

# The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



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## MARGENELLIDS OF THE WESTERN CAPE UPDATED

by Mike Hart.

Over a decade ago Richard Carlsson wrote his article on the marginellids of False Bay (Strandloper, June/July 1976). Since then, significant new finds and range extensions have been made. These have come about primarily because of the increased number of divers looking for shells. A significant contribution has also been made by the trawlermen and crayfish boat crews. The latter are now on the lookout for shells as they have become aware of how lucrative certain of these by-products have become. (*Cypraea iutsui*, *Trivia calvariola*, deep water volutes *Marginella bicatentata* and *Conus gradatulus* amongst others).

Areas not normally frequented by the average weekend diver are now being exhaustively searched for that unusual mollusc. These areas, including sandy and muddy ones, have little apparent sealife and minimal aesthetic appeal for the average diver.

Night diving has also taken its toll on the marginellid population. Those prepared to dive in these waters at night have a better chance of finding the more elusive of the margin shells. I have dived these Western Cape waters fairly extensively since the early 70's and, apart from ***Marginella rosea*** and ***Marginella capensis***, have found few marginellids walking on the sand or reef during the day. Occasionally, if one is lucky, the distinctive siphon of the animal can be seen extending out of the sand. The animals appear quite content to spend the daylight hours in the protection of the sand. With the onset of dark however, almost in unison, the shells emerge from the sand in search of food. The vast majority of these species appear to be carnivorous. Not infrequently, one has come across a dead fish almost smothered by hundreds of ***Marginella capensis***. ***Marginella nebulosa***, ***floccata*** and 'species novum' can be found on or in the vicinity of something dead. ***Bullia tenuis*** also appears to be a favourite meal for the larger marginellids of False Bay.

The following descriptive account is by no means complete and only includes the larger marginellids found off the Western Cape:

### ***Afrivoluta pringlei*** Tomlin, 1947

World's largest marginellid. It was first thought to be a volute.

**Size:** Shell size appears to decrease from west to east. The average west coast size is approximately 100mm.

**Habitat:** Occurs from west coast of South Africa to off Transkei coast in the east.

They are usually collected as a by-product by trawlers fishing on the soft silty

bottoms at depths ranging from 100-400m.

The shell itself does not require further description being the logo of the Conchological Society of Southern Africa. However, few people have been fortunate enough to see the animal in its living state. It is only through the concerted co-ordinated efforts of Sea Fisheries that photographs of the living animal are now available.

It can be seen from the photograph (Strandloper 214 page 9) that the animal is uniformly tan in colour and that the eyes are greatly reduced, presumably due to the diminished amount of light at the depths in which it lives.

### ***Marginella musica*** Hinds, 1844

**Range:** Luderitz to Agulhas Bank.

**Size:** 15-24 mm

**Description:** Creamy white/greyish ground colour with a number of fine brown to black spiral lines. The animal is perhaps the most spectacular of our local marginellids. The entire foot, mantle and siphon is covered in bright red and yellow alternating irregular lines giving a flame-like appearance to the animal.

Until recently, the only shells available were ex pisce from the horse fish, ***Congiopodus torvus***.

Live ***M. musica*** are now being recovered from the crayfish traps off the Western Cape. The animals are presumably attracted to the smell of rotting crayfish bait. Occasional specimens have also been found by divers below 40m off the West Coast of the Cape Peninsula.

### ***Marginella nebulosa*** Bolten in Roeding, 1798

**Range:** False Bay to Bulugha Mouth and Transkei.

**Size:** 28-52mm.

The largest specimen I know of measures 52mm and was found in the Sunny Cove area of False Bay by the late Dennis Greeff, who was a competent diver and a very keen conchologist.

**Description:** Heavy greyish white shell with darker irregular marks all over the body whorl. Outer edge of lip is white. There is minimal colour variation although pink may be the dominant colour in the occasional shell. It has four columella pleats. The foot, mantle and siphon of the animal is white, covered with small red dots.

**Habitat:** In coarse sand, often close to adjacent reef. It tends, like other marginellids, to live in the sand during the day, emerging at night to feed.

### ***Marginella lineolata*** Sowerby, 1886

**Range:** False Bay to Bulugha mouth.

**Size:** 27-34mm

**Description:** Ground colour of the shell is off-white with fine dark axial zig-zag lines and indistinct darker grey blotches. Lip thick and varies from white to yellow. Colouration of the animal is the same as ***nebulosa***.

**Habitat:** Only recently become available due to increased night diving activity off the western shores of False Bay.

***M. lineolata*** is still extremely rare. It appears to live in the same area as ***M. nebulosa*** and ***M. floccata*** but often slightly further from the reef.

The Port Elizabeth shell tends to be smaller, more heavily marked and lives in gravel under large boulders on the reef rather than in sandy areas.

### ***Marginella sp. indet. A***

Has been known as 'species novum' by local divers since the early 1980's. It may well turn out to be a larger, southern form of ***M. bairstowi***.

**Range:** Recorded only from False Bay.

**Size:** 18-25mm (***M. bairstowi*** Sowerby, 1886 - 14-17mm)

**Description:** Similar in shape and colouration to ***M. bairstowi***. Both have four columella pleats.

Ground colour is creamy white covered in a design of rhomboid and cylindrical streaks of greenish blue colour, arranged at oblique angles across the whorls in a pattern similar to but less closely-knit than that of ***M. bairstowi***. The foot is covered with white streaks and blotches. Less commonly there may be red stippling on the dorsal side of the foot.

The semi-transparent mantle is never spotted.

### CONCHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN

#### ***M. sp. indet. A* and *M. bairstowi***

- 1) Little if any size range overlap.
- 2) Whorls rounder in ***M. sp. indet. A*** than in ***M. bairstowi***
- 3) Lip more bowed in ***M. sp. indet. A*** than in ***M. bairstowi***.
- 4) The edge of the siphon area turns up in ***M. sp. indet. A*** and not in ***M. bairstowi***.

***Marginella sp. indet. A*** was first encountered during dredging operations in the Simonstown Harbour several years ago. It is now found in False Bay especially in the Sunny Cove area. These shells are usually found at night on coarse sand or shale areas adjacent to the reef's edge. Unlike many of our local marginellids, gem specimens are hard to find as most have marked growth lines or sand which has been incorporated into their nacre.



**Marginella sp.indet B**

**Range:** Occasional shells are found on both sides of False Bay, as far east as Cape Agulhas.

**Size:** 24-29mm.

This shell, which is still extremely rare, may well turn out to be the southern form of *M.ornata* Redfield, 1870. It is however constant in pattern and colour and has conchological features which differ from the *M.ornata* found in the eastern Cape and Transkei.

The shell is medium size for the genus. The shoulder is rounded with a very thick smooth outer lip. The aperture is widest at its middle and the columella has four strong pleats.

Ground colour is beige and is constant in all specimens examined. A single narrow spiral band of alternating dark grey/black and white blotches is present one-third the way up the body whorl.

The outer lip is cream coloured with variable number of prominent vertical black dashes present along the entire length of the lip.

Conchological features shared with *M.ornata* include size, shape and number of columella pleats. Differences include the ground colouration as well as the reduced number of spiral bands. *M.ornata* varies from grey to beetroot-red in ground colour; the local shell in contrast is a constant beige colour. *M.ornata* usually has three spiral bands on the body whorl and at least two on the spire. The local shell has a single spiral band on the body whorl and none on the spire. The animal colour is a rather drab cream to white colour with no markings of the foot, tentacle or siphon. The foot is reduced in size compared with most of the other local marginellids. The colour of *M.ornata's* animal is completely different, further strengthening *M.sp.indet B's* claim to species status.

**Marginella floccata** Sowerby, 1889.

**Range:** West coast of False Bay to East London.

**Size:** 21-29mm

**Description:** Perhaps the most common marginellid in False Bay at night. Ground colour ranges from light pink to purple with interrupted darker spiral bands and wavy often incomplete off-white stripes along the length of the shell. Lip white with or without dark stippling. Four columella pleats. Animal colouration identical to *M.nebulosa* with the mantle, foot and siphon white with red spots. At night, the shells can be found on almost any sandy area, whether it be adjacent to the reef or in the middle of the bay.

**Marginella rosea** Lamarck, 1822

**Range:** St Helena Bay on the west coast to Agulhas in the east.

**Size:** 16-28mm

**Description:** Marked locality variation. Ground colour white/grey to pink/rose. Darker overlaid square and zig-zag patterns. All have four strong columella pleats. Below are some of the more defined colour forms.

**WHITE/GREY FORM:** West coast - larger deep water and smaller intertidal forms.

**PINK FORM:** False Bay side of Cape Point to Cape Hangklip.

**GOLDEN FORM:** Appears to be confined to Buffels Bay (Cape Point) area although a few specimens have been found in the Hangklip area. Perhaps this colouration is due to many ferrous wrecks found in the area.

**STRIPED FORM:** Occurs in a very localised area near Danger Point east of Hermanus. Usually found at approximately 20m on flat rock covered with green filamentous algae or on sand.

**WALKER BAY FORM:** Pink or grey ground colour but has a well defined white band adjacent to the shoulder. So far only found near Hermanus.

Despite all the differences in the shell colouration and size, the animals are identical, i.e. 'translucent white body with faint sprinkling of gold speckles on the side of the foot and a fringe of deep pink spots or rings on the trailing edge of the foot. There are similar pink spots on the edge of the transparent mantle.

The pink spots are generally surrounded by an opaque white ring.'

**Habitat:** Unlike most of our local marginellid species, *M.rosea* is often found in the open during the day. Its habitat varies markedly from being intertidal at Kommetjie to deeper than 50m off Hout Bay on the west coast. In False Bay they are usually found on the reef or in sandy gullies between rocky outcrops.

*Marginella rosea* preys on limpets, gibbulas etc.

**Marginella capensis** Dunker, 1846.

**Range:** Luderitz to False Bay.

**Size:** 8-15mm (Specimens found at Langebaan tend to be bigger than those from False Bay.)

**Description:** Oblong-ovate in shape. Ground colour varies from white through to fawn with or without broad darker spiral bands. Outer lip and columella are white. Four strong columella pleats.

The animal is very dark grey in colour with the posterior portion of the foot angular rather than rounded.

**Habitat:** Found in sheltered areas of sandy reef from intertidal region down to approximately 30m.

**Marginella piperata** Hinds, 1844

Three colour forms of this extremely variable shell are found in the False Bay area.

**Size:** The shells from this region are smaller (12-16mm) than their Eastern Cape counterparts (approximately 20mm).

**Description:** Apart from *M.piperata strigata*, the local colour forms are less striking than those found further east. The three local colour forms are as follows:

1) *M.piperata strigata*. Ground colour white to cream, with grey axial streaks. The local *strigata* is smaller than its Eastern Cape counterpart.

2) *M.piperata piperata* yellow form. (This is not *lutea*.)

3) *M.piperata piperata* grey/white form.

