

## SMITHS VOLUTA

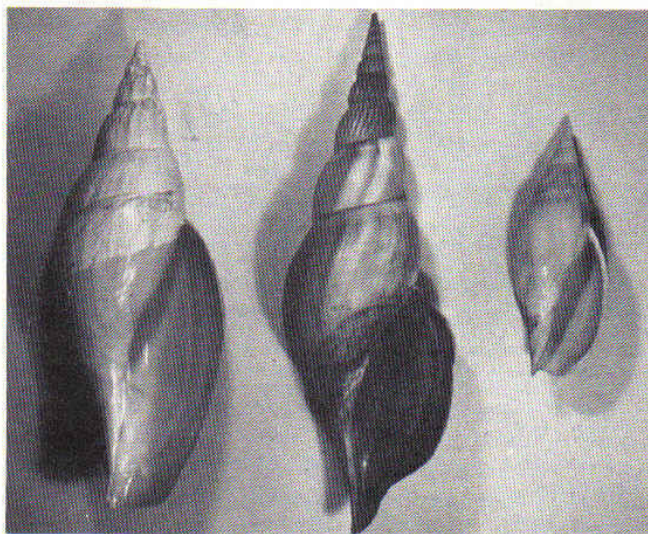
by P.W. CLOVER

Its very seldom in a popular family for three species to all have the same name. In fact most authors avoid doing this due to genera changes, their name could become a synonym. In cones and cypraea where many genera are in doubt the same name is never used twice much less three times. But in Volutidae the genera are well established and in the past 75 years we have three smithi all with the exact same spelling.

1 *Fulgoraria smithi* (Sowerby III 1901) is from deep water off Chiba Pref. Japan, the illustrated specimen is 180 mm in length and Mr E.A. Smith was so honoured for pointing out that Sowerbys *uniplicata* had prior usage.

2 *Teramachia smithi* (Bartsch 1942) also very deep water over 600 metres off Bohol, Philippines, the illustrated specimen is 200 mm and is named for the director of Philippine Albatross Expedition, Dr H.M. Smith.

3 *Pachymelon smithi* Powell 1950 is from 100-160 metres off South Island, New Zealand, the illustrated specimen is 100 mm and is named for Mr J.G. Smith who donated the holotype to the New Zealand museum. This last species is possible for most collectors to add to their collection. But the first two are most rare and it is seldom all three species will be seen together.



Illustrated left to right 1, 2, 3

## KNYSNA – PART TWO

by

MICHAEL CORTIE and KENNETH BROWN

### SHELLING ON THE SANDBANKS

Knysna lagoon presents a host of opportunities for conchologists. It is a truly fascinating and beautiful place with sandbanks abounding in sea-life, deep, mysterious channels and gloomy underwater cliffs and caves. It has sunny wave-washed rocks, and even a charming underwater shipwreck, which can be reached by snorkel-divers. The sandbanks of Knysna vary from well washed clean sandbanks off Leisure Island, and between Thesens Island and Leisure Island to weedy banks. Further up the estuary are other very different weed banks, which harbour a different, more brackish-water fauna. There are also extensive regions of sandflats. The regions vary greatly in the type and number of shells available.

We travelled around the lagoon in a long aluminium canoe which enabled us to visit all manner of odd corners. Having the canoe also meant that we were able to try our hand at dredging. We designed and built a small dredge, but this proved impossible to drag along the bottom behind the canoe as it dug in too much. Instead we used the boat to take the dredge out, and we pulled it in from a convenient sandspit. The dredge takings varied considerably from place to place. Mostly the dredge contained many single bivalve valves. However we were occasionally rewarded by prettily coloured live bivalves; five species turned up in the dredgings, including a beautiful *Tellina*. Other regions turned up *Turritella capensis* in large numbers – many of these were live. An occasional pansy shell – *Echinodiscus bisperforatus* – turned up in all its prickly glory. These ranged in size from about 13 mm to 70 mm. A red sea-anemone also came up in a dredging, floppy and collapsed. We attempted dredging the deepest parts of the main channel, but the deepest successful dredgings were from about 5 m below mean sea level.

