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 x THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA x
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CIRCULAR NO. 5. FEBRUARY, 1959. PAGE 1.
 (Re-printed 1972)

MEETING:

By special request, our next meeting will be a Field-Day. We will make use of the next springtide and meet at the small gate at Millers Point, near Simonstown, on Sunday, March 8th. at 8.30 a.m. Members are reminded that it will be low tide at about 9.08 a.m. and they should, therefore, try and come earlier. We also want to remind members of the fact that Millers Point is private property and no fires are allowed. At 10.30 a.m. a short meeting will be held on the beach to attend to the following business:

- (1) Minutes of the last meeting.
- (2) Matters arising out of the Minutes.
- (3) Election of members.
- (4) Proposal of new members.
- (5) Any other business.

Anybody requiring transport, please contact the Secretary (Home: 698063, Office: 27594), who will try and arrange lifts.

NEW MEMBERS:

The following members were elected at our last meeting:-
 (S = Student Member)

Mrs. E.W. Baxter	"Sylvania", 141 King Edward Ave., Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.
Mrs. H.E. Bragg	46 Milner Rd., Mossel Bay, C.P.
S Miss Peggy Broomfield	14, Darwent Court, Rondebosch, C.P.
Mrs. C.M. Connolly	40 Third Ave., Fish Hoek, C.P.
Mrs. D. de Villiers	"Avondrust", 63, Van Reenen St., Robertson, C.P.
Mrs. C. Dunningham	42 Wallesley Court, Wellington Rd., Wynberg, C.P.
S Mr. Jacob Hirschmann	P.O. Box 4858, Johannesburg.
S Mr. Ezra Hirschmann	P.O. Box 4858, Johannesburg.
S Miss E.A. Kennelly	5 Fourie St., Eric Dodd Township, Uitenhage, C.P.
Prof. A. Kipps	"Nautilus", de Villiers Rd., Kenilworth,
Mr. H.J. Koch	20 Burn St., Waverley, Johannesburg.
Miss A. Mossop	172 Main St., Paarl, C.P.
Mr. A. Rombouts	25 van der Merwe St., Rietondale, Pretoria, Tvl.
Mrs. N. Smit	P.O. Riverview, Mtubatuba, Zululand, Natal.
Dr. J.A. van Eeden	Dept. of Zoology, Potchefstroom University for C.H.E., Potchefstroom.

PROPOSED MEMBERS:

Apart from those listed in Circular No. 4, the following new members were proposed at our last meeting:-

	<u>PROPOSER:</u>	<u>SECONDER:</u>
S Miss Ann Kerr	Mr. C. Swaneveld	Mr. J. Ackermann
S Miss Elizabeth Kerr	Mr. C. Swaneveld	Mr. J. Ackermann
Mrs. E. Lowry	Mr. C. Swaneveld	Mrs. L. Kerr
Mr. G. Sole	Mrs. L. Kerr	Mr. J. Ackermann
Miss P. Spilhaus	Mrs. L. Kerr	Mr. J. Ackermann
Mrs. F. Talbot	Mrs. L. Kerr	Mr. J. Ackermann

GENERAL NOTES:

The Secretary received a letter from Mrs. Ingrid Keto, El Arish, N. Queensland, Australia, who would like to exchange shells with somebody in Southern Africa. She is not interested in minute shells.

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Mrs. Ackermann has given us the name of the following shell collector who would like to exchange:- Mr. Frank Lovejoy, 195 Ocean St., Narrabeen, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

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SHELL HUNTING:

by Mr. John S. Hutt.

While a conchologist, in the strictly scientific sense of the word, will always endeavour to hunt for the "live" shell in the rock pools, in the estuarine mudflats, by dredging, etc. the shell collector - who is not really a conchologist - delights himself or herself by combing the beaches.

Shells on the beaches vary very considerably in size, and the average collector, even those who get down on to their knees and progress sideways along the fringe of marine jetsam like an ungainly crab, rarely takes the trouble to pick up anything smaller than about a quarter of an inch, unless it is of a striking and eye-catching colour like the pink gleam of an *Amphiperas Beckeri*, the glistening white of a *Trivia Pellucidula* or the red of a *Gibbula Gaudiosa*.

When, however, the collecting of the larger shells has nurtured the jackdaw habit into a hobby, and the hobby shows signs of becoming an obsession, then the shell hunter can open for himself or herself unending vistas of discovery and excitement by bringing home bagsful of the "Small Stuff", what my wife and I call "Shell Grit", for examination in the calm atmosphere of one's own home.

The process as follows:- Acquire (a) a hand magnifying glass of about 10 or even as high as 20 diameters (b) a magnificusser of 7 diopters (c) a pair of pointed depilatory tweezers (d) a fine camel's hair brush; and (e) a supply of matchboxes, labelling paper, cotton wool and larger boxes in which to store the matchbox containers when filled.

Then the procedure is as follows:- On return from the beach, spread out your "bag" on a tray or trays (I use an old white bed quilt) to get thoroughly dry after having washed off the sand and seawater in fresh water.