Perhaps the latter two should not be separated. They probably represent two extremes of the same shell as colour intergrades do exist. Whether the ground colour is white or yellow, numerous spiral rows of dark spots cover the entire shell. Regardless of the shell colouration, the external animal appearances are constant. The foot and mantle are semi-transparent with white streaks on the foot. Siphon and tentacles are white.

I have excluded the many locally found small marginellids from this article but two small deepwater species deserve special mention, if only for the way in which they are found. *Marginella kerochuta* Shackelford, 1914 and *M.zeyheri* Krauss, 1852 have, for some time, been found ex pisce in the horsefish.

These two are now being found live with other deep water shells in the large mud balls occasionally brought up in the trawl nets.

In the past, these mud balls were routinely hosed off the deck with the rest of the debris after a net had been brought on board. Now these mud balls are carefully broken up and examined revealing, on occasion, these two small shells.

It is surely these unusual methods of obtaining shells, as well as the greater interest in shells among an ever-increasing diver population, that will bring about the discovery of new species and the extension of the ranges of known species.

My only plea to divers and active collectors is to show some restraint in collecting. Take what you can use making sure they are adult and in gem condition. An inferior shell is not worth collecting.

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**The Address of the Committee of the Conchological Society of SA:**

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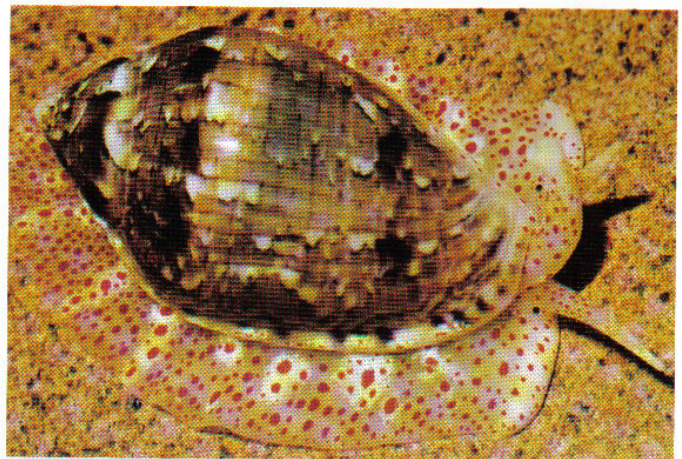




ABOVE: *Marginella musica* animal could not be enticed out  
 LEFT: *Marginella musica* Hinds, 1844



ABOVE: *Marginella rosea*, striped form.  
 LEFT: *Marginella nebulosa* Bolten in Roeding, 1798. Live animals pictured on front cover.



ABOVE: *Marginella rosea*, Lamarck, 1822.  
 LEFT: *Marginella rosea* Lamarck, 1822



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 BILL LILTVED for slide of *M. musica* live animal.

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## THE MOLLUSCAN FAUNA OF AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES PART 2: LAKE MALAWI

by Kenneth Brown.

The Great Lakes of Africa lie in long deep valleys which run the length of the African continent in an approximately north-south direction and were caused by trough-faulting on an extended scale.

This long gash stretches from the Dead Sea down as far as the Zambezi River. The floor of this great rift contains Africa's spectacular long narrow lakes with coastal plains rising into steep escarpments, such as Malawi's Nyika plateau. The southernmost lake in the chain is Lake Malawi.

Lake Malawi is the third largest lake in Africa and the world's eleventh largest. Known as Lake 'Marawi' to early Portuguese explorers, and locally as 'Nyanza' or 'Nyasa' or 'Great Water', the lake is over 600 Km long and has a surface area of 23 310 square kilometers. It is over 700m deep, making it the fourth deepest lake in the world, and the second deepest in Africa.

In the north, the lake is flanked by precipitous mountains which fall to the shore and continue equally steeply beneath the water to considerable depths.

The lake is fed by 14 main short rivers which flow from the escarpment and nearby mountains. The volume of inflow into the lake from these rivers is directly dependent on rainfall in the immediate region, and the hydrology of the lake is thus susceptible to seasonal variations, particularly to drought or flooding. Seasonal fluctuations in the water level of the lake may be as much as one to two metres.

Lake Malawi has been the cradle of Malawian culture for many centuries, and modern archaeological investigations have uncovered evidence of many Stone Age and Iron Age settlements along the lakeshore, which show the area to have been inhabited by men for the last 100 000 years. The recorded history of the lake begins with the Portuguese explorers of the 16th century, followed by Ar-

abs from the coast during the 18th century. The latter established bases for the devastating slave trade until the coming of David Livingstone in 1859, who ultimately was responsible for breaking the slave traders' stanglehold.

Geologically, the lake is younger than Lake Tanganyika and first appeared during the Pleistocene 1. The lake experiences a wet calm season followed by a period of heavy winds and lower temperatures. This cycle causes a seasonal change in water circulation since wind-induced internal waves are created which circulate nutrients from the anoxic water below the 200m level to the upper layers.

Lake Malawi has, however, been long enough isolated to have produced an endemic fauna that is quite remarkable.

There are more than 245 species of fish in the lake, which is greater than any other African lake. However, the molluscan fauna of Lake Malawi is far more restricted than that of Lake Tanganyika.

Thus Crowley states that Lake Tanganyika supports 60 species of gastropoda, 37 of which are endemic and 12 species of Lamellibranchia, 5 of which are endemic, whilst Lake Malawi has only 19 species of Gastropoda with 11 endemic species and 12 species of Lamellibranchia with 8 endemic species 2. Cunnington calculates that 73% of all faunal species in lake Tanganyika are endemic, whilst Lake Malawi only has 24%. 3 The first collected mollusca from Lake Malawi were obtained by John Kirk, a companion of David Livingstone, and were described by Dohrn in 1865 4, and subsequent studies were undertaken by Smith 5, Bourguinat 6, von Martens 7, Moore 8 and more recently by Crowley 9 and Mandahl-Barth 10.