When the tide was low we were often forced to push the canoe over very shallow water over the flats. At first we had great fun running with the canoe, making high speed. However the discovery of patches of *Atrina squamifera*

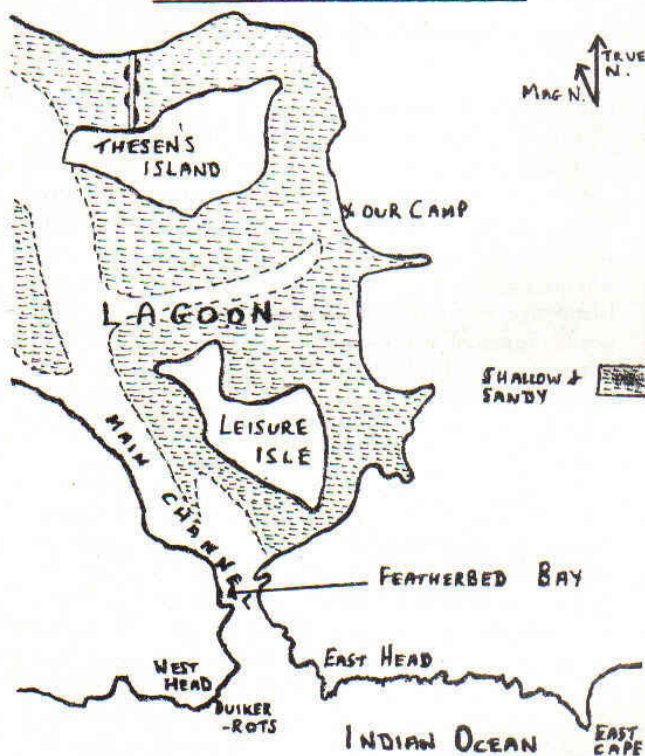
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(Horse mussels) soon put an end to this sport, because we noticed that these razor-sharp shells would have a very disastrous effect on our bare feet. They can be found below HWM between Thesen Island and the airport. We found them by carefully shuffling through the shallow water at low tide, looking for their gaping, black openings, which give them away. One had to dig them out very carefully if you wanted an undamaged specimen. The spines were especially fragile. While we were digging one out we found a live *Solen capensis*.

Shelling on the sands around Leisure Island in the daytime proved profitable. *Natica tecta* Anton 1839 (formerly *N. genuana*) were very common in sizes from 10–15 mm live. These left distinctive trails in the sand, and were mostly found by digging at the end of a trail. Hermitted

KNYSNA : 1 : 50 000



shells were especially common in the shallows between Leisure Island and the mainland.

*Natica tecta* was quite a common sort of shell for occupancy, and we even took some of the larger (30 mm) specimens. Other hermitted shells were *Turritella carinifera* and *T. capensis*, *Bullia annulata* and one *Bullia issima*. We even found two hermitted landsnail shells. On the hermitted shells we found attached three life *Crepidula procellana*. Rocks in this area had thousands of *Oxystele variegata*. On the wall forming the northern shore of Leisure Island *Littorina knysnaensis* formed a solid black band. Large specimens occurred only at one specific locality, and everywhere else these periwinkles were very much smaller.

We found that shelling at night was not only good fun, but that it was also profitable. Night-shelling has an atmosphere all of its own. The careful checking of the tide-table,

the preparation of lights, bottles and boxes, the choice of a route — all these add to the enjoyment. The sandbanks come alive at night, and presented a very different spectacle to the same bank in the daytime. We chiefly searched for tell tale humps and trails in the sand. *Natica tecta* up to 13 mm were found in many areas, especially over the weedy sections. Many were also found crawling on the surface. *Bullia annulata* were found actively crawling over the sand at the water's edge. Some small bivalves, perhaps *Tivela compressa* were fairly common, ranging in colour from brown to almost white. These appeared to have dug themselves out of the sand. On a higher, wrinkled surface of sandbank we found what appeared to be *Tellina* (only about 15 mm though). Large clams, *Mactra glabrata* were found by digging up small holes or slits in the sand. They also revealed themselves by the untidy mounds they made as they pushed themselves out of the sand. Another small mound, also with an opening, produced a *Venus verrocosa*. We also came across *Polinices didyma* busy digging themselves out or into the sand. The very tips of the sandbanks were populated by the hairy echinoderms, the sea-mice *Echinocardium cordatum* and the sand-dollars or pansy shells *Echinodiscus bisperforatus*. The latter were found by the telltale holes left in the sand, three to four tiny holes per animal. In various places we also came across scattered colonies of *Atrina squamifera*. We always enjoyed night-shelling, and although we didn't necessarily return with many shells, as we had already found most species, we certainly enjoyed observing the sand-banks coming to life with the darkness. The discovery of some new sea-creature was always greeted with enthusiasm and we would gather in the pool of light cast by our lamp and hotly speculate on just what it was.

