



Also passed round for all to see was a copy of the main context of an interesting paper "The Preservation of Molluscs, Storage and Maintenance of Malacological Study Collections" by A.C. v.Bruggen, which was discussed at the recent Museum Technicians' Conference in Maritzburg. This should prove of interest to all members of the Society and a copy is being sent for publication in the Circular when space is available.

A surprise to us all - and what a pleasant surprise - was the birthday cake with its one candle. This was especially made by Mrs. van Bruggen to celebrate the occasion, and her thoughtfulness was much appreciated by all present, and the requests for second helpings showed that the contents and preparation were also first class.

Our next meeting is to take the form of a Field Day on Sunday, 9th August, at Durban. Full particulars have not yet been fully arranged as regards venue, but the suggestion by Mr. Kilburn that we go over to "Central Sand Bank" in Durban Bay seemed to find favour with most present who know of the spot.

Enquiries are being made and, once full particulars are available, all Natal members will be notified well in advance so that they may make necessary arrangements.

This will be in the nature of an experiment and if a success will be repeated.

Les Cock.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

- Mrs. M.E. Bereth, c/o Maritime Motors, 11 Uitenhage Road, Port Elizabeth.
- Mr. J. Hearle, 74 Marion Way, Gooseberry Hill, Kalamunda, Western Australia.
- Mrs. E. le Roux, 7 Caledon Court, Somerset West.
- Miss M. Lord, 11 Baynes Street, Berea, East London.
- Mr. A. Rombouts, Bina Street, Indooroppilly, Brisbane, Australia (old member who has rejoined).
- Mrs. M. Rix, P.O. Box 384, East London.
- Mrs. E. Visage, 52 Shakespeare Street, Vanderbijlpark, Tvl.

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EXCHANGE WANTED.

- Mrs. D.M. Fowler, 126B Main Street, Stoneham 80, Mass. U.S.A.
- Mr. P. Elston, phone 26802, would like a pair of Fusus faurei Barnard, described in Contributions No. 2, June 1951, page 94. He can offer a good exchange for a pair.

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REQUEST.

Unfortunately the Natal Museum's reference library has a few gaps in its otherwise complete series of the Proceedings of the Malacological Society of London. All missing parts are now out of print, so that the Museum now appeals to readers of the Circulars to help in completing our series. The following parts and volumes are required :-

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- Proc. Malac. Soc. Lond.  
 Vol. 28, parts 1, 4, 5, 6, 1949/1951;  
 Vol. 30, all parts, 1953/1954;  
 Vol. 31, parts 1 (Aug. 1954), 2 (Dec. 1954), 3-4 (June 1955);  
 Vol. 32, parts 1-2 (Aug. 1956), 3 (Dec. 1956), 4 (March 1957),  
 5 (Aug. 1957);  
 Vol. 34, part 1 (April 1960).

Offers of any or all of these parts and volumes will be welcomed by the Curator of Molluscs, Natal Museum, Loop Street, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, S.A. The Museum is prepared to pay reasonable prices for copies in fair condition.

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SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD NO. 1.

<u>Across.</u>	<u>Down.</u>
1. Cardium.	1. Cypraea.
4. Ovum.	2. Dinoplax.
6. Pinna.	3. Mimochlamys.
7. Mactra.	5. Mys.
9. Punctata.	8. Chama.
11. Albs.	10. Africana.
14. Musica.	12. Murex.
15. Capensis.	13. Pica.
17. Clam.	16. S.C.

How many of you were correct? Please let us know if you are doing these puzzles and want any more.

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DONATIONS FOR LIBRARY CUPBOARD.

Previously acknowledged	R12.50
Mr. S. Kruger ...	1.00
Miss Stocker ...	1.00
Mrs. M. Kuttel ...	2.00
Mrs. M. Bereth ...	1.00
Mrs. du Preez ...	1.00
Mrs. C. Robinson ...	1.00
	<u>R19.50</u>

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GENERAL NOTES.

1. Preservation of Molluscs, Storage and Maintenance of Malacological Study Collections  
 by  
 A.C. van Bruggen.

1. Killing.
  - (a) For keeping shells only.
    - a.s. Sea shells collected empty: wash in tepid fresh water and dry (never in the sun);

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a.b. Live specimens: kill by dropping in boiling water, extracting body with a bent pin, replace operculum by glueing on piece of cotton wool in the aperture. In case of thin and fragile specimens, bring water slowly to boiling point so as not to crack shells. In case of small very fragile shells let body rot away in water and shake clean after some days.

a.c. Minute specimens: keep in alcohol 96% for some days and dry thoroughly (never in the sun and out of the reach of flies).

(b) For keeping wet specimens for research or exhibition purposes.

b.a. Land snails: drown in (boiled, distilled or tap) water in well closed bottle (preferably with a screw top in order to have no air bubble left at the top), allowing for (sometimes fantastic) expansion of body. If not completely drowned in 10 to 12 hours (depending on temperature of surroundings), add alcohol slowly, drop by drop, in order to anaesthetize specimens; when dead fix in 75% ethyl alcohol, replace preserving liquid after some days because it loses its strength. At the same time slime may be cleaned off with cotton wool or a soft brush. Other anaesthetics may be used (see below).

b.b. Fresh water molluscs: anaesthetics must be used (see below).

b.c. Marine Molluscs: anaesthetics must be used here.

Menthol: sprinkle crystals on water surface, slow narcotic 12 to 24 hours sparingly soluble.

Chloretone (Parke Davis & Co.): same as for Menthol.

Magnesium chloride: 8% solution in tap water is isotonic with sea water, narcotises animal in 20 to 60 minutes.