As regards mollusca, Lake Malawi appears to have two distinct ecological zones. The first is represented by permanent marshes where variations in wa-

ter level have little influence. These marshlands are characterised by the presence of *Lanistes ellipticus* (Mts) and *L. ovum procerus* (Mts). The second milieu is the upper layer of the lake itself which is the habitat of *L. solidus* Smith and *L. nyassanus* Dohrn. The latter with its thick heavy shell, has a marked preference for clear water and seems unaffected by turbulence. At present there is no evidence for the existence of any mollusca in the deeper waters of the lake except possibly at the southern end, but further investigation would be essential to clear the point 11. Present knowledge of ecological conditions in the lake does not explain why most endemic species have very heavy shells and a few very thin shells, whereas all non-endemic species except one have normal shells. The lake's acquisition of a nilotic fauna appears to have been a slow process in view of the very limited possibilities of access and the remoteness of the faunal origin, and the development of endemic species has therefore not been on a large scale.

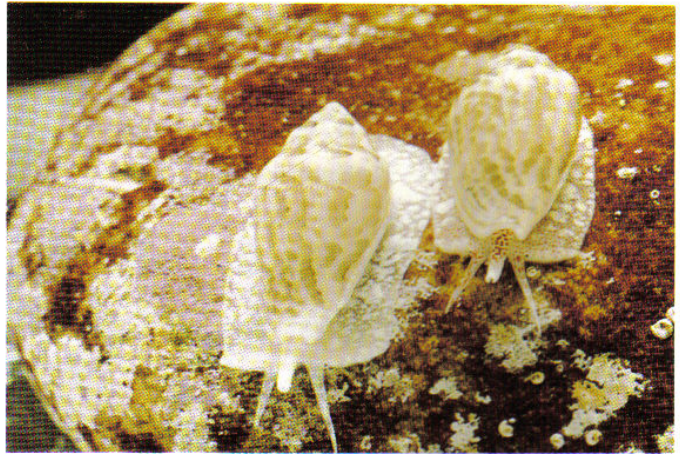
The genus *Pila* appears to be totally absent from the lake and this may be due to the wide and frequent fluctuations of the lake level, since conditions may well be unfavourable to it or to the vegetation on which it depends. This, however, is not an entirely satisfactory answer since *Lanistes ovum proceru*, with which *Pila* is associated in Zaire and other places, occurs widely distributed on the margins of the lake.

One of the main characters which Lake Malawi shares with great lakes Victoria, Albert and Edward is the presence of large bivalve forms. No doubt these were some of the earliest inhabitants of the lake.

The following brief synopsis of the molluscs of Lake Malawi is based on Mandahl-Barth's investigations 14. He identifies 10 families and 38 species:

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ABOVE: *Marginella sp.indet. A.*  
 LEFT TOP: *M. sp.indet. A.*  
 BOTTOM: *M. Bairstowi.* Sowerby, 1886.



ABOVE: *Marginella sp.indet. B.* Description of *M. sp.indet. B* in Press.  
 LEFT: Top and Bottom right: *M. sp.indet. B.* Bottom left: *M. ornata.*



ABOVE: *Marginella ornata.* Redfield, 1870.  
 LEFT: *Marginella bicatenata.* Sowerby, 1914.





ABOVE AND LEFT: *Marginella lineolata*. Sowerby, 1886.



ABOVE AND LEFT: *Marginella piperata* Hinds, 1884.



ABOVE AND LEFT: *Marginella floccata* Sowerby, 1889.



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1. FAMILY: **Viviparidae.**  
GENUS: **Bellamya.**

Crowley **13** described the lake as having two species of Viviparidae: a synonymous grouping under **Bellamya unicolor**, and a new species under the name of **Neothauma ecclesi**. Mandahl-Barth argues that **Neothauma ecclesi** is in fact **Bellamya ecclesi** and that the lumped grouping under **Bellamya unicolor** should be split into 3 distinct species. Hence, he argues that the lake has 4 species of **Bellamya**, these being:

1. **Bellamya capillata** (Frf)
2. **Bellamya ecclesi** (Crowl & Pain)
3. **Bellamya robertsonii** (Frf)
4. **Bellamya jeffreysii** (Frf)

All but **Bellamya capillata** are endemic to Lake Malawi.

2. FAMILY: **Pilidae**  
GENUS: **Lanistes**

Mandahl-Barth identifies 5 species from Lake Malawi and its shore swamps; of these **Lanistes nasutus** is a new species. The list is:

5. **Lanistes ovum procerus** (Mrts)
6. **Lanistes ellipticus** (Mrts)
7. **Lanistes solidus** (Smith)
8. **Lanistes nyassanus** (Dohrn)
9. **Lanistes nasutus** (Mandahl-Barth)

**Lanistes solidus**, **Lanistes nyassanus** and **Lanistes nasutus** are endemic to the lake.

3. FAMILY: **Bithyniidae**  
GENUS: **Gabiella**

Both Crowley and Mandahl-Barth list a single species from the lake, it also being endemic:

10. **Gabiella stanleyi** (Smith)

