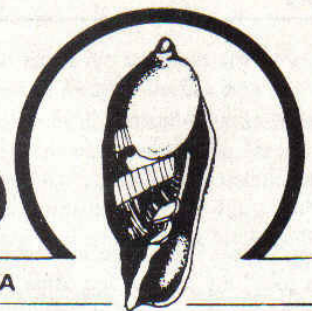


# The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 183

APRIL/MAY 1977

Page 1

## PRETORIA GROUP SHELL SHOW

Our first public competitive shell show was held on November 6, 1976. Twenty members of the Pretoria Group and five members of the Transvaal Group entered 150 exhibits which included scientific, educational and artistic displays. In all cases, including scholars and novices, scientific data was made full use of. To have made the show possible, members had to find the necessary funds in order to finance the show. The trophies and prizes were donated by the Pretoria members and Helene Boswell presented us with a beautiful shield which then became the Victor Ludorum Trophy and was won by Laurie Smith, our Chairman.

Mr R N Kilburn from the Natal Museum was the judge. Dick Kilburn was hosted by Stanley and Helene Boswell. The judging was based on scientific data as well as the quality of shells displayed.

Han Vandenberg made a valuable contribution towards the success of the show with his light effects, information boards, etc. The members provided refreshments 'a-la-picnic'.

A shell show can only be successful if all members of the Group do their share and support the Committee and in Pretoria this was the case.



SEEN AT THE SHELL SHOW

From Left to Right: Mr. L.J. Smith, Mrs. M. Mullan and Mrs. A. Wilson with Mr. R.N. Kilburn (second from left).

## SHELL COLLECTING IN PORT ELIZABETH HARBOUR

By F. GRAEVE

At the end of last year the planned extensions of the Port Elizabeth harbour finally got under way. Already a small portion of the old basin has been filled in with rubble and sand. Here a container berth has been sited on which rows of containers stand where once ships were moored to the quay.

On the northern side of the harbour a large tract of sea will be reclaimed. From the tip of the Charl Malan quay a wall is being built in the sea which will join up with a similar wall which is under construction from the bottom of Green Street. A Dutch dredging company has been contracted to dredge sand from the harbour channel and surrounding areas, which is being pumped behind the partly constructed walls. In due course on this reclaimed land new railway sheds, offices, warehouses etc. will be built.

The dredger sucks the sand from the seabottom and blows it through a pipeline as a thick watery mass behind the new walls. And in that sand are shells . . .

To get at the mouth of the pipeline is impossible as the sand by then has not yet settled. There is the very real danger of quick sand so notices have been put up by the harbour authorities warning people to stay out of this area. But in those parts where the sand was blown some weeks before, the ground has become firm and here one can look for shells, although, by then, most are to some extent sun bleached. Yet the search is interesting for in this part of Algoa Bay the beaches normally do not yield many shells so this is a wonderful opportunity to see what lives at a depth of 10 to 20 metres.

Now in Port Elizabeth harbour terminates a small stream, the Baakens; once quite a river as we know from pictures and sketches of the previous century. So in the harbour itself, and consequently in the channel now being dredged, species of molluscs are living that are at home in river mouths and estuaries. Hence the large quantities of *Turritella capensis* Krauss, *Nassarius kraussiana* (Dunker) and *Rhinoclavis kochi* (Philippi) now lying in the pumped up sand. All, of course, fresh shells but I found none with the animal still in them.

Venturing near the mouth of the pipeline, as closely as was safely possible, I did find some shells that were alive while others still contained the dead animal. These were mostly Nassariidae such as *Bullia annulata* (Lamarck),

(Continued on page 2)



## HOUSING YOUR COLLECTION — TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

By M. M. EVA

"If you collect shells, you must collect boxes and plastic bags too!" my mother has often told visitors by way of explaining the miscellany of "junk" in my shell room.

Just lately, as part of my beat-inflation-anti-waste effort, I have been collecting various other things, and feel that a few thoughts on ways and means of housing a shell collection with the minimum of expense may be of use to some who face, as I do, the factors of *space* and *expense*.