We must point out however, that unless the collector doesn't mind a long paddle in knee-deep or deeper water, he or she is well-advised to take very careful heed of the state of the tide.

In conclusion may we point out that Knysna is a beautiful place and we hope it can more-or-less stay that way. We urge collectors in this or any other region to exercise restraint, and only to collect two or three of any but the most common species. For in this way we all ultimately derive greater joy from this fascinating study — Conchology.

We would welcome any article of interest to  
Shell Collectors for future publication.

#### EXCHANGES WANTED:

- Mr J.M. Massoutier, 3151 Labroquere, Barbazan, France. Is interested in obtaining a *Cypraea fultoni*, either exchange or buy.  
Mr W. van Damme, Kwarteldreef 4, 8200 Brusse — St. Michiels, Belgium. Would like to contact members with view to exchanging.  
Mr Y. Attard, 18 rue de Rieth, 67200 Strasbourg, France. Would like to contact members with view to exchanging land and marine shells.

#### CHANGES TO JANUARY, 1978 MEMBERSHIP LIST:

##### New Members:

- Mr G. Poppe, Floralaan 17, 2510 Mortsel, Belgium.  
Mr W. van Damme, Kwarteldreef 4, 8200 Brusse, Belgium.  
Mrs M. Krusche, 81 Kafue Street, Lynnwood Glen, Pretoria 0081.

##### Deceased:

- 1969 Mr M.E. Lohr, 30 Lombard Street, Raceview, Alberton

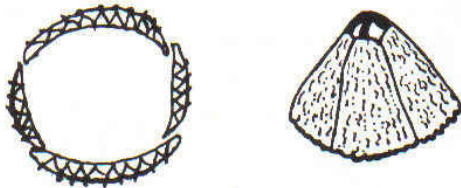
AN ILLUSTRATED LIST OF THE MARINE ANIMALS WHICH INHABIT THE INTER-TIDAL REGION OF UMDONI PARK, NATAL SOUTH COAST

(Continued)

Compiled by

Mrs I.F. Lambert and Miss A. Lambert

*Tetraclita serrata* Darwin



1 cm diameter

Volcano-shaped skeletons formed of four grey, deeply ridged shell-valves. Common in colonies in the middle to upper areas of the shore, which are exposed for a long time at low tide.

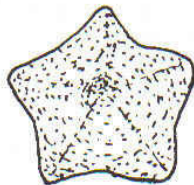
PHYLUM ECHINODERMATA (Unsegmented coelomate animals which are radially symmetrical as adults. There is no head, and the body is strengthened by calcareous ossicles).

CLASS ASTEROIDEA (Common Name: Starfish)

GENUS

SPECIES

*Asterina exigua* (Lam.)



1 cm diameter

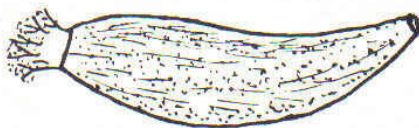
Small, short-armed, variably coloured star-fish. Predominate in shallow pools in the higher part of the shore.

CLASS HOLOTHUROIDEA (Common Name: Sea Cucumber)

GENUS

SPECIES

*Cucumaria sykion* Lampert



5 cm long

Black, leathery animals which inhabit gulleys and become wedged under overhangs. Very difficult to remove as the animal tenses its muscles to fit into its crevice. Found in the higher shore.

PHYLUM CHORDATA (Coelomate animals with a dorsal tubular nervecord; a notochord at some stage of development; pharynx with gill-slits and a true tail extending behind the anus).

CLASS TUNICATA (Common Name: Sea-squirt).

ORDER ASCIDIACEA

GENUS PYURA

SPECIES

*Pyura stolonifera* (Heller)



5 cm diameter

Colonial animals, each enclosed in a thick, leathery test or skeleton which is often covered in small, sessile animals and algae. Found in the bases of wet verticals or on ridges which are exposed briefly during low tide. Uncommon, occur in the lower shore.

PHYLUM MOLLUSCA (Soft-skinned, unsegmented animals possessing a head, a muscular foot, a visceral hump usually covered by a calcareous shell and a mantle fold covering the gills).