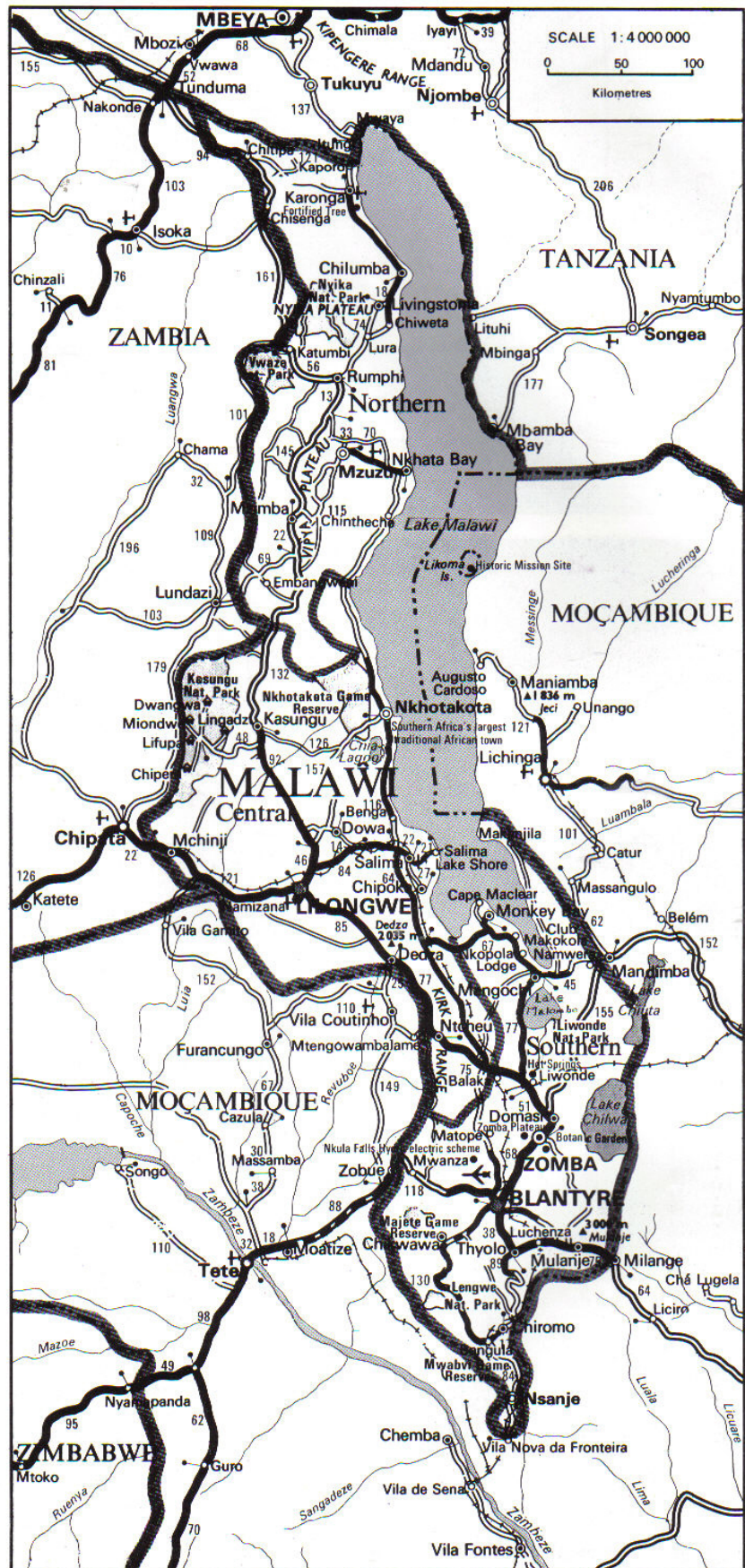
4. FAMILY: **Thiaridae**  
GENUS: **Melanoides**

Smith 1877 recognised 7 species of **Melanoides**, Bourguinat 1899 added a further 29 to this list, whilst Crowley and Pain reduced the number to 6. Mandahl-Barth identifies 9 species, all but **Melanoides tuberculata** being endemic to the lake:

11. **Melanoides tuberculata** (Mull)
12. **Melanoides nodicincta** (Dohrn)
13. **Melanoides pergracilis** (Mrts)
14. **Melanoides pupiformis** (Smith)
15. **Melanoides turritispira** (Smith)
16. **Melanoides polymorpha** (Smith)
17. **Melanoides nyassana** (Smith)
18. **Melanoides truncatelliformis** (Bgt)
19. **Melanoides magnifica** (Bgt)

Nineteen species of prosobranch gastropods are hence identified by Mandahl-Barth from the lake, and out of this number 15 are endemic. He proceeds to identify 8 pulmonate gastropods from the lake, only **Bulinus nyassanus** and **Bulinus succinoides** being endemic. The following are the pulmonate gastropods recorded by Mandahl-Barth:

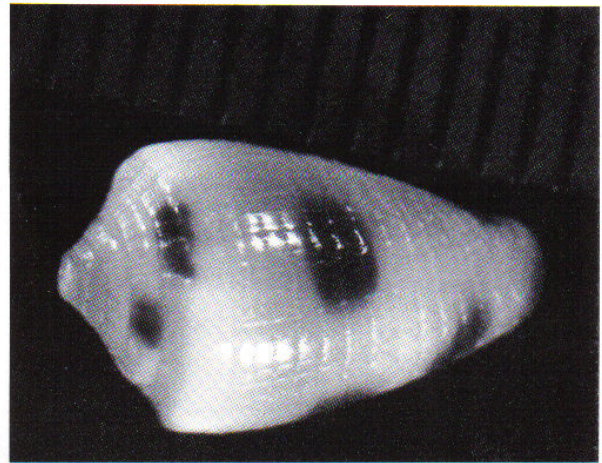
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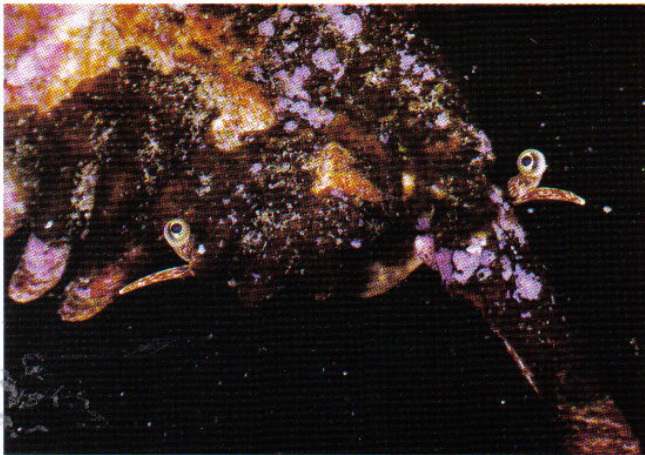


