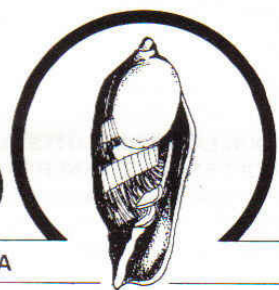


The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 201

APRIL/MAY 1980

Page 1

ARGONAUTA ARGO

The paper nautilus "season" is with us again and readers might be interested to see the specimen picked up on the Struisbaai beach by Michel Fascio. As the matchbox indicates, it was a young one and it is surprising that a seagull hadn't taken it.

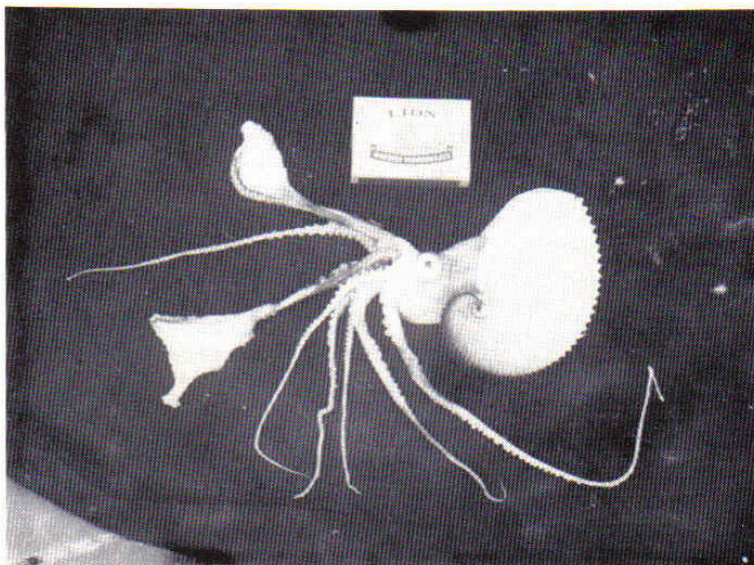
You can clearly see the two modified tentacles used by the animal both in the production of the shell, which is strictly speaking not a shell but the egg case, and for holding herself securely in place within the aperture.

The eggs are deposited inside and protected by the female. The male animal of this species is a small and insignificant creature in comparison, but obviously a necessary partner in the creation of this fascinating structure.

Specimens of *Argonauta argo* wash up in fair numbers along the southern beaches from False Bay eastwards every year, with the greatest concentration occurring in March and April. Sea birds and rival collectors are a nuisance that must be circumvented by getting up in the early hours of the morning if you want to find any.

INTERTIDAL TALK

The German *Club Conchylia* bulletin for March 1980 lists a number of *Patella* species and includes a key to the European Patellidae. This definition extends the range to the West African coast and the Atlantic islands of Cape Verde, Madeira, the Azores and the Canaries. One species is supposed to occur on the coast of South West Africa - Namibia and has been known to us as *Patella safiana* Lamarck 1