on the rocks below the hotel. Bring shelling equipment and lunch or braai if you want to spend the day. We hope that as many members as possible will turn out so that they can help the N.H.C. members in collecting and identifying shells. Take the new road through Blaauwberg to get to Melkbosch. Friends are welcome.

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MEETING AT THE S.A. MUSEUM 18.2.1964

Dr. Talbot who was in the chair, welcomed all present to the first meeting of the year with a special welcome to Mr & Mrs Smit of Mtubatuba, Zululand, who were here on a visit. The minutes, published in a previous circular, were taken as read. The following were proposed as new members:-

Mrs J. Snyman	proposed by	B. Richards	seconded by	L. Kerr
Mr R. Williamson	"	"	P. Elston	" " "
Denise Wilson	"	"	"	" " "
Mrs A.J. Benn	"	"	B. Newton	" " M. Kempthorn

Mrs Kerr spoke about the Library and asked for helpers to cover the books. Mr R. Pollard and Miss M. Kempthorn volunteered.

The next Field Day was discussed and as March 15th was the only date suitable in the near future, it was decided to hold it then. However, as Mrs Connolly and Mrs Kerr had both been co-opted by the Natural History Club to help them on their own outing that day, we would ask the N.H.C. to combine with us to our mutual advantage.

Mrs Kuttel asked if it were possible to display the shells described in a circular, at the following meeting. This was agreed to.

Mr Jock Dichmont then gave a very informative talk on skin-diving at Bazaruto Island, illustrated with excellent slides. During the tea-interval, Natalie Smit gave us some large land snails from her part of the country. The Strombus on display were excellent.

After tea, Mr Smit showed us some films that he had taken at a Game Reserve. These were much admired and we were sorry that time did not allow the showing of the rest of his films.

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NATAL GROUP

The next meeting of the Natal Group will be held at the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg on Saturday April 11th at 2.30 p.m. when Dr van Bruggen will give a talk. Members and guests please note the date and let's have a bumper attendance. Bring along any shells you have for identification or exchange and also any friends who may be interested in our hobby.

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BORDER MEETING

Border Members are reminded that their next meeting will be held at the Hotel Florence, Kei Mouth from 4th to 6th April.

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THE LIBRARY

Your secretary apologies for the delay in sending the Library List, owing to being laid low with 'flu' for the last few weeks. The list is now complete and will be posted, together with the Members List, after this circular. Most of the books have been covered with a plastic sheet and we hope they will be kept in good condition. My grateful thanks go to Raymond Pollard for his willing help in this. P.S. Please read the Library Rules?

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SLIDES

We acknowledge with thanks, the gift of three slides showing live shells taken at Mocambique, from Mrs Granville of Northern Transvaal. These will be a welcome addition to our slide collection and we appeal to members to send us copies of their best shell transparencies.

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GENERAL NOTES

A short paper on specimens in the collection of P. Elston on Cape of Good Hope Mollusca plus one specimen from Natal waters.

(Given by Mr P. Elston at Natal Group Meeting 8.2.1964)

Acknowledgements to Dr K.H. Barnard's Contributions Part 2 1959

Fasciolaria

As in many other Genera, there are plump and slender forms. Strebels mentioned the possibility of this being a sexual difference and deplored the lack of evidence, but after close study of several specimens Dr. Barnard could give no support to the suggestion.

- 1 Fasc. rutila Watson 1882
Living 40fms. to 154. Range of habitat: off Cape Peninsula to Umhloti River. Dr. Barnard suggests possible the specimen off Umhloti River, Natal, has been misidentified through label. (Brit. Museum Pieter Faure) (Africana shows distribution only to 31 S. on west coast.)
- 2 Fasc. lugubris Reeve 1847
These are found in both deep and shallow water and the resemblance to heyneimanni is strong, but the latter species

has finer and more regular lirae above the shoulder and the shoulder projections are strong. Littoral specimens seem to me to be stronger and stouter than off shore deep water examples.