For my smaller shells, especially those that are "round" in shape, I have invested in a set of Gason office filing drawers (hardboard, not metal). Then, to my joy, I found in the stationers shop, among the "rubbish" some plastic sheets containing round indentations — 12 to a sheet. I gathered them up, and found that they fitted exactly into the drawers — in layers of 2. — i.e. 24 containers to a drawer x 8 drawers = 192 species in a small space. It is a simple matter to cut stiff paper or card discs to fit the containers, and neatly print all the data on them. The advantage against the use of plastic gums is that you can take the shells out and examine them, and also you can have more than one shell in a container. They look most attractive too.

For the other shapes, turritillas, ceriths, etc., (small) I have reverted, after feeling the financial pinch of plastic boxes, and difficulty in obtaining them here, to the match-box. Well do I remember the late Mr Kennelly painstakingly cutting a square window on the "striker" part of the match box, and pasting cellophane across it. I have several of his neat little boxes containing shells that he gave me. With a

(Continued from page 1)

*Bullia laevissima* (Gmelin), *Bullia tenuis* Gray and *Nassarius speciosa* Adams, the last mentioned a scarce shell on Eastern Cape beaches.

*Ancilla albozonata* Smith was also found with the animal still inside and so were some bivalves such as: *Tivela compressa* (Sowerby), *Dosinia orbigny* Dunker, *Felania subradiata* (Sowerby) and *Bornia africana* Bartsch. All very welcome additions to our checklist of Algoa Bay shells.

One species that I had so far not found on the beach was rather common in the dredged sand: *Minolia articulata* (Gould), while others, normally scarce, became suddenly quite plentiful, like *Natica simplex* Sowerby and *Terebra suspensa* Smith.

On the other hand some species are just as abundant in this sand as they are on some of the Algoa Bay beaches. Among these are the bivalves *Glycimeris connollyi* Tomlin, *Donax longissimus* J. & T. and *Tellina alfredensis* Bartsch. Common Gastropods are *Ancilla obtusa* (Swainson) — one damaged sinistral one! —, *Polynices didyma* (Bolten), *Melapium lineatum* (Lamarck) and *Terebra capensis* Smith. I had been hoping for some nice *Marginella*'s but had to be satisfied with a few rather worn *M. floccata* Sowerby.

The dredging and pumping of sand may continue for a few more months and by that time we should have a pretty thorough knowledge of what species are living in the area of Port Elizabeth harbour.

little modification I have changed this fiddling job into an easy, quick production. With the use of a card-cutter, and self-adhesive polythene, cut into strips the right width, I can make six of these "window" boxes in less than ten minutes, complete with shell and label inside! To make them more attractive, I have spray-painted mine black, or dark green.

These fit very neatly into Kodak Bromide boxes — the 8 x 10 size, and are excellent for small limpets, bi-valves etc. and can be stacked on the shelves of the cupboard, always, of course carefully labelled. A good idea, too is to number the boxes, and keep reference of the number on a card index file.

Another anti-waste measure which has proved useful is the collection of aerosol can lids. These, I found, fitted neatly into the drawers I had made for medium-sized turbos and similar shaped shells. They can be moved around as the collection grows, without disturbing the shells, and again, if uniform in size, can present a very attractive appearance when proudly displaying the collection to friends! Remember, though, that these must be in dust-proof drawers, as they have no lids.

Supermarkets often have suitable boxes and containers, which they throw away after unpacking — bottles and jars, and even toy motor-cars! I collect everything I can that may prove useful — it can easily be discarded if it doesn't answer. Garages throw away dozens of little plastic boxes, similar to those we pay so much for, containing points, and fuses. A friendly mechanic would put them on one side for you, and they are just super for the tiny *trivia* and *cypraea*

Any other members have other suggestions? In these days of inflationary prices, any ideas would be welcome.



A DISPLAY OF LARGE SHELLS AT THE PRETORIA SHOW.



**AROUND THE GROUPS**

**Cape Town.** At a poorly attended February meeting Mrs Connolly gave a very interesting talk on the pectens. With the aid of the numerous specimens on display she explained the various technical terms used when discussing the bivalves. Our March meeting was also not too well attended but those present were given a display by Victor Millard on the effects of ultra violet light on the colouration in shells. The talk and demonstration was accompanied with slides. One shell, a plain white 25 million year old fossil, performed well when exposed to the ultra violet light and we saw the original checkered pattern. The members discussed the possibility of changing our meeting night to see if more members would attend but it was decided that we continue to meet on the last Tuesday of each month.

