

THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

CIRCULAR NO. 8

AUGUST, 1959  
(Re-printed 1977)

PAGE 1

MEETING:

Our next meeting will be held on August 11th at 8.p.m. in the Zoology Department of the University of Cape Town in Rondebosch. Visitors are welcome!

Agenda:

1. Minutes of last meeting
2. Matters arising out of the minutes
3. Election of members
4. Proposal of new members
5. Any other business
6. Discussion of the genus conus. Members are invited to display a representative collection of their cones both South African and foreign.

NEW MEMBERS:

At our last meeting, held on June 11th, the following members were elected:

Mr J.E. Bell, "Windsong", 10 Camden Road, Sunnyridge, East London.  
Mrs C.B. Chandler, P.O. Box 621, Chatham, Massachusetts, U.S.A.  
Mr M.E. Dormer, 36 Rotherfield Road, Plumstead, C.P.  
Mr E.T. Haywood, "Twig", 24 Moodie Street, Umkomaas, South Coast, Natal.  
Miss P. Preston, 2Albany", Roosevelt Road, Claremont, C.P.  
Mr K. Sprighton, 618 The Gables, Esplanade, Durban, Natal  
Mr A.M. van Wezemaal, Studio "Marin", Grand Rue, Herseaux, Belgium.  
Mr J. Viergever, Noordstraat 6, Serooskerke, Schouwen, Holland.

PROPOSED MEMBERS:

At our next meeting, the following will be proposed for membership:

	PROPOSER:	SECONDER:
Mrs I. Fynn	Mrs L. Kerr	Mr C. Swaneveld
Mrs H. Jefferies	Mrs L. Kerr	Mr C. Swaneveld
The Kei Mouth Primary School	Mrs L. Kerr	Mr C. Swaneveld
Mrs E.H. le Roux	Mr D.W.J. Ackermann	Mr C. Swaneveld
Mrs J. Truer	Mrs H. Boswell	Mr C. Swaneveld
Mrs E. Visagè	Mrs H. Boswell	Mrs L. Kerr

Apart from those listed in Circular No. 7, the following were proposed at our last meeting:

Miss C. Barnett	Mrs L. Kerr	Mr C. Swaneveld
Miss S. Wood	Mrs L. Kerr	Mr C. Swaneveld
Dr E.C.N. van Hoepen	Mr C. Swaneveld	Mr J.N. Ackermann

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Miss I.A. Windsor, 192, Kloof Road, Bantry Bay, C.P.

RESIGNATIONS:

As from July 1st 1959, Mrs M.B. van Heerden has resigned from the Society.

LIST OF MEMBERS:

A list of members as per June 30th, 1959, complete with Addresses, may be obtained from the Secretary on application.

GENERAL NOTES:

Our first anniversary dinner was a great success. This was greatly due to the careful preparations by Mrs L. Kerr, who also provided the floral decorations which were arranged in various large sea-shells and the menus

which were hand decorated with coloured drawings of shells. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking Dr Francois Retief for showing us two beautiful films of underwater life around the Cape Peninsula. This was certainly the highlight of a most enjoyable evening.

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Mrs Joan Weakley has been corresponding with Miss R. Cleverley, 20 Dallington Terrace, Dallington, Christchurch, New Zealand, and suggests that anybody who is interested in exchanging should get in touch with her.

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It may interest our members to hear what a shell dealer in Mocambique has to say about selling shells to collectors in South Africa. The following is an extract from a letter which Mr P.J. le Roux received from a dealer in that area:-

"The really rare and uncommon shells hardly ever go to the dealer but are sold to collectors directly at 50% of the dealer's retail price or even their full catalogue price. Since, from what I have seen so far, a specimen shell in South Africa is valued at 1/3rd of what U.S.A. dealers pay for it, or 1/10th of what U.S.A. collectors pay, it's really far from worthwhile to sell rare shells to S.A. as long as S.A. collectors aren't prepared to acknowledge the current prices.