CLASS AMPHINEURA (Common Name: Chiton or Coat-of-mail)

BIVALVIA (Common Name: Bivalves, oysters, mussels)

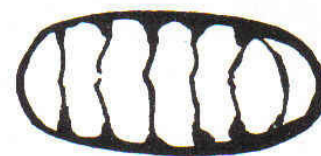
GASTROPODA (Common Name: Snail, Shell)

CLASS AMPHINEURA (Common Name: Chiton or Coat-of-mail)

GENUS *Onithochiton*

SPECIES

*Onithochiton literatus* Kr.



3 cm long

Animal with flattened body, covered by a series of seven to eight shell-valves, embedded in a muscular mantle. Foot broad and flat. Isolated animals are found in rock hollows throughout the shore. Difficult to remove.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

CLASS BIVALVIA (Common Name: Bivalve, oyster, mussel)

GENERA *Brachidontes*, *Crassostrea*, *Parviperna* and *Perna*  
SPECIES

*Brachidontes variabilis* (Krauss)



1 cm long

Colonial, black mussels, often embedded deep into gulleys or hollows, so that the free end of the valves is visible. Found in the higher areas of the shore. Surface of valves is ridged and bears a fur-like periostracum. Attached by byssus threads.

*Crassostrea cucullata* (Born.)



4 cm long

Large, white bi-valves, conspicuous in the upper shore. Lower valve is permanently cemented to the rock substrate. Upper valve is free and moveable on a hinge. Interior is smooth, polished mother-of-pearl.

*Parviperna dentifera* (Krauss)



2 cm long

This species has not been recorded from the Natal Coast (Day, 1974). Shell dirty-white in colour with a black margin. Shape irregularly semi-circular. Attached by byssus threads. Isolated specimens found in gulleys on the higher shore. Uncommon.

*Perna perna* (Linn.)



2 - 5 cm long

Very common as extensive colonies on the lower shore, which is in the splash at spring low tide. Valves dark brown, though often coated with encrusting algae. Attached by byssus threads.

CLASS GASTROPODA (Common Name: Snail, Shell, Mollusc)

SUB-CLASS PROSOBRANCHIA

ORDER ARCHAEOGASTROPODA

FAMILY FISSURELLIDAE

GENERA *Amblychilepas* and *Fissurella*

SPECIES

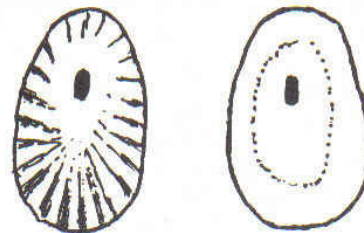
*Amblychilepas scutella* (Gmelin)



1 cm long

Small, brown, smooth shell with dorsal anal canal. Animal mobile by a strong muscular foot which is pointed in front and which projects markedly behind. Found in pools, on colonies of *Octomeris angulosa* and seaweeds.

*Fissurella natalensis* (Krauss)



1 - 2 cm long

Shell with coarse radial ridges and dark streaks. Anal canal centrally placed. Shell alone does not sit flat. Common in pools, under moist overhangs, on colonies of *Octomeris angulosa* and amongst seaweeds.

FAMILY PATELLIDAE

GENERA *Cellana*, *Helcion* and *Patella*

SPECIES

*Helcion pectunculus* (Gmelin)



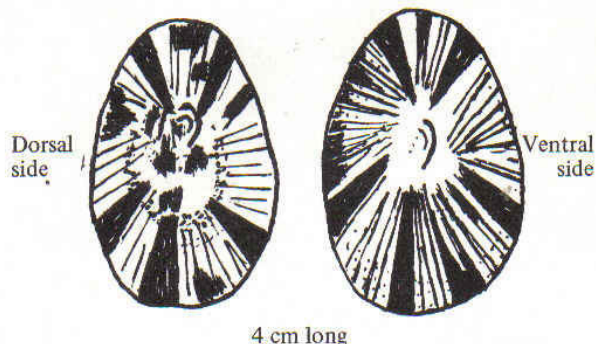
1 cm long

Shell is dark-brown, conical, with apex not central but nearer the narrower margin. Shell ornamented with radiating rows of dark prickles. Found on open rock and on colonies of *Octomeris angulosa*.