**Port Elizabeth.** A chain store who are shortly opening a new shop in Main Street have approached us to see if we are interested in making use of a small theatre, seating 25 people and having display facilities. This theatre, which will form part of the new store, will be made available to clubs to show their hobbies. At our February meeting Mrs Carstens, a visitor, showed a sinistral *Cypraea capensis* from Algoa Bay and some live taken *Conus mozambicus lautus* from near Port Elizabeth. Members then discussed the family Neritidae and showed shells acquired during the holidays. At our March meeting Mrs. Hoogenhout showed some Fissurellidae found in the stomachs of fish and Mr Graeve had a *Nassarius analogicus* with animal found in the harbour dredgings. The families Mitridae and Petricolidae were discussed.

**East London.** After a lapse of two months the members were very enthusiastic and excited to meet again in February. Letters and messages received were conveyed to the members. Each and every member brought shells found during the holidays – what a display and what an interesting discussion followed about the numerous specimens found.

**Durban.** The weeks leading up to our long talked about show were very hectic, but when one looked at the finished combined display one realised just how many beautiful shells we own between us. The display of pectens was particularly interesting to the public and the cases of mixed shells made for alot of interest. Our thanks go to all the members who assisted and worked so hard to make this show the success it was. With our Annual General Meeting now behind us we look forward to another successful year. In his annual report the Chairman highlighted the successful exhibition. Considering the small band of workers it was really a stout effort. Marueen Latigan has accepted the post on our Committee of Scientific Officer and under her guidance we hope to be set on the right track to build up the long planned scientific reference collection of shells from Natal waters.

**Pretoria.** By ons Februarie vergadering was daar twentig lede en besoekers. Aangesien 'Piermeef Huis' nou 'n bietjie klein word is 'n nuwe venue bespreek. Mev. Wilson meld aan dat Dr Pat Burgess, die *Cypraea* deskundige, Suid-Afrika moontlik later in the jaar sal besoek, dat Barclay Plein is vir die volgende skulptskou bespreek. Daarna het Laurie Smith oor

die genus *arabica* gepraat en na die teepouse het almal met belangstelling na Lorene du Preeze se skyfies gekyk – Vulkanen tot Gletsers, gepaard met uitstekende kommentaar. Twenty-two members and friends attended our March meeting which was opened by our Chairman with a special word of welcome to two members from the Johannesburg Group. After a rather long business meeting Michael Cortie gave a most interesting talk on where and how to find fresh-water molluscs in the various lakes, rivers and swamps north of Durban.

**Johannesburg.** In February Don Aiken's "The Collecting of Small and Minute Sea Shells" really made the evening for all those who attended, and fine examples and drawings, as well as many collecting tips, made the presentation all the more outstanding. In March Mrs Adam gave us an insight into the secrets of the Pondoland coast for the Conchologist, documented with a slide show and specimens. The Johannesburg and Pretoria groups are to have a joint outing in May in the Krugersdorp area in search of land-snails, and will be led by Mr Aiken and Dr van Hoepen. Enthusiasm has been expressed by all concerned.

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All enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary:  
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**INTERTIDAL TALK**

Mr Fred Graeve, Secretary of the Eastern Cape Group, has written a small correction as follows: "In *The Strandloper* No. 181 of December 1976/January 1977 it was mentioned that *Polinices sebae* (Récluz) had been found by Mrs Burnett at Jeffreys Bay. The identification was mine, and it was wrong. Looking again at the shell I discovered that it is in fact *Polinices simiae* (Deshayes). The last time *P. simiae* was reported from Port Elizabeth was in 1892 so this find at Jeffreys Bay confirms that it still occurs in Eastern Cape waters, although it is certainly rare. My apologies for the error.

It is with regret that we have to announce the resignation of Miss K. Leers from the Council of the Society due to other commitments. Miss Leers was elected to the Council in 1975 and we wish to thank her for her sound judgement and advice since then.

Subscription time has come around once more and accounts were sent to all members during the first half of May. We would ask that you made the task of our Treasurer easier by paying promptly thereby saving the necessity for the sending out of reminders. The subscription rates are unchanged at R4 per ordinary member and R2 per student member. In this respect we would like to point out that a student member is a member who is a full time student at an educational institution in the Republic of South Africa. It would be appreciated if you do not cross postal orders and if bank exchange could be added to cheques.

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