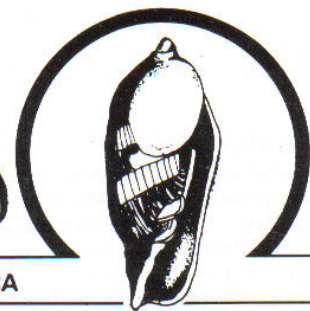


The Strandloper

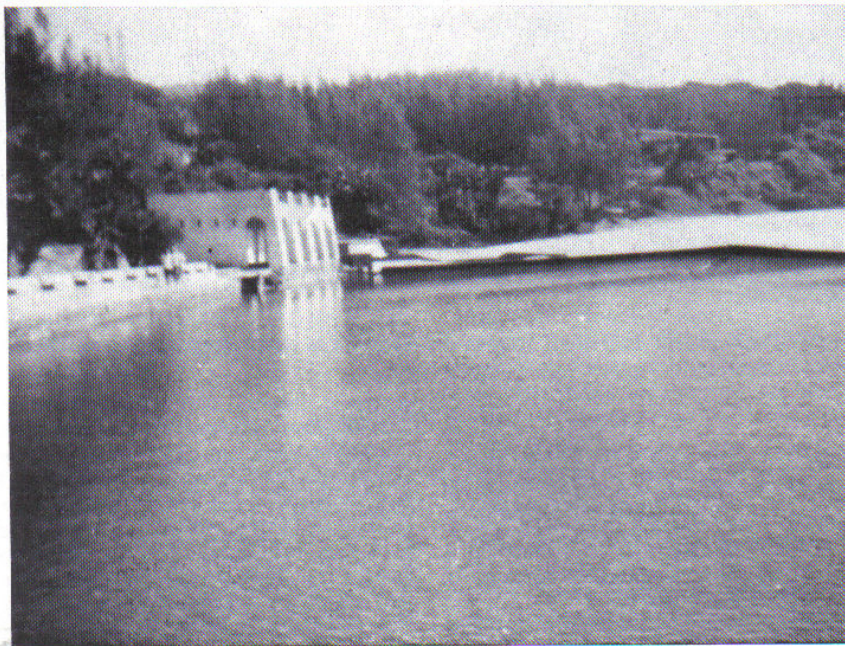
BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 216

APRIL 1986

Page 1



A SAD TALE

by Val van der Walt

Charles' Pool is dead. This tidal swimming pool, situated at Thompson's Bay on the Natal north coast, was a sheller's delight. Teeming with molluscs, it was a wonderful place to snorkel and view the fascinating sea life. Shells there often seemed to grow bigger and better than anywhere else, but we who knew of it treated it with respect and avoided taking anything already in our collection, so that its shell-life would not be over-exploited.

Unbeknown to us the local authorities decreed in mid-February that the pool be drained for cleaning. A week had passed before we heard about this, and by the time my daughter Dawn and I arrived, the summer heat had taken its toll and the smell of decomposition hung heavily in the air. Moreover, a tractor was busy shovelling out all the accumulated sand. We managed to find a few dead but complete bivalves, but no sign of *Akera soluta*, which abounded here and grew up to 45 mm in length, so these must have died under the now well-baked sand. The walls of the pool – which used to be covered in oysters, mussels, *Chama* and *Spondylus*, amongst which lived gastropods such as large *Cymatium tabulatum durbanense*, and *Cronia margariticola* and *C. heptagonalis* – had been scraped clean to make it safe for bathers. We were told that over the previous weekend many people had picked up dead shells. When we pointed out to the men in charge of the operation how much marine life had died, they replied that this was a swimming pool, not a "marine aquarium".

A list of some of the species that we have collected here over the years will give some idea of the former richness of this pool. In the sand: *Akera soluta*, *Hydatina ampulstre*, *H. physis*, *Bulla ampulla*, *Dolabella auricularia*, *Natica gualteriana*, *Tapes sulcarius*, *T. deshayesii*, *Dosinia hepatica*, *Pitar abbreviatus*, *Irus irus*, *Eumarcia paupercula*, *Gafrarium pectinatum alfredense*, *Gastrana matadoa*, *Macoma dispar*, *Fulvia papyracea*, *Loripes clausus*, *Tellina ponsonbyi*, *Anodontia edentula*, *Parvicardium turtoni*, and *Pinna muricata* (tucked into sandy rock crevices). On the walls and on the submerged rock outcrops, filled with crevices: *Cymatium parthenopeum*, *C. pileare*, *C. tabulatum durbanense*, *C. cutaceum africanum*, *C. gallinago*,

Continued from page 1

Linatella caudata, *Bursa granularis*, *Morula anaxares*, *M. nodosa*, *Strombus mutabilis*, *Cypraea annulus*, *Columbella turturina*, *Peristernia forskalii*, *Mitra luctuosa*, *Epitonium simplex*, *Cerithium crassilabrum*, *C. alveolus*, *Colina rostrata*, *Littorina pinto*, *L. undulata*, *Scutus unguis*, *Amblychilepas dubia*, *Pintada nigra*, *Streptopinna saccata*, *Spondylus nicorbaricus*, *Chama limbula*, *C. asperella*, *Pseudochama cristella*, *Lopha cristagalli*, *Musculus cuneatus*, *Barbatia foliata* and *Petricola ponsonbyi*, plus many other common rock-dwelling species.