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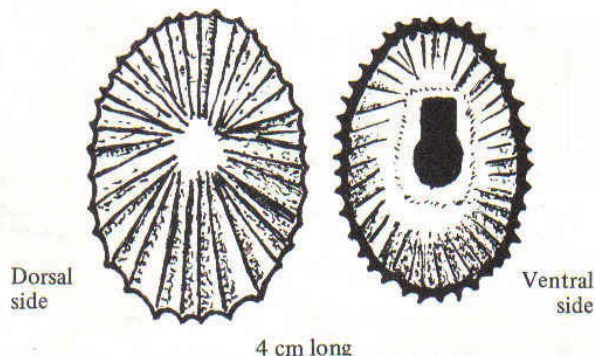
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*Cellana capensis* (Gmelin)



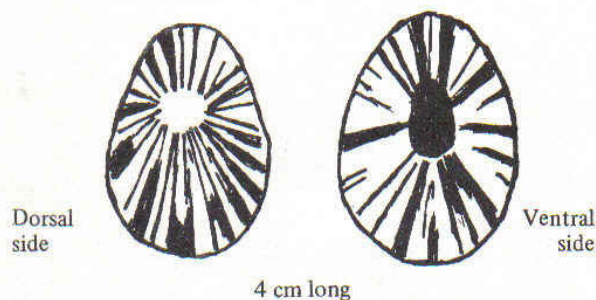
Dorsal side is low spired with smooth to finely ridged surface. Colour grey-brown. Ventral side smooth, polished, with five brown lines radiating from centre. These lines are visible on dorsal side in juveniles. Common on encrusting algae, in pools high up shore.

*Patella barbara* Linn.



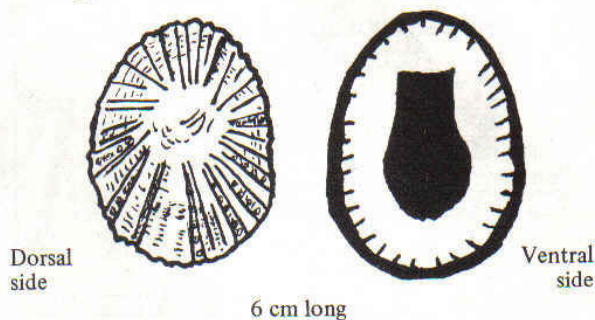
Dorsal side is light brown, heavily ridged with serrated margin and high spire. Ventral side is smooth, polished, with white centre and light brown margin. Distribution as for *Cellana capensis*.

*Patella concolor* Krauss



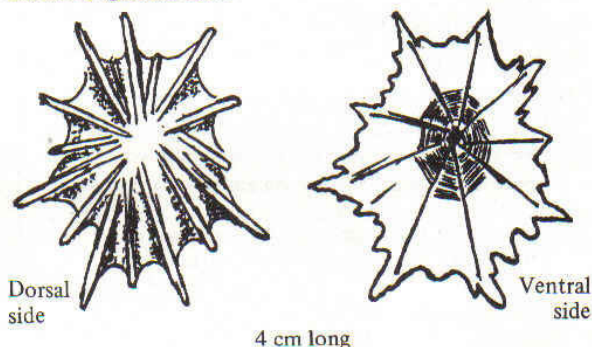
Dorsal side is low spired with faint radiating ridges. Margin is smooth. Ventral side is smooth, polished, with a grey-brown centre and alternating, radiating grey-brown and light brown lines in margin. In juveniles ventral colouration is visible on dorsal side. Distribution as for *Cellana capensis*.

*Patella granularis* Linn.



Dorsal side is high spired with ridges radiating from spire. Margin is weakly serrate. Ventral side is smooth, polished, with dark brown centre, white border and black margin. Distribution as for *Cellana capensis*.

*Patella longicosta* Lam.



Shell has characteristic profile. Dorsal side is low with strong radiating ridges which constitute a strongly serrate margin. Pronounced in adults, less pronounced in juveniles. Ventral side smooth, polished, with buff centre, white border and black margin. Distribution as above.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

AROUND THE GROUPS

**East London:** At our March meeting we held the first competition of the year. Twenty well known S.A. cones were set out in a box and members had to name them. At the end of the year the points scored by members at all competitions will be added and prizes awarded. After the competition a discussion took place about the cones.

**Pretoria:** Dr van Hoepen from Johannesburg spoke at our March meeting about the Olividae. A most interesting and informative talk. It was decided that each member bring to each meeting his or her five best shells of the family under discussion. Points would be awarded at each meeting and at the end of the year a prize given to the member with the highest points.

**Port Elizabeth:** At our March meeting it was announced that we had been approached by the P.E. Museum to assist with the showcases of shells. If we so desired we could use one showcase permanently – inserting a name plate of the Society. With some very interesting collections on display the Conidae were then shown and discussed.

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