Depth $4\frac{1}{8}$ metres to 28 fms.

Range West coast Cape Peninsula to False Bay. One specimen from Natal, dredged, no depth given, but so far there are no records since from Natal so the specimen named by Krauss 1848 can possibly be ignored.

- 3 Fasc. heynemanni Duncker 1876
One of South Africa's largest shells. Columella has three pleats and has been established by the radula. Range: Living off Cape St. Francis, Plettenberg Bay to Port Alfred, then a gap eastwards by Dr. Barnard found one in Delagoa Bay, with epidermis intact, fresh dead, so considers this species to be living there as the Mozambique current flows in the opposite direction. More study is necessary into the species and perhaps members can help.

Fusus

Shell more or less fusiform, spire often high. This Genus has no columella pleat, but usually the anterior portion of the inner lip bordering the canal forms a thin edge, separate from the columella.

- 4 Fusus ocelliferus Lamarck 1816
Has blunt knobs on a prominent shoulder around the whorls and growth lines are usually very noticeable. As far as I know confined to the Cape Peninsula, westwards, but eastwards to as far as Port Elizabeth. Always trawled in deep water to 200 fms.
- 5 Fusus adamsi Lamarck 1816
A large shell, up to $5\frac{1}{2}$ -7" similar to ocelliferus, but spiral ridges more or less uniform in size and in good specimens the spiral lines more distinct than growth lines, mostly trawled in deep water but recently collected in shallower water at 35 fms.
Range from Cape of Good Hope to Algoa Bay
- 6 Fusus verruculatus Lamarck 1816
Knobs usually bright red, when fresh, not a very deep water species and indications in young specimens of red flames. Range from Cape Peninsula to Port St. Johns, quite likely in Natal waters but I have had no reports up to now of this being so. Most examples found 14 to 35 fms.
- 7 Fusus colus Linnaeus 1768 confirmed by Chemu 1859
Recorded first in South African waters by Smith 1903. Seems to be confined to the warmer waters of the Indo-Pacific so far, not found very deep 23-36 fms. Very long canal sometimes as long as the spire. Range from Port Natal, Tugela river and as far east as Inhambane. I have specimens from Port Natal and Delagoa Bay and Mocimbuque. Recently our member Mr E. Dee found one at five fms. whilst diving at the North Pier, entrance to Port Natal.
- 8 Fusus faurei Barnard 1936
Quite a small shell, from 33 to 50 mm. very deep, off Cape Point 300-560 fms.

- 9 Fusitriton murrayi Sowerby 1898
A deep water fairly large shell, in conformity with the majority of deep water shells, in being very light. Never found on beach. Seems to be confined to the Cape of Good Hope 150-200 fms.
- 10 Neptuneopsis gilchristi Sowerby 1898
One of the commonest of our deep water shells of the Cape and a large shell, Trawled from 40 to 300 fms. Dead shells have been found as far east as Algoa Bay, but it is not definite, if this and other pockets are caused by bottom currents or that the species exists alive in this area. Named after Dr. Gilchrist Professor of Zoology South African College now University of Cape Town. The peculiar protoconch is characteristic. Emblem of the Society.
- 11 Volutocorbis abyssicola Adams & Reeve 1848
Columella has many pleats and precious whorls often overlaid by callus, some pleats have smaller ones between them. Difficult to obtain undamaged. Seem to be confined to the Cape of Good Hope 80-150 fms. Plump and slender individuals in same colony. Very recently specimens have been found on the West Coast. To my mind one of the most beautiful of the deep water shells.
- 12 Volutocorbis lutosa Koch 1948
Similar to abyssicola, columella pleats three to five, size always smaller than the former, the two forms seem to overlap in the vicinity of Saldanha Bay. Range from Port Nolloth to Orange River mouth. The mollusc is usually found covered with red/brown or umber/brown clay, making it difficult to preserve the glaze. Trawled 100 to 200 fms.
- 13 Afrivoluta pringlei Tomlin 1947
A beautiful chestnut brown shell with, usually, two broad bands of pale reddish brown on body whorl, 4 columellar pleats, the most noteworthy discovery since Pleurotomaria africana which was found by the Fisheries Survey vessel "Africana" in 1931. Named after the popular Director of the Natal Museum, Dr. Pringle. 100-120 fms. depth. Range: Cape St. Francis to Port Alfred area.