We wonder how long it will take before Charles' Pool once more becomes a haven for sea organisms. The waves that break over the seaward wall at high tide will bring in larvae and seaweed spores, so we expect that marine life will gradually be restored. But it will probably take a long time. (Q)

MONOGRAPH ON THE FAMILY EPITONIIDAE

by **R N Kilburn, Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg**

All shellers will rejoice to know that reprints are available of the monograph written by Dr Kilburn on the family Epitoniidae in Southern Africa and Mozambique.

The paper forms part of the Annals of the Natal Museum: Vol. 27(1) Pages 239-337 Pietermaritzburg December, 1985

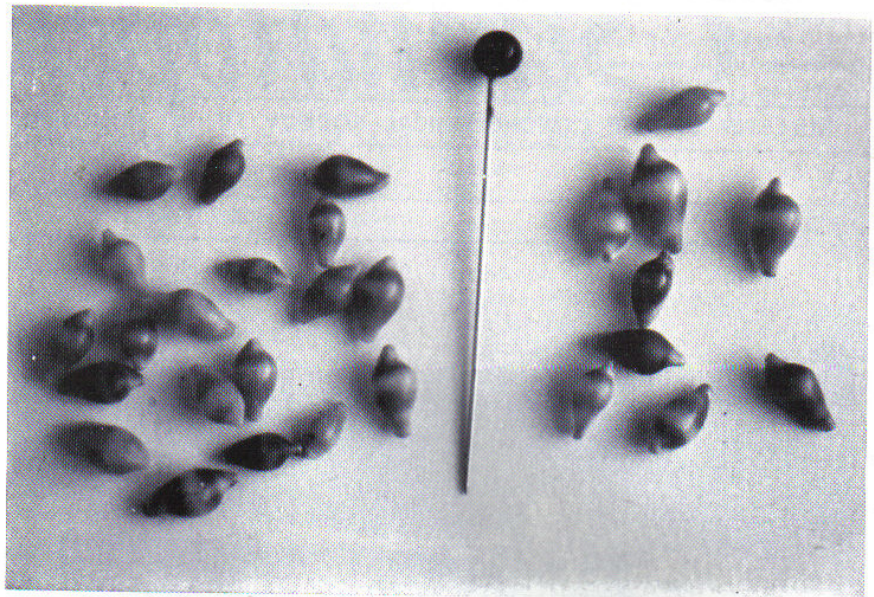
If you thought that there were perhaps some ten or a dozen species to be found around our coastline, you might be startled to learn that the paper covers eighty species belonging to 15 genera of Epitoniidae. Of these, 37 are new species and 19 are new records for the region. The author points out that these figures exceed those listed for tropical West America, the western Atlantic, Red Sea and Persian Gulf, respectively.

Although it goes without saying that this is a scientific paper, the discussion of each species, coupled with drawings and photographs, will give the lay reader a wonderfully clear understanding of the complex family as represented in our region.

If you want a copy, please write to the Natal Museum, 237 Loop Street, 3201 Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The cost is R10, inclusive of postage in South Africa.

Cheques should be made out in favour of the Natal Museum. Overseas orders should include extra for postage, i.e. the equivalent of 75c for surface mail and R14,00 for air-mail.

At the same time, you may be interested to know that a few copies are still available of the 1981 reprint of the same author's revision of the Genus Ancilla. Copies may likewise be ordered at the same price and from the same address as the Epitonium paper.



WHERE AND HOW I FIND PRIMOVULA BECKERI AND OTHER TINY SHELLS

by **D. J. Hodgkinson**

- WHERE?: Marsh Strand, Shelly Beach, Fullers Bay & Hickman's River (all in the East London area)
- HOW?: By crawling along the beach on all fours with my behind up in the air and my nose about 20 cm from the sand.
- WHEN?: Whenever there are shells on the beach, summer, autumn, winter or spring.

The first places I try are the high and low water mark, then up and down in between. I also try to be on the beach before anyone has had a chance to walk or ride all over the shells in a beach buggy. It's much easier to find the tiny shells on a sandy beach where they have been spread out by the retreating tide, rather than at Shelly Beach for example, where there are so many old shells that it takes ages to find the precious ones I like.

RECORD SIZES OF SOUTH AFRICAN HALIOTIS SPECIES

By **Sandy Muller, East London Museum, P.O. Box 11021 Southernwood 5213**

GENUS	SPECIES	AUTHOR	SHELL LENGTH	LOCALITY
Haliotis	midiae	Linné	280 mm	Simonstown Diving School
H.	spadicea	Donovan	95,5 mm	Personal observation
H.	parva	Linné	48,0 mm	Personal observation
H.	queketti	Smith	70,6 mm	P.V. Palmer (private collector) E.L.
H.	speciosa	Reeve	63,4 mm	Kilburn (pers. comm.) Natal Museum collection
H.	pustulata	Reeve	53,2 mm	Kilburn (pers. comm.) Natal Museum Collection

I challenge all readers of Strandloper to measure their **South African Haliotis** species and to see if they can improve on these sizes. Could someone suggest a family for the Strandloper so that we may all get out our verniers and visit our museums to check for sizes - maybe **Patelliidae** would be a logical follow-on.

RESIGNATIONS

- G. Rohland of Beacon Bay
- H. Busby of Constantia
- S. Dockendorf of Durban North
- Miss M.E. Booth of Port Elizabeth
- Mrs M. Basset of Durban
- Mr G.J. Hooper of Village of Happiness
- Mr & Mrs R. Morris of Durban North

DEATHS

- Mrs A. Burger of Table View, Cape.
- Mr L.D. Shapiro of Harare, Zimbabwe
- Mr Peter Bartsch of Durban
- Mr Wayne Clausen of Port Elizabeth.