*Marginella capensis.*



Juvenile *Conus ebraeus* Linne, 1758.  
Refer to Juvenalia (Strandloper 220).

### SPIDER CONCHS IN SOUTH AFRICA



*Lambis digitata* eyes.



*L. digitata* (Perry, 1811) and *L. chiragra arthritica* (Roeding, 1798).

by D G Herbert, Natal Museum.

Until recently spider conchs, members of the genus **Lambis** Roeding, 1798 were unknown in South Africa and none have ever been officially recorded from the region. The Natal Museum's current malacology research programme on the molluscs of Zululand has however brought to light the occurrence of several **Lambis** species in that area. This research project has involved several SCUBA diving expeditions to the coral reefs off Sodwana Bay and Kosi Bay during which a number of spider conchs

have been collected. To date we have specimens of **Lambis chiragra arthritica** (Roeding, 1798), = **L. crocata** (Link, 1807), the somewhat more rare **L. digitata** (Perry, 1811) and the large and spectacular **L. truncata** (Humphreys, 1780). It is also quite possible that **L. lambis** (Linne, 1758), the most common species in Mozambique, occurs in the same area, but this requires confirmation.

It is most rewarding to find such typically tropical species in our region, but it is not altogether surprising as all are well

known from neighbouring Mozambique.

Indeed the molluscan fauna of the Zululand coral reefs has much more in common with that of Mozambique than it does with that of the rest of Natal.

These diving expeditions together with dredging cruises led by C.S.S.A. President, Dr Dick Kilburn, have greatly extended our collections of Zululand molluscs and we now have a large amount of material to work through which will no doubt contain a considerable number of species new to South Africa.

*Cypraea verhoefi* Burgess, 1982, recently dived at Jeffrey's Bay by Roy Marlow.





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5. FAMILY: **Lymnaeidae**  
GENUS: **Lymnaea**
20. **Lymnaea natalensis** (Krs)
6. FAMILY: **Planorbidae**  
GENUS: **Biophalaria**
21. **Biophalaria pfeifferi**  
GENUS: **Anisus**
22. **Anisus natalensis** (Krs)  
GENUS: **Gyraulus**
23. **Gyraulus costulatus** (Krs)  
GENUS: **Bulinus**
24. **Bulinus globosus** (Mor)
25. **Bulinus nyassanus** (Smith)
26. **Bulinus succinoides** (Smith)
27. **Bulinus forskalii** (Ehrenb)
- Crowley argues that **Bulinus africanus** (Krs), as reported by Smith, 1877 does not occur in the lake, and this view is supported by Mandahl-Barth. Mandahl-Barth describes 8 species belonging to 5 different genera from the lake in the **Bivalvia**. Haas in 1936 recorded 3 species, whilst Crowley added 2 more species to this list. The following are Mandahl-Barth's findings:
7. FAMILY: **Unionidae**  
GENUS: **Caelatura**
28. **Caelatura nyassaensis** (Lea)
29. **Caelatura hypsiprymna** (Mrts)
30. **Caelatura mossambicensis** (Mrts)
- Caelatura nyassaensis** is endemic to the lake
8. FAMILY: **Mutelidae**  
GENUS: **Aspatharia**
31. **Aspatharia subreniformis** (Swb)
32. **Aspatharia nyassaensis** (Lea)
33. **Aspatharia wahlbergi** (Krs)
- Aspatharia nyassaensis** appears to be endemic.  
GENUS: **Mutela**
34. **Mutela alata** (Lea)  
This species is endemic to the lake.
9. FAMILY: **Corbiculidae**  
GENUS: **Corbicula**
35. **Corbicula africana** (Krs)
36. **Corbicula astartina** (Mrts)
10. FAMILY: **Sphaeriidae**  
GENUS: **Pisidium**
37. **Pisidium pirothi** (Jickeli)
38. **Pisidium reticulatum** (Kuiper)
- On a recent trip to lake Malawi, I collected specimens from Nkopola, Cape Maclear, Boadzulu Island and Domwe Island. My idea was to collect as intensively as possible, but exceedingly poor weather with waves of 1 to 2m in height often churned up the close shore waters and made collecting difficult. I nevertheless, was able to collect many species, some of which are shown in the accompanying plates. Regular flights from South Africa and the general friendliness of the Malawians makes collecting at the lake quite an easy exercise. Road conditions are moderate to poor, and transportation is almost inhibitive expensive. This tends to localise any

collecting, but even from a tourist centre such as Makokola the number of sand-dwelling species which can be found by snorkeling in about 2m of water is large, and in a space of under 1 hour I collected fine live specimens of **Mutela alta**, **Caelatura nyassaensis**, **Lanistes nyassanus**, **Lanistes ellipticus**, **Bellamyia unicolor**, **Neothauma ecclesi** and many species of **Melanoides**. After a fierce tropical storm which lashed Makokola I found many fine beach specimens, including **Lanistes nasutus**, **Melanoides turritiformis**. Snorkeling off Boadzulu Island in about 5m of water with excellent visibility was poor in terms of collecting, but the dazzlingly bright fish and otters frolicking in the water more than compensated, as well as the astounding diversity of bird life. The same applied to Cape Maclear and Domwe Island. As an introduction to freshwater collecting, Lake Malawi can have few rivals with golden beaches in the south and warm crystal waters. The following article in the series will deal with Lake Tanganyika.