Magnesium sulphate (Epsom salts): add a few crystals every 10 minutes until concentration of about 1% is obtained (animals narcotised in 1-5 hours).

Alcohol or Formalin: add drop by drop.

#### General Rules to be observed:

(a) Do not leave specimens in anaesthetic too long, otherwise decomposition will set in rapidly; animal must be insensible but not dead when transferred to preservative.

(b) Make colour notes (sketch or watercolour) of body, particularly in slugs, before killing.

Sea slugs may be killed in hot formalin made up with sea water.

Chitons or coat-of-mail snails have to be tied to strips of glass or board to prevent curling up.

If packed sufficiently carefully, many land snails may be despatched alive so that killing and fixation may be done at leisure in the laboratory.

#### Preserving.

Never use formalin for preserving molluscs (formic acid destroys the shell eventually body gets too hard for dissection). Usual preservative is ethyl alcohol 75% (70-80), 96% is too strong.

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Four important tips :-

- (a) Change alcohol after some time, because body fluids dilute it.
- (b) Make hole in shell of operculate snails for better penetration.
- (c) Offensive remains in bigger shells may be sealed off by pouring in shellac or plugging with cotton wool soaked in alcohol 96%.
- (d) Injections with preservatives only necessary in case of large squid, etc.

Bivalve shells must be tied together after cleaning to let the ligament harden (may always be opened by soaking in water).

Oil, vaseline, shellac, polishing, dipping in acids and kindred methods and products are, of course, NEVER used in scientific collections.

### 3. Storage and Maintenance.

Main requirements: exclude daylight and dust.

- (a) Cabinets: sufficient depth for drawers is essential, and a standard depth seems to be 3", increasing in depth as required.
- (b) Boxes: glass-topped are the ideal, but very expensive. Open boxes in various standard sizes are very satisfactory (1 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (2 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (2 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 5)".
- (c) Wet collections: alcohol must be kept at strength and evaporation watched.
- (d) Cataloguing: this is entirely a matter of personal taste. If numerical system is used, numbers should be written on the specimens if not too small. Small specimens are kept in glass tubes with the labels inside.

### 2. Notes on *Atrina Vexillum* (Born).

By D.H. Kennally.

The distribution of this species in East Africa is given by J. Rosewater (1961) as Tanganyika (Dar-es-Salaam), Zanzibar and Kenya (Mombasa).

In Southern Africa *vexillum* has been recorded from Portuguese East Africa (Port Amelia and Delagoa Bay), also from Durban.

Dr. K.H. Barnard remarks that Sowerby's record from Durban was probably based on a dead shell.

An additional record has now been discovered in the East London Museum.

In 1936, the Director - Miss M. Courtenay-Latimer - while collecting at Bird Island, secured a specimen of *vexillum* from a trawler operating close to the Island. This shell measures 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, and 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches in width, and had lain in the Museum collection for 28 years, unidentified, until the writer found it while working over the large collection held.

Further investigation should be made at the locality recorded to obtain further data, as it appears that *A. vexillum* is a rarity on our coast.

3. Cynrasa helvola. By E.T. Haywood.

I would welcome reliable information as to the names of the subspecies of the above which are known to inhabit South African waters. I ask the question because C. argella is very common in East Africa - I have collected many lovely "live" specimens up there - and I have found beach-rotted specimens in Unkomaas. I have also found "very dead" specimens of C. meridionalis at Unkomaas. Recently, however, I have been given a specimen, in good condition, from the Bashee River area, of what I consider may well be C. mascarena, as the description contained in Joyce Allan's "Cowry Shells of World Seas", at p. 97, so aptly applies to this particular shell. It has very deep chestnut margins and base; has a much wider aperture than the other subspecies of helvola mentioned above; is particularly dilated in front; is rather oblong in shape; has lilac extremities, and measures 2.6 cm. in length and 1.7 cm. in width. In my view it cannot possibly be confused with C. argella or C. meridionalis.

Joyce Allan only gives the type locality of C. mascarena as North Madagascar, with distribution in the Indian Province, Lemurian region, and that is why I am interested to know if this subspecies is known to live in our waters, as it would tend to confirm my identification. Incidentally, there are 18 teeth on the labial side and 16 on the columellar side.

4. Notes on Thecalia Concamerata (Brug). By D.H. Kennelly.

An investigation of records of the distribution of this species has proved interesting.

The East London Museum has a number of specimens from the following localities :-

East London, Bonza Bay, Haga Haga, Kei Mouth, Port St. Johns and Pondoland.

Live specimens are recorded taken at Haga Haga and Kei Mouth. This bridges the gap between Port Alfred and Natal, the latter record mentioned by Krauss.

Reference:

Annals, South African Museum, Vol. XLVII, Part V.  
Lamellibranchiata. March 1964. Dr. K.H. Barnard.

5. Cape Notes. By L. Kerr.

While in Johannesburg, I took the opportunity of contacting as many members as possible and had a most enjoyable time looking at their collections and talking "shells". My thanks for their delightful hospitality. Of course, I made a point of visiting Helen Boswell and just revelled in her outstanding collection. The Spondylus, especially, were wonderful. We are hoping that Helen, at some future date, will have a get-together of Johannesburg and Pretoria members.

Mrs. Connolly reports that she found a left-handed Marginella cylindrica at Kommetjie in June. She went to East London in the holidays and will tell us of her finds soon.

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While shelling recently at Millers Point, Helen Duffett and Iris Cohen were chased out of the water by an octopus! Nothing daunted, however, they went on shelling on the beach and Iris found a good specimen of a left-handed Marginella nebulosa.

Whisenberg this year is hopeless for shelling - the weather has been too good.

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