BEDEVA PAIVAE CROSSE – an Australian murex living in South African waters

by **Sandy Muller East London Museum P.O. Box 11021 Southernwood 5213**

The presence of this foreign shell was first noticed by Kilburn in the late sixties. Since my appointment at the East London Museum in 1983 I have been monitoring this colony periodically. In January 1985 it was decided to initiate a full research programme dealing with all biological and ecological aspects of the snail. This was indeed fortuitous as in October and November 1985 the East London area experienced severe floods and the "colony" appears to have vanished.

However a few preliminary results from this initial investigation are worth recording.

The snail is dioecious, that is the sexes are separate. The snail also exhibits sexual dimorphism, the female being larger than the male. Initial results show that the male's shell is normally narrower than the female shells of the same size.

It has been recorded that *B. paivae* feeds on *Siphonaria capensis* and *Haminoea alfredensis* (Kilburn & Rippey 1982).

Initial observations on *B. paivae* kept in tanks show that they also eat the brown mussels *Perna perna* and cut red bait *Pyura stolonifera*. The method of feeding is similar to that of *Cymatium* spp.

To date no juveniles (snails with shell length smaller than 6 mm have been found. No egg capsules have been seen.

I wish to thank Janet Lambie for typing the manuscript. (♀)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

from **Walter Sage, American Museum of Natural History, New York.**

Many thanks for your welcome letter and the superb issue of the Strandloper with the outstanding colour photos of the Volutidae, many of which have never been seen in any publication before in color, and they certainly have not been gathered together before in any publication. And the living animal photos are great. Bill Liltved did a really first class job, and you and Victor Millard are to be commended. My sincere and warm compliments to you all – YOUR journal is a good example of what a truly worthwhile club publication should be. I will call this to the attention of everyone I know who is interested in African Volutes. I hope you have surplus copies that can be published; you might tell me to whom people should write for copies.

Editor's reply:

Aw shucks, it weren't nuthin'.

Seriously though, we do appreciate these kind comments on an issue we are proud of. Surplus copies are available to readers. For the U.S.A. the price is \$5.00 including postage by surface mail. Airmail will cost an extra \$1.50.

The local price is R5,00 including postage. Write to our Durban address.

from **G.A. Hyatt, Uvongo, Natal**

I write to thank you for Strandloper 215 and congratulate you on the magnificent manner in which it was prepared and presented. South Africa can be proud of such excellent team work.

The photography is particularly excellent and nothing appears to be lost in the reproduction. What is the secret? I would really like to know so that I can photograph some of my specimens. Other members may feel the same.

I have always been an admirer of the way in which Tucker Abbott's 'Indo-Pacific Mollusca' was presented and its replacement as 'Monographs of Marine Mollusca' by American Malacologists Inc. With this in mind I have in the past suggested that Strandloper be produced on a similar basis i.e. pages on monographs, photographs descriptions etc. be produced in such a way that they can be filed in book form. Articles, letters, advertisements, etc. should accordingly be confined to other pages which can be separated and filed accordingly. From time to time replacement pages updating information can easily be produced using the same photographs. I sincerely ask you to give this suggestion some thought. I have not of course looked at cost factors or other possible complications but your printers should have the answers.

In closing may I again compliment you on the latest issue of Strandloper. I appreciate the endless hours of work involved but I wish to assure you that my personal opinion is that if only one issue of this calibre was made

Continued from page 3

available to me as a member in a year I would be grateful. Far rather one good issue than several mediocre issues.

Editor's reply:

To answer the question about the photographs it is not quite as easy as just telling you how to do it. It is a matter of experimenting. The guide lines that I can offer are:

- Photograph on black velvet.
- Use tungsten lights. Ask your local photographic dealer what lights would be most suitable for use with Tungsten transparency film. This will give you transparencies. These in turn can be made into colour pictures.
- the experimentation comes in when you start photographing. You may have to make several exposures at different f-stops to arrive at the correct exposure. This will start off being a wasteful process but as you improve it will take less film as you would need to make fewer exposures.

Your suggestion of a Strandloper in the form of a series of loose-leaf monographs or, at least, containing occasional loose-leaf monographs, is an interesting one but there are just one or two considerations. Technically the idea is quite feasible, but we would begin to use substantially more paper which would be more costly in itself but would have an even worse effect on the cost of mailing the bulletin. The increased cost could be met only by increasing membership fees, and I would question whether

- we would retain a sufficient number of members at the higher fees to guarantee a higher income, and
- the editors could guarantee a sufficiently frequent and substantial flow of material to satisfy subscribers.

The editors, and I am sure also the Society's Executive Committee, would like to hear from our readers about this suggestion. We will do it the way you want us to. Which brings us to the other remark that even one excellent Strandloper per year might be worth as much as several mediocre ones.

There have recently been complaints about the absence of Strandlopers, and this might be an occasion to tell our readers that the quality and quantity of the Strandlopers are governed by two factors, viz, the number of articles and photographs that we receive from contributors, and the size of our membership and therefore the amount of money we have in the bank to pay for printing and postage.

Approximately 70% of the Society's funds are used for producing the Strandloper, 20% for mailing, and the rest on such expenses as stationery, telephone calls, etc. The last Strandloper's printing costs came to R2 000, and this would in fact have been R4 000 had I not been able to do most of the work myself and with the help of friends after hours. Postage was over R200.

With 300 members paying the old subscription rate of R8 per annum, our income

for the year would be R2 400, which would just cover the cost of Strandloper No 215, with a bit left over.