"Take this instance: You know the form *Cypraea onyx adusta* which is entirely and uniformly deep chestnut or black. I sell this shell to collectors in U.S.A. for up to \$5, to dealers for \$1, and I can never get enough to satisfy the demand. Well last year I shipped 2 of them to S.A. upon request, as fine as they come, found them appraised with 6d on the check-list, postage not even paid. Well -- and I pay my native shell hunters 4d for a fine specimen --"

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Further to Prof. Day's records (Circular No. 7), Dr K.H. Barnard advises that the Cape Government trawler s.s. Pieter Faure collected *Nerita albicilla* at Knysna in August 1898. Fresh unworn juveniles from 1 mm diameter upwards have also been obtained at Still Bay, and it is a reasonable assumption that adults are living in some habitat not far off-shore in that area.

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#### MIGRATION OF TROPICAL SPECIES:

by Dr K.H. Barnard.

*Clavatula taxus* is a well-known inhabitant of False Bay, but the other species referred to in Circular No. 7 are all "common objects of the Tourist trade", and the record of their alleged occurrence off Simonstown cannot be allowed to pass without comment.

I assume that Mr Bosman was not the frogman who obtained these shells. Were they obtained by a frogman? Possible. Did the frogman obtain them from the sea-bed? Possible. Did he obtain them alive near Simonstown? Incredible!

Recently I was invited to see the collection in the possession of the S.A. Naval Diving School at Simonstown. I was shown numerous shells and other marine objects, some of which had been collected at Inhaca Island (Delagoa Bay), others in Simon's Bay. No Labels were attached to any of the specimens, and the officer in charge was quite uncertain as to the locality where any particular specimen had been collected.

What I think has happened is that Mr Bosman saw or was given some of these shells, and was informed, quite innocently, that they came from near Simonstown; or was there a Naval (frog's) leg-pull?

I am not impugning Mr Bosmans sincerity, but in making an accurate fauna-list it is necessary to check and recheck every record as far as possible.

Von Martens (1903), Turton (1932) and myself (1958) have commented on the unreliability of some of Bairstow's, Crawfords and other collectors'

records. Whether Turton identified his shells correctly or incorrectly, we may feel sure that he collected them all himself and did not accept any from friends with the assurance: "Oh yes, it was found in South Africa".

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SOME NOTES ON MELAPIUM LINEATUM, LAMARCK. by D.H. Kennelly

For the information of collectors, it may be mentioned that in recent years some confusion has arisen with regard to the correct specific name of this shell.

Turton has this species listed as Melapium bulbosum, Wood, which appears to be incorrect.

Dr Barnard quotes the name as M. lineatum, Lamarck, and it seems that this species is confined to South African coast. As far as the writer is able to ascertain the shell certainly ranges from East London round to Jefferys Bay.

M. bulbosum, Wood, occurs in the Pacific and is about twice as large as the South African shell. The writer has seen an excellent example of M. bulbosum owned by Mrs H. Boswell. It is of beautiful colour and unmistakably different to the South African species.

NOTE: With reference to the above Prof Day advises that he has found M. lineatum alive and common in Mossel Bay

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NOTES ON THE GENUS "BULLIA". by D.H. Kennelly

There are a number of species listed as living on the South African coast - Turton gives 24 in his book, with a number of new species described by himself in addition.

The only species, as far as the writer has been able to discover, which occurs alive between tide marks is Bullia rhodostoma, Gray

This shell is very common and seems to act as a scavenger as it swarms in all sizes over stranded Medusae (Jelly fish), also on Physalia (Portuguese men of war),

All the other species listed appear to live well below low water mark, and are found only as dead shells on the beach.

The genus should be further investigated, for the shells are in many cases difficult to identify with certainty.

In particular, Bullia digitalis is listed with four or five varieties. These varieties are based on colour, and it seems possible they may be eliminated in the future.

Turton lists four new species named by Dartsch in 1915, but the writer has never been able to discover specimens.

It will be interesting to have further comments on the genus from our members.

Reference: Turton, 1932, Marine Shells of Port Alfred.

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