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#### JOHANNESBURG BRANCH OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF S A.

After a lull of several years organised meetings of the Johannesburg Branch of the Conchological Society have begun again. A meeting was held on the 14th of November at which some 'old' and some 'new' Johannesburg members were able to meet and chat. Ken Brown gave a short talk on inland marine aquaria and there was a lively discussion on what types of mollusc could be successfully maintained in such aquaria and on how frequently, and what portion of, the salt water should be changed. Laurie Smith of the Pretoria Group was also in attendance and brought along a drawer of diverse shells which shared the common characteristic that each species had been named by Dr R. Kilburn of the Natal Museum. Following this Ken Brown was duly elected as the secretary of the Johannesburg Branch and Dr Mike Cortie as the Chairman. It was decided that Ken would also apply his legal expertise to the position of Treasurer. Tea and cake were then served and there was much informal 'shelly' talk.

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#### BOOK REVIEW

by David Freeman

#### SKULPE VAN SUIDER-AFRIKA : 'N GIDS VIR DIE VERSAMELAAR

deur Dierdre Richards C. Struik Uitgewers, Kaapstad 1987

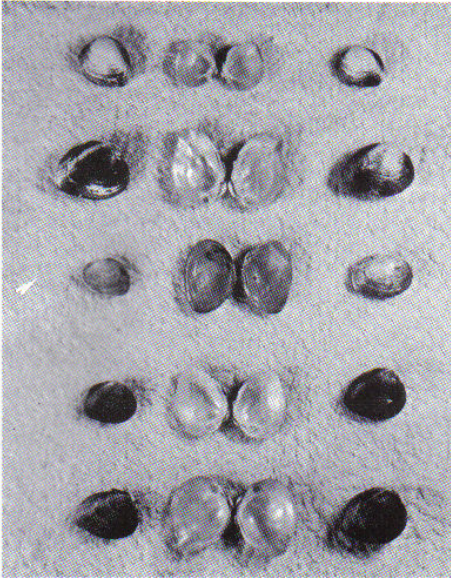
Uiteindelik 'n ordentlike Afrikaanse boek oor Suid-Afrikaanse skulpe! Hierdie boek is 'n vertaling van Dierdre Richards se boek wat in 1981 in Engels eers verskyn het, en wat nou onlangs ook in 'n tweede uitgawe in Engels verskyn het.

Dit is deur Jurie van den Heever van die S A Museum in Kaapstad in Afrikaans vertaal, met 'n besondere interessante bydrae tot Afrikaanse skulpname deur ons lid Laurie Smith van Pretoria. Lesers wat die vorige uitgawe ken sal merk dat verouderde name vervang is en dat die verbeteringe wat deur Maureen Quicquelberge (Purdon) in haar errata's van Augustus 1982 aanbeveel is, meestal ook ingesluit is. Dit is miskien ietwat teleurstellend dat die verouderde inligting aangaande perke en grense van baie van die skulpsoorte ook nie op datum gebring is nie. Ek het sowat vier of vyf drukfoute onder die skulpname opgemerk, wat nie eintlik 'n probleem behoort te wees nie: bv Nitra ipv Mitra (nr 326).

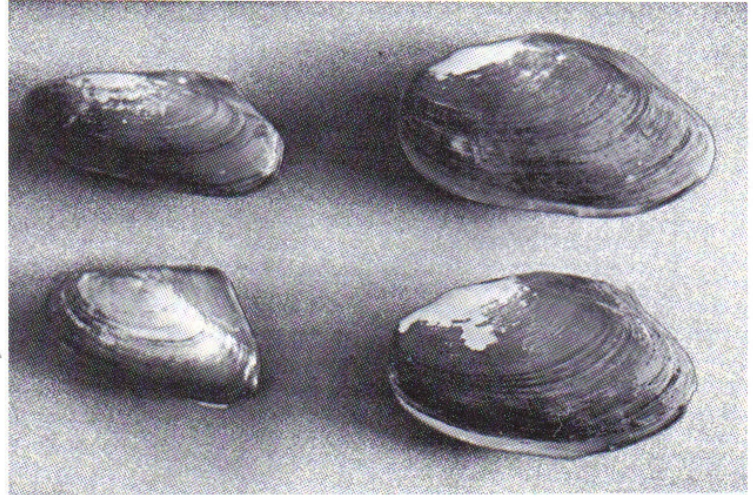
Ek kan hierdie boek baie sterk aanbeveel.