One 12-page bulletin without colour would cost around R1 200 to print, plus R200 for mailing. Two 6-page bulletins would cost 2 times R600, or R1 200 to print, but the postage would then be 2 times R200 or R400, so you see it is more costly to produce a larger number of smaller bulletins.

We can of course supply Strandlopers if we get enough articles from contributors. We can give you more issues per year if they are smaller, but the mailing costs will be higher. We can give you more large issues per year but we will have to get more articles from you, the readers, and it will cost you more both for printing and for mailing.

One way you can help to keep costs down is to help recruit new members and share the costs that way, but it seems pretty obvious that our existing subscriptions are not enough to cover the number of Strandlopers that members have a right to expect from the Society in a year, quite apart from the problem of getting enough publishable material.

Our thanks to Mr Hyatt for raising these thoughts in his stimulating letter. (4)

NEW MEMBERS

Mrs E.C. Shephard
27 Diggery Drive
Taybank
6001 Port Elizabeth

Mrs Rona Anderson
37 Milkwood Drive
6570 Knysna

Mr & Mrs T. Carstens
1 Sorreldeene,
van Wyk Street,
Westering
6001 Port Elizabeth

Mrs E.A. Love
9 Selwyn Court
cnr 7th Ave & Marine Drive
Summerstrand
6001 Port Elizabeth

Mrs L.B. Slabbert
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Summerstrand
6001 Port Elizabeth

Mr J.J. Swart
703 Pearson Place
Pearson Street
6001 Port Elizabeth

Miss R. Steven
6 Amandelboom Avenue
7195 Kleinmond

Mrs E. Botha
1 Da Gama Street
6330 Jeffreys Bay

Mr D.A. Smith
31 Edinburgh Crescent
3630 Westville

CHANGE OF NAME

Miss M. Scott is now Mrs M. Du Plooy. (Congratulations!)

WANTED

Looking for Cernohorsky's second book titled "Marine Shells of the Pacific" printed in 1972. Anyone wanting to sell this book, please contact Mrs Dawn Brink, 2 Highfield Drive, 3630 Westville, South Africa

Richard H. Knobla, 32120 Oakshore Drive, Westlake Village, Ca.91361. U.S.A. wants South African cones. *Conus typhon*, *tianianus*, *bairstowi*, *orbigny*, *elokismenos*, *mozambicus lautus*, *lohri*, *pictus*, *algoensis algoensis*, *algoensis simplex*, *pictus*, *visagenus*, etc.

A COLLECTING TRIP TO THE CORAL REEFS OF SODWANA BAY

by D G Herbert

The coral reefs of Zululand are amongst the most southerly such reefs in the world. Their presence is due primarily to the existence of the Mozambique current which brings warm water from the tropical regions in the north. The sea temperature never falls below 20°C. Another important factor is the small number of rivers entering the sea in this area, thus the water is normally clear and there is little silting. Corals are generally intolerant of turbid water.

Most if not all the reefs are subtidal and can only be sampled by SCUBA diving. At present very little is known of their molluscan fauna. Virtually no scientific collecting has ever been undertaken. Nevertheless the reefs form part of the tropical Indo-West Pacific biogeographical zone and can therefore be expected to possess a fauna similar to that of other reefs in the zone. This in fact proves to be the case and the northern Zululand fauna has much more in common with that of Mozambique than it has with the rest of Natal.

Recently I undertook a field trip to Sodwana Bay as part of a joint project between the Natal Museum and the Natal Parks Board on the molluscs of Natal. Material was collected by SCUBA diving on the reefs north of Jesser Point (Two Mile Reef - weather conditions did not permit visits to Seven and Nine Mile Reefs). This was essentially a pilot exercise for more extensive work planned in the future.

Approximately 120 species were collected over a period of ten days (on two of these, however, diving was not possible) during which ten dives were made. The majority of species found, although of very restricted distribution in South Africa, are typical of Indian Ocean coral reefs - **Charonia tritonis** (Linné, 1758), **Tutufa bubo** (Linné, 1758), **Lambis chiragra arthritica** Röding, 1798, **Drupella cornus** (Röding, 1798), **D. fraga** (Blainville, 1832), **Turbo argyrostoma** Linné, 1758 and **Tridacna maxima** (Röding, 1798) to mention a few of the larger and more frequently encountered species. Close examination of one specimen of **T. maxima** revealed a total of 22 other species of mollusc living between its scales and amongst the many encrustations

growing on its surface. Most were small species or juvenile stages of larger ones; species of *Triphora* were particularly numerous.