The dried grit can then be spread out on a white cloth (an old piece of sheeting 3 feet x 1½ feet) in small quantities in a thin layer, divided arbitrarily, by running a finger down through the spread, into sections about 4" wide. Then, whenever time and opportunity allows, having thus arranged a spread, don the magnificusser and scan your catch section by section. I use an old nail file as a scratcher and for turning over.

The hunt is on, and I personally always have the feeling that I am an explorer entering new and unknown territory. Where there is a lot of very fine material I sieve it through two kitchen sieves. The first to let through anything of a millimeter or under, and the second to pass all 2 mm material, and the residue is put aside to be dealt with as above.

The amazingly beautiful - in colour and/or sculpture - variety of the dwarfs among the mollusca which one comes across in this way is too exciting for words. Here in Port Alfred, I would judge that shells of ¼" downwards make up

about 35% of which perhaps 24% are of less than 2 mm in diameter. Such percentages indicate the size of the field of pleasure and discovery which is lost to a collector if he only collects the medium and large shells from the beaches.

Once such a system of "shell hunting" is begun, the collector will soon learn to judge where the best "grit" is likely to be found, and, if lucky enough to have an estuarine pool or pools, such as Port Alfred's "Little Beach", then on rare occasions, he or she will find a jetsam spread of minute stuff which will be exceedingly rewarding.

Good hunting to all.

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NOTES ON THE RANGE OF SOME SOUTH AFRICAN SPECIES OF THE GENUS "CYPRAEA";

By Mr. D.H. Kennelly.

The species to be dealt with in these notes are three of the well known species, but it would appear that the range is not so well known by collectors, and the study thereof becomes interesting because of the sudden end at a locality, particularly of two of the species.

Cypraea edentula, Sowerby. This shell is well known to all collectors, and appears to occur abundantly from the Transkei coast (East London), Port Alfred, Jeffreys Bay, and westwards to False Bay.

It is a very common species, but is very seldom found in very good condition on a beach - the best specimen the writer ever saw were recovered from the stomach of a large fish -. Their appearance was so different from the usual run of beach specimen, that at first the writer was puzzled as to the identity, but the absence of teeth on the aperture gave the clue. It would be interesting to know if this shell occurs in the Atlantic, i.e. Table Bay or north to Saldanha Bay.

Cypraea capensis, Gray. So far as the writer has been able to ascertain, this species occurs from East London, past Port Alfred to Cape Recife (Port Elizabeth).

At this latter point the range seems to end, for after years of collecting the writer has never found it at Jeffreys Bay, nor seen any specimen found at the latter locality. It would be interesting to hear from collectors in Natal if this shell occurs on that coast.

Port Alfred seems to be the best locality for getting really good specimen of this shell.

Cypraea Fusco-dentata, Gray. Many years ago, the writer found just one specimen at Port Alfred, and it appears to be rare for Turton never found it in spite of his long experience of collecting at this locality.

At Cape Recife (Port Elizabeth) "C. fusco-dentata" appears to occur in equal numbers with "C. capensis", but at Jeffreys Bay it is very common on the beach, and it would appear that this locality would yield splendid specimen if proper dredging was possible.

As far as may be ascertained at the moment "C. fusco-dentata" does not occur further West, but here again other collectors may be able to furnish further information.

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NOTES ON "RARE" FINDS AT JEFFREYS BAY:
by Mr. D.H. Kennelly.

Within the last two or three months, a fellow collector in Uitenhage (a beginner) consulted the writer with regard to a shell he found on the beach at Jeffreys Bay. He was very thrilled with the discovery, but his shell proved to be a very good specimen of "Murex ramosus", widely distributed over the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The finder was rather crestfallen to learn that this shell does not occur on the South African coast, and the specimen was probably thrown overboard from a passing ship, eventually coming ashore at Jeffreys Bay.

This is the second specimen of this shell known to the writer as being found at Jeffreys Bay - whether there have been other shells of other species so found is not known, but this goes to prove the fact that many shells have been accorded a locality, where they do not occur, and such discoveries should be referred by the collector to some competent authority on conchology for opinion.

Another source of bewilderment - and subsequent exasperation - to the beginning collector, is that at some establishments at seaside resorts, a case is found exhibiting many shells. These shells are mostly local, but others are specimen from all over the Indian and Pacific Oceans. There are no names on these shells, nor are localities mentioned. The beginner is at once disappointed that he - or she - failed to find some of the "showy" shells on the local beach, until the matter is referred to someone "in the know".

Some twelve months ago, the writer was discussing just such a show case with a friend, and pointing out the local shells from the tropical species. Just then the proprietor's wife came on the scene and after finding out what the talking was all about, spoke to the writer and said, "Nonsense, I found all those shells on the local beach myself and put them in the case".

The writer and friend decided to depart in search of suitable liquid tonic after such a display of ignorance, to say nothing of such a "tall" assertion.

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