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Family Turridae. Turris (Gemmula) cosmoi Sykes D.H. Kennelly

The first indication of the presence of this Japanese species in South African waters, was noted when in recent years live specimens of Xenophora pallidula Reeve, were taken by a trawl in 90 fathoms off the Zululand coast. More than one example of Turris cosmoi was found adhering to the Xenophora specimens. The latest development is, that within the last few weeks, live specimens of T. cosmoi have been taken by a skin diver at a point on the South coast of Natal - a most interesting and important discovery. The writer is greatly indebted to our enthusiastic member, Mrs H. Jefferies of Kei Mouth, for the information and also for a specimen of T. cosmoi presented to the East London Museum.

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Observations on Hydatina at Kei Mouth.

H. Jefferies

About the middle of October 1963, Hydatina physis appeared in great numbers, at a particular spot where a few had been seen in previous years. Hydatina circulata made their appearance about the beginning of November, quite a few, but not nearly as many as physis. Both species were in the same locality, in sandy pools among rocks. To the writer's knowledge, circulata has not been found here before.

The animals of both species are very beautiful, with flesh-pink wavy folds, head and tentacles, edged with electric blue; circulata is slightly darker than physis.

It is quite apparent that they came inshore to spawn. Every pool has many white, frilly egg ribbons in it. Each ribbon has a threadlike end which is buried in the sand, evidently to keep it in position. A few were found, actually in the act of spawning and these were partially buried in the sand.

No attempt will be made to describe the shells, as they are well illustrated in Dr. Barnard's "A Beginner's Guide to South African Shells", page 130. In both species, the number of lines and the thickness of them varies. In circulata the transverse band which is white, edged with fine black-brown lines, is sometimes missing and a single, dark line circles the shell.

At the end of January 1964, both species have disappeared, except for a very occasional one. It will be interesting to see if there will be a recurrence in October-November this year.

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The Genus Cheilea in South African waters.

R.N. Kilburn

In Circular No. 49 Mrs Cock wrote of finding shells at Manaba Beach comparable with the figure in Webb's "Handbook for Shell Collectors" of Mitrularia equestris L. It is hoped that the following will answer her questions.

Mitrularia Schumacher 1817 is a synonym of Cheilea Modeer 1793. The two species of Cheilea occur in our waters, C. equestris L. and C. cicatricosa Rve. Synonyms of cicatricosa are porosa Rve. and diaphana Rve., under which names it has also been recorded.

The two species are easily distinguished, C. equestris having radial ribs, whereas cicatricosa has a beautiful sculpture of wrinkled concentric rugose thickenings. Mrs Cock's shell is undoubtedly the latter species, as she mentions the "rather crinkly design" of her specimens.

Both are of wide Indo-Pacific distribution and have been found on a number of occasions on the Natal South Coast. They are rare in our waters.

As usual Walter Webb's information is quite incorrect, for members of this genus certainly do not inhabit "mudflats". They are all rock dwellers, but normally live below low tide level. They will be found clinging tightly to rocks on a calcareous platform which is secreted by the foot and fits the margin of the shell exactly.

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Notes on Papyridea papyracea, Bruguiere.

D.H. Kennelly

The attention of Border members is directed to Circular No. 29, pages 3 and 4, for information regarding this shell. This month, February, Miss Courtenay-Latimer, Director of the East London Museum, collected a live specimen at Nahoon just after the Nahoon River came down in flood. Border members are requested to keep a look out for this shell.

and advise the writer of any live specimens found and the locality.
The information is required for the record of live Mollusca occurring on the Wild Coast.

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An Unusual Find.