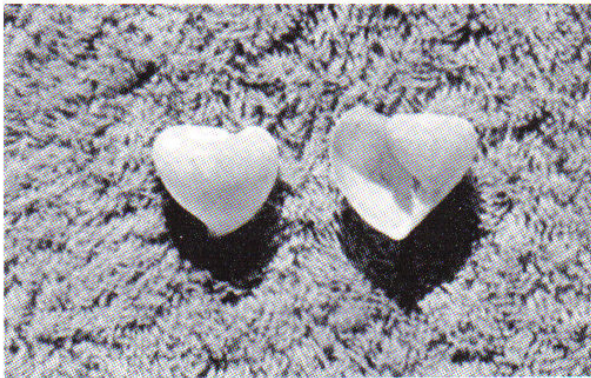
# SOME MOLLUSCS FROM LAKE MALAWI



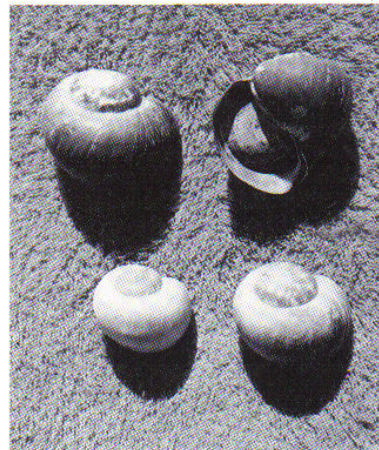
Row 1 & 2: *Caelatyura nyassaensis* (LEA)  
 Row 3: *C. hypsiprymna* (MTRS.)  
 Row 4: *Caelatyura nyassaensis* (LEA)



*Mutela alata* (LEA)      *Aspatharia (Spathopsis) nyassaensis* (LEA)



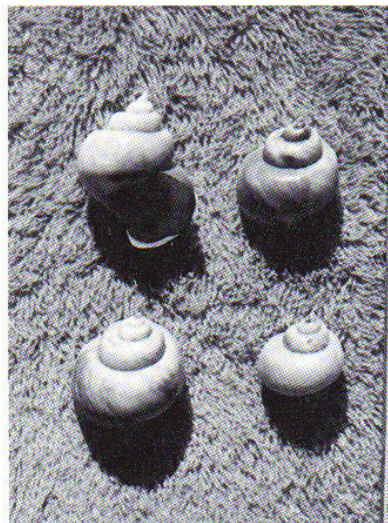
*Lanistes nasutus* n. sp.



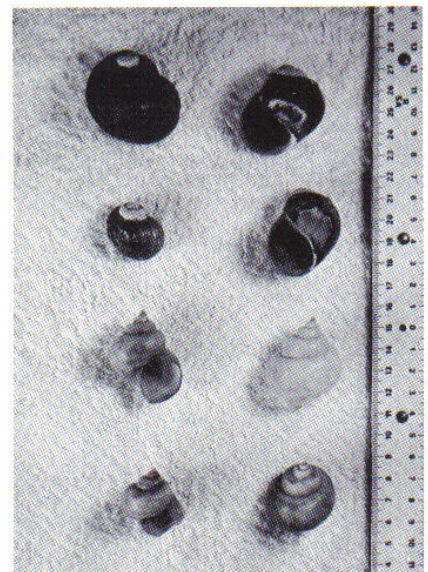
*Lanistes nyassanus* DOHRN



Top: *Melonoides pupiformis* SMITH.  
 Bottom: *M. turritispira* SMITH



*Neothauma ecclesi* Mandahl-Barth.



Top 4: *L. (M.) ellipticus* VON MARTENS.  
 Bot 4: *N. ecclesi* Mandahl-Barth.



## CASSIA CORNUTA IN ZULULAND



by D G Herbert, Natal Museum.

I feel it is worth noting unofficially, the occurrence of **Cassia cornuta** (Linne, 1758) in South Africa. Recently, whilst on a dive in Zululand, a fellow diver, Harvey Livschitz from Pietermaritzburg saw a living helmet shell. Knowing that the Natal Museum already had a helmet shell from Zululand he simply took a photograph and left the specimen alone. On surfacing he told me about his find and I automatically thought that what he had seen was a **Cypraeacassis**

**rufa** (Linne, 1759), a Zululand specimen of which the museum does indeed possess.

However, when the film was processed and I saw the resultant slide I was confronted not with **Cypraeacassis rufa**, but with **Cassia cornuta**! The existence of this species was, prior to this, totally unknown in South Africa. I of course castigated him for not collecting it for the museum, or at least calling me over to see it. (In order to officially record the species we would need a voucher specimen in the museum). He

of course replied that he did not know where my dive group had got to and pointed out, quite rightly, that he was not entitled to collect it as he did not have the necessary permit to collect in a marine reserve. *C'est la vie*, but at least we now know of the existence of **C. cornuta** in South Africa and have a picture to prove it, even though this is not enough to officially record its presence. This represents a most interesting find as the museum only has specimens from as far south as northern Mozambique.

We would welcome articles for Strandloper, please submit them to the Editor, The Conchological Society of SA, P.O. Box 1200, Cape Town 8000.

Back issues are available for those interested, please write to The Secretary, The Conchological Society of SA, c/o Durban Museum, P.O. Box 4085, Durban 4000.

### EXCHANGES WANTED

Charley Froger, Residence Eden, 37 Promenade Robert Schumann, 06190 ROQUEBRUNE, Cap Martin, FRANCE wishes to exchange with South African collectors and is especially interested in Cones.

Jose Hernandez Otero, Capitan Quezada 41, 35450 GALDAR, Las Palmas,

SPAIN is interested in exchanging West Coast and Canary Island shells for South African shells.

Wanted ex pisce and trawled mollusca from Cape Coast, especially smaller turrids, trochus etc for cash purchase or exchange for Natal deepwater/inshore molluscs. Michael Meyer, P.O. Box 20085, Durban North. 4016. South Africa.

Roy Marlow requires unusual and rare South African shells for trade or exchange.

Write to: 103A Nelson Road, Fish Hoek, 7995. South Africa. Or Telephone (021) 85 2519.