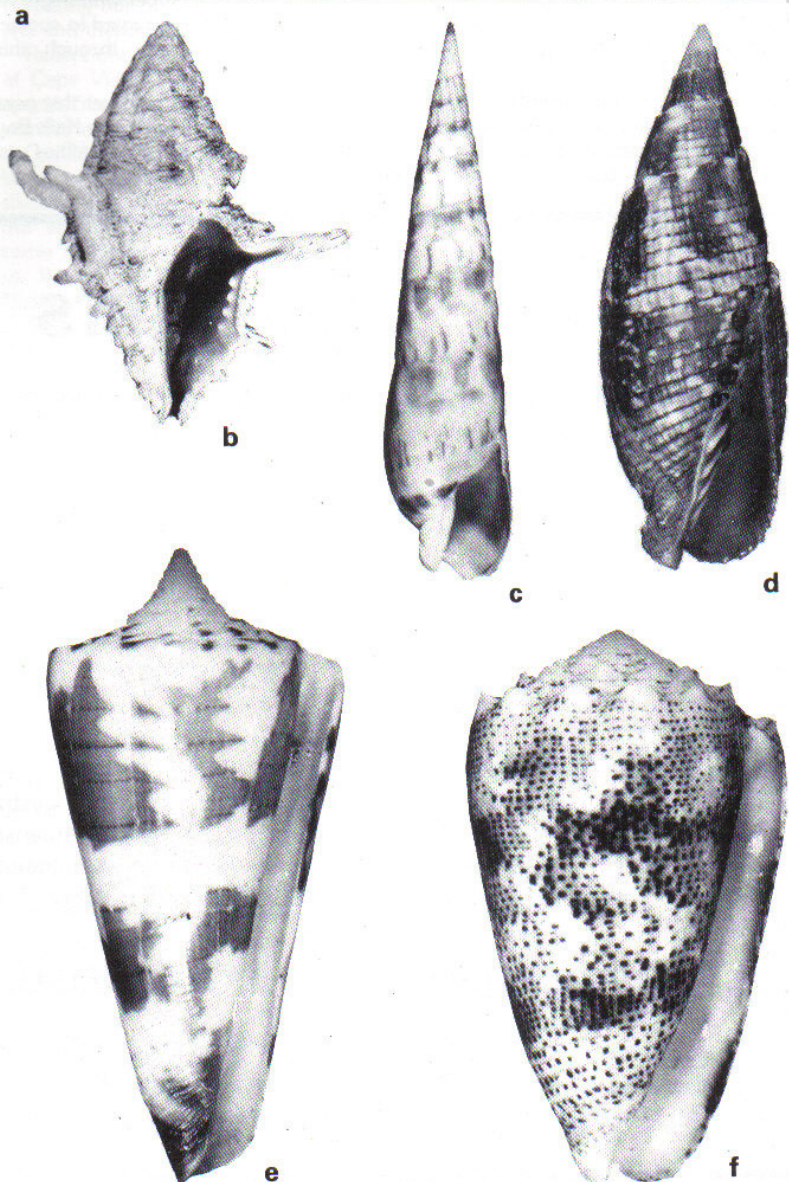
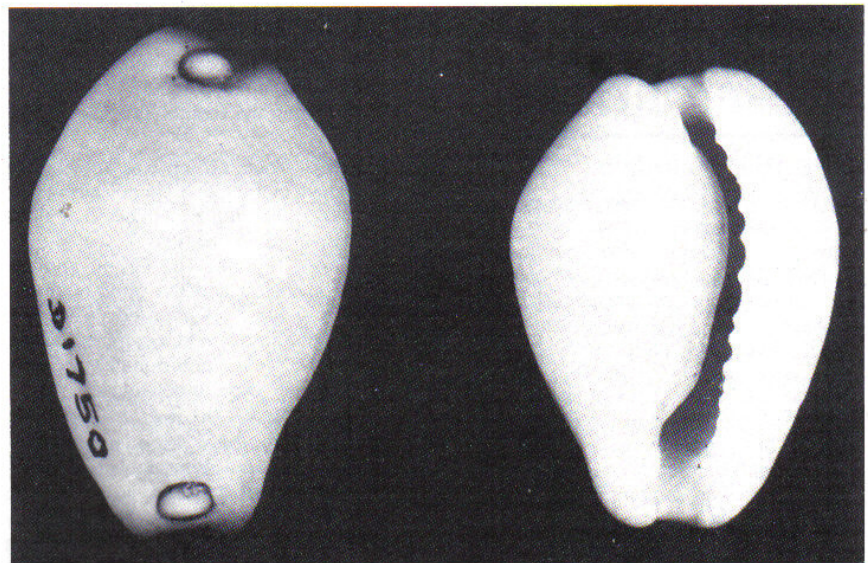
Other interesting finds included *Chicoreus kilburni* Houart & Pain, 1982, *Cypraea nucleus* Linné, 1758, *Cronia andrewsi* (Smith, 1909) (Fig. b), *Clivipollia fragaria* (Wood, 1828), *Terebra chlorata* Lamarck, 1822 (Fig. c), *Conus moreleti* Crosse, 1858 and *Trapezium sowerbyi* (Hidalgo, 1903). A substantial number of species (34) were found that have not been officially recorded as belonging to the South African fauna, but their presence is not at all unexpected; many are already known from neighbouring Mozambique. Doubtless many more such species occur in Zululand, but remain to be found. Amongst species previously unrecorded from South Africa are *Phalium erinaceus* (Linné, 1758), *Calpurnus verrucosus* (Linné, 1758) (Fig. a), *C. lacteus* (Lamarck, 1810), *Mitra imperialis* Röding, 1798 (Fig. d) and specimens of an as yet undescribed bivalve belonging to *Asaphis* (*Heteroglypta*). The specimen of *Mitra imperialis* collected alive, three-quarters buried in a sand filled crevice, was a somewhat unexpected find as this species was previously known only as far south as northern Mozambique.

A total of more than 20 species of *Conus* were obtained including *textile* Linné, 1758, *bandanus* Hwass, 1792, *terebra* Linné, 1758, *generalis* Hwass, 1792 (Fig. e), *varius* Linné, 1758, *striatellus* Link, 1807, and *arenatus* Hwass, 1792 (Fig. f). However, only six species of *Cypraea* were found. This paucity of cowries is almost certainly due to the activities of sport divers. Two Mile Reef is only a short boat ride from the coast and is a very popular area amongst sport divers. At this point I must emphasise that a Division of Sea Fisheries permit and a Natal Parks Board permit are required in order to collect molluscs using SCUBA in Natal and furthermore that the Sodwana Bay reefs are part of the St Lucia Marine Reserve and that no material may be removed without special permission from the Natal Parks Board.