P. Elston

Recently I obtained a Murex maurus Broderip from Salisbury Island (Bay of Port Natal) measuring 95 x 43 mm. in very good condition with 102 egg capsules of the same species affixed to the body whorl.

This I have never come across before. Have any of our members done so? I am preserving the specimen and when ready will send it to the South African Museum.

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Janthina pallida at Port Alfred.

R.N. Kilburn

Janthina pallida Thompson recently came under fire as an inhabitant of our waters and the following may be of interest to members.

Several years ago while collecting at Port Alfred, in the Breton Beach area, the writer found three specimens of the species in good condition. They were lying high and dry at the very top of the shore and had evidently been deposited during a period of very high seas; no trace of the animals remained.

All have the flaring aperture described and figured by Laursen (Dana Report No. 38, 1953), but differ in showing no trace of a peripheral keel on the spire whorls; in fact this keel is scarcely visible on the body whorl either. It is of course possible (although not very likely), that all three are merely freak prolongata Blainv.. Nevertheless for the present I am inclined to regard them as genuine pallida.

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Cypraea algoensis, Gray. (Type locality, Algoa Bay).

D.H. Kennelly

Collectors will be interested to learn that our old friend, Percy Elston of Durban, has two examples of this rare shell - in his collection. We now hear that while Percy was at Bonza Bay in October last, our keen collector, Mrs Rix, gave him some shells. On returning to Durban, these shells were carefully examined and Percy found a third example of algoensis among them. The feelings of Mrs Rix on hearing about this, are better imagined than described.

A description of algoensis is given by Joyce Allan in her Cowry book, page 31, and the species closely approaches eden-tula in appearance.

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Natal Notes.

Les Cock

Fifth Meeting of the Natal Group of the Society held at the Natal Museum on Saturday 8th February 1964

It was on quite a sad note that the above meeting of the Natal Group of the Society closed, when Dr. van Bruggen speaking on behalf of all members, said "Good Bye and Good Luck" to Mr Percy Elston and his good lady, who had come along with

him to this his last meeting, as they leave Durban at the end of March to take up residence in Cape Town. Mr Flston who was Chairman, has with his knowledge of shells and willingness to impart same to others, been a tower of strength to this Group and will be sorely missed. Our loss will be Cape Town's gain, but we know that he will always have the interests of the Natal Group at heart. It was rather fitting that the subject for the afternoon's discussion, "The Deep Sea Shells of the South African Coast", should be given by Percy. A specimen of eash shell was passed round for inspection and was followed by a short description and such interesting points as depth, range etc. A most interesting and instructive talk, but as if that were not enough, at the conclusion, the speaker placed on the table several shells of the genera discussed for distribution amongst the members. An interesting point arose re Afrivoluta pringlei when it was mentioned that the radula of this animal was more of the Marginella type than that of the Volute. It was decided that at the next meeting of the Group, Dr van Bruggen would give a talk and practical demonstration.

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Cape Notes.

L. Kerr

Credit goes to these members who gave donations towards our cupboard for the Reference Collection. All received boxes of our local shells with their identification labels. Mrs Connolly reports that she has plenty of shells, so send in your wants.

Mrs Prior	R 3
Mrs Pinkham	3
Mrs Jefferies	1
Mrs M. Ackermann	1
Mrs Kerr	1
Mrs Weakley	1

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Mrs Connolly has sent in the following field note:-

Arniston - on a recent trip, live cones were found with red animals inside which I presume to be Conus aurora. The shells were three different colour varieties. This is the furthest south that I have collected these cones.
Millers Point- a dead specimen of Diodora calyculata was found. This is a very common shell on the East London beaches, but has not yet been recorded from False Bay. Has anyone found this mollusc alive further south than Still Bay?
Kowmetjie - another dead shell, Tugalia barnardi (Check List No. 19) was found. Has anyone found this alive?

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Hints on cleaning live snails, e.g. Helix.

Place them in a plastic bag, close opening and freeze for 3 days. The animal can then be easily removed. This works for all the Bullia.

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