Altogether the trip was well worthwhile and indicates the richness of the molluscan fauna to be found in Zululand. Undoubtedly many more species exist in the area, only a small percentage of the total was collected on this trip. All specimens have been deposited in the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg and will act as voucher specimens for fauna lists and inventories. A number of additional species, eg. *Cypraecassis rufa* (Linné, 1758) are already known to occur in Zululand, but as yet no voucher specimens are available. (Q)

Legends

- a) *Calpurnus verrucosus* (Linné, 1758.)
- b) *Cronia andrewsi* (Smith, 1909).
- c) *Terebra chlorata* Lamarck, 1822.
- d) *Mitra imperialis* Röding, 1798.
- e) *Conus generalis* Hwass, 1792.
- f) *Conus arenatus* Hwass, 1792



ROUND THE GROUPS

CAPE TOWN GROUP

Meetings of the Cape Town Group this year were initially held in the South African Museum's temporary premises in Queen Victoria Street, pending completion of restoration work at the South African Museum. Since February, however, meetings have been held at the home of Mrs Connolly, at her kind invitation. This change has allowed for more informal evenings and members have gained in the closer association this has engendered.

One film has been shown this year, "The Fairest Cape", an environmental film on the Cape Peninsula.

We have had talks on shelling in the Comores by Mrs Pat Coles, a Cape Town member and the crab-fishing industry by Mr Roy Melville-Smith of the Department of Sea Fisheries.

Ms Olive Peel, our well-known fellow conchologist from Durban, was unfortunately unable to attend a Society meeting while on holiday in Cape Town, but the contents of

her generous parcel of Natal shells, containing many trawled specimens, were studied and admired at a subsequent meeting. Shell groups that have had particular attention this year have been the **Fasciolaridae** and the **Trochidae**.

The Cape Town Group was approached to participate in the Cape Town Festival during April by providing an exhibition of shells to be displayed in the Old Town House, Greenmarket Square. The Group appreciated this invitation and the opportunity for publicity it would have afforded. We would have had little problem in assembling an excellent collection but unfortunately lockable display cabinets were unobtainable.

It is generally agreed that, for the Cape Town Group to have its own exhibition cabinets would be most desirable but at present our financial position is not strong enough to purchase them. The secretary would like to take this opportunity of asking any reader of this Strandloper who might be in a position to help in this regard to contact the secretary or chairman through this magazine.

No outings have been held yet this year but two are now planned. One to Kalk Bay in April and another to Agulhas in September.

EASTERN CAPE GROUP (PORT ELIZABETH)

November 1985: Brian Hayes and Fred Graeve gave very interesting talks on the families **Cassidae** and **Donacidae** respectively.

December 1985: Our monthly meeting took the form of a competition, members being asked to display three of their best shells of any of the following families: Hapridae, Tonnidae and Strombidae. We ended off the year with a most enjoyable Christmas braai at Brian and Riana Hayes' home.

January 1986: A well-attended identification evening was held.

February 1986: Another competition was held. This time members displayed their best Cypraeidae, both local and foreign.

An excursion was planned for March to New Brighton Beach (a raised Pleistocene beach in Algoa Bay). A wide variety of fossil bivalves and gastropods have been dug up by members over the past few months, including huge bivalves (**Panopea glycymeris**) up to 8 inches in length. We have started a reference collection of small and minute species of E. Cape shells for use by members.

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We receive specimen shells weekly from all over the world.

Latest arrivals include the newly described *Pleurotomaria westralis*, also *Pleurotomaria hirasei*, *Cypraea valencia*, *venusta*, *vercoi*, *surinamensis*, *guttata*, *mauiensis*, *martini* etc.; *Lambis violacea*, *pilsbryi*; *Murex bodjadorensis* *bednalli*, *miyokae*; *Conus milneedwardsi*, *bengalensis*, *kinoshitae*, *barthelmyi*, etc.; *Harpa costata*, *doris*, *gracilis*; and many more.

URGENTLY WANTED (PURCHASE OR EXCHANGE):

Cypraea fultoni, *iutsui*, *cruickshanki*, *connelli*, *lisetae*, *barclayi* and *broderipi*;

Voluta ponsonbyi, *boswellae*, *magister*, *festiva*, *queketti*

All local Cones and Ovulidae (*Phenacovolva*) and Muricidae (*kilburni*, *uncinarius*, etc).

SOUTHERN NATAL GROUP

The Southern Natal Group has developed a valuable connection for generating publicity via the local newspaper which publishes periodical reports of the group's activities. This is something that all group secretaries might try to cultivate. The following report appeared in the South Coast Herald at the end of February 1986:

Programme for beginner shell collectors

The Conchological Society of Southern Africa - Southern Natal Group ended 1985 with a highly enjoyable Christmas party with families and friends. Prizes were given to those who excelled in the year's competition. First prize went to K Eastwood, second to D Smith and third to G and M Wallace.

This year we have been concentrating on building up the shell collection in the Port Shepstone Library Activities room, where all our meetings are now held. This was established a few years ago by us, and aims to represent a comprehensive reference of shell species found on the South Coast. At our last meeting on February 8, Eric Balson donated several beautiful cowries, many obtained from divers.

We look forward to April 11 and 12 when once again we shall take part in the popular Rotary Hobbies Fair held at the Uvongo Town Hall. Our next meeting is on Saturday March 8 at 2.30 pm. We are starting a series of four talks, aimed at beginners in shell collecting. The programme for these is as follows:

- March & - 'Introduction to shell collecting'.
- April 12 - (no meeting or talk as Rotary Hobbies Fair).
- May 10 - 'Where and How to find shells'.
- June 14 - 'Cleaning of shells'.
- July 12 - Identification, Storage and Labeling of Shells'.

The next outing will be this Sunday, February 23, to TO Strand. Those interested please meet at 7.30 am at the Tea House of the Blue Lagoon, Ramsgate.

Some recent interesting finds include the following: C Harris - live *Cypraea felina*; K Eastwood - *Babylonia pintado*; K Borland - live *Strombus decorus*, two live *Pyramidella turrita* and live *Neritina gagates*; M Borland - live *Nerita undata* and *Nerita umlaasiana*.

All meetings and outings are open to interested members of the public. Further information may be obtained by telephoning the Secretary at 0391-3568, the Chairman at 0391-51100 (after hours) or a committee member at 03931-20527.

South Coast Herald February 21st

DURBAN GROUP NEWS

We have been fortunate in getting top flight speakers lately. Dr Kilburn spoke on Turridae, leaving us agog at the complexity of this group. Hank van de Weg, a diver of 25 years stand, presented his video on diving on the reefs off Sodwana and Durban. We saw the dead shells he had found on the

reefs - the collection of living material with SCUBA is prohibited in Natal waters. Mary Mears spoke on tiny shells found in beach grit, algae washings, harbour dredgings, or parasitic on other animals. Dr Pat Berjak showed slides on mangrove ecology. Dr Dai Herbert made English shells sound very exciting. Billy Liltved showed us some superb slides on living Cape Cowries, and Maureen Quickelberge spoke on the breeding biology of Cymatiidae. Our A.G.M. slide show was taken from our Group library and starred all of us in informal poses (mostly either bottoms or elbows up) at various outings over the years.

Excitement is running high with our monthly shell competition. So far this year we have 16 entrants and the positions are: 1st Dawn Brink, 2nd Olive Peel, 3rd Gladys Ashwell, 4th Val van der Walt, 5th Andy Keppy. Prizes are awarded to each entrant at the A.G.M. We have all learned a lot from preparing our 5 shells for the monthly subject and then marking the other exhibits.

Recent outings included a weekend away at Cape Vidal. A list was prepared of 113 species from Mission Rocks. As a project we want to expand this into a checklist.

Our New Year outing was a champagne breakfast braai at Kelso. Unsurprisingly, little shelling was done! Bookings are open for our weekend away in June, and we welcome members from other Groups to join us. We will stay at Leisure Bay and shell at Mzamba in the Transkei.

We continue a close liaison with the Parks Board and our present project is a display in the foyer of their Congella offices.

SHELLS AND MAN

by Olive Peel, Durban

Since primitive man, shells have played important roles in everyday living as can be seen from fossils dug up in the mountains and in caves. Shells were used as eating utensils, the sharp edges of the aperture of shells made cutting tools, they were used as drinking vessels. Even now when I want to water a plant and there is a shell handy I use it as a container for the water and I am sure that many other people do the same thing. I have used them too for drinking water if a cup is not handy!

The uses are so many and varied that it would take a book in itself to quote them all so a few interesting uses are mentioned here.

We must not forget the animal inside the shell as well as the outside magnificence. The animals are by nature scavengers. They can destroy noxious weeds and fungi, they are a source of food to other molluscs, fish and indeed to man as well. Oysters and mussels are foremost in their edibility to man, together with clams, cockles, snails and scallops. The oyster too is foremost as a source of the world's wealth in pearls. Pearl buttons are made from fresh water clams. Cameos are cut from helmet shells, sepia ink and dyes are molluscan secretions, cowries were once used by primitive tribes as curren-

cy hence 'money' cowries (*Cypraea moneta*). A young wife for instance would be sold for 60,000 to 100,000 money cowries whereas an older and more 'ordinary' wife would only fetch 20,000! Good-luck bands of nerites are worn as bracelets by South African tribal people. Tritons have a hole cut at the spire through which Hindus blow, calling people to prayer. Fishermen too use this shell as a trumpet.

In the West Indies the queen conch (*Strombus gigas*), with a hole cut in its spire was used to call workers in from the sugar can fields. The animal of this shell is used as food in the Caribbean. The shell is also used when ground into a powder, in the manufacture of porcelain, whilst the pear turbinella or chank (shankh) is the sacred shell of the Hindus. Images of the god Vishnu always carry a chank shell in one hand. According to legend the Vedas (prayer books) were stolen by the chank shell and Vishnu took on the form of a fish that he might go down and recover the lost books and destroy the thieving mollusc. And so every Hindu regards the chank as his good-luck charm used in worship otherwise his prayers would not be answered. The are also used as oil vessels for illumination in temples, and are revered in India, Siam, China and in Ceylon. Chinese priests keep them as sacred vessels in the pagodas; they administer medicine to the sick from them. They are used in the manufacture of bracelets, armlets and bangles. The long white columella of giant whelks is made into beads to make belts for the Indians in America.

Garden pathways are bordered with shells, lamp shades from the spines of sea urchins and 'jingles'; serviette rings are cut from the *Cypraea tigris*. Ornaments and pictures are made and sold to tourists in curio shops; almost every home has at least one shell adding beauty to a display cabinet, or on a shelf. Macramés and milk doilies are made from small shells, whilst the delicate clinking of 'jingles' form windchimes and whisper of the sea. The bottle of shells on your bath is a reminder of happy frolicking on a beach with your family.

And every child knows the joy of putting a shell up to an ear hearing the sound of the crashing waves, reminding us that as long as there is an ocean and a beach, shells will be picked up and enjoyed by children and adults alike.

References:

- Shell Collecting - an illustrated history by S Peter Dance
- The Shell Book, revised edition by Julia Ellen Rogers (P)

COLLECTIONS OF FAMOUS PEOPLE

by Olive Peel

Have you ever wondered what became of the shells that were actually used in the original descriptions by all those famous authors during the past two-and-a-half centuries? These priceless specimens are called "type specimens" or "types", and form the

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basis on which a species is recognised. It is therefore essential to know where they are and to have access to them. The following is a partial list of well-known authors with an indication of where their collections of shells are to be found today. The information was compiled from S. Peter Dance's fascinating book, "Shell Collecting - An Illustrated History" published by Faber & Faber in 1966 and now unfortunately out of print.

- ADANSON, M (1727-1806). Paris Museum.
 BERNARDI, A (d. 1863). Coll. acquired by M. Gubba of Havre. Some in Paris Museum.
 BLAINVILLE, HMD de. (1777-1850). Thaisidae, Paris Museum. A few types eg. of Chiton in British Museum.
 BLANFORD. British Museum.
 BOLTEN, JF (1718-96). Most bought by FC Schmidt and acquired after his death by the Art and Nat. Hist. Museum, Gotha.
 BORN I, Baron von (1742-91). Vienna Museum.
 BRODERIP, WJ (1789-1859). British Museum.
 BURNUP, HC (1852-1928). Main collection in Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, but many types in British Museum.
 CHEMNITZ, JH (1730-1800). Some in Copenhagen Museum.
 DAUTZENBERG, P (1849-1935). Main coll. in Brussels Museum but many in Paris Museum.
 DELESSERT, JPB (1773-1847). Geneva Museum.
 DESHAYES, GP (1796-1875). Main coll. in Ecole Mines. Many in British Museum.
 DILLWYN, LW (1778-1855). Cardiff Museum.
 DUFRESNE, L (1752-1832). Main coll. in collection of JPB Delessert and a small coll. in Scottish Museum.
 DUNKER RW (1809-85). Berlin Museum. Many in collection of H Cuming.
 DUPONT LEE (1847-1933). Mauritius Inst.
 GAIMARD, JP (1796-1858) and QUOY (1790-1869). Paris Museum but many have been incorporated in the general collection of the museum and so the identity of many has been lost.
 GASKOIN, JS (1790-1858). Many of his types in Brit. Museum and collection of JRB Tomlin.
 GMELIN, JF (1748-1804). In collection of Adanson and Splengler.
 HWASS, CH (1731-1803). Geneva Museum.
 JOUSSEAUME, FP (1835-1921). Paris Museum
 KRAUSS, F Main coll. in Stuttgart Museum but almost all destroyed during 1939-45 war. Many S African shells sent to British Museum by Krauss.
 KURODA, T. Private coll. destroyed by fire about 1931.
 LAMARCK, JBPA de M de (1744-1829). Geneva Museum, but bivalves in Paris Museum

LINK, HF (1767-1851). Rostock Museum. Specimens not isolated and none can now be identified positively.

LINNAEUS (or Linné) (C. von.) (1707-78). Coll. Muss and library in Linnean Society of London.

MARRATT, FP (1820-1904). Nearly all his coll. and most types in Liverpool Museum.

MARTENS CE VON (1831-1904). Berlin Museum, some in British and Harvard Museums.

MELVILL, JC (1845-1929). Main coll. in collection of JRB Tomlin but many in Brit. & Manchester Mus.

PEASE, WH (1824-71). Main coll. of Pacific Islands in Harvard Mus., others in British and Paris Museums

PENNANT, T (1726-98). British Museum.

PILSBRY, HA (1862-1957). Most of his types in Philadelphia Academy.

PONSONBY (or Ponsonby-Fane), JH (1848-1916). South African and many others in British Museum.

RECLUZ, CA (d. 1873). Many in Paris Mus. and collections of JPB Delessert and H. Cuming.

REEVE, LA (1814-65). Part of his personal coll. in coll. of JG Jeffreys, H Cuming, JRB Tomlin and British Museum.

RUMPHIUS, GE (1634-1702). Perhaps the only authentic extant material is that which should be in the coll. N Gualtieri.

SALLE A (1820-96). Many specimens in coll. of H Cuming, Harvard Mus. and coll. P Dautzenberg.

SAVIGNY, MJCL de (1777-1851) Specimens in Paris Mus.

SCHEPMAN, MM (1847-1919). Amsterdam Museum.

SEBA, A (1665-1736). His first coll. sold to Peter the Great, second coll. auctioned in 1752. Some specs. bought for Queen Louisa Ulrica of Sweden, may still be in Uppsala Univ. Zool. Inst.

SIEBOLD, PF von (d. 1866). Leiden Museum.

SOWERBY, GB (1st) 1788-1854; (2nd) 1812-84; (3rd) 1843-1921. Brit. Mus. coll. JRB Tomlin.

SWAINSON, W (1789-1855). Manchester Museum.

SYKES, ER (1867-1954). Brit. Mus. Harvard Museum.

THIELE, J (1860-1935). Berlin Museum.

TOMLIN, JR le B (1864-1954). Cardiff Museum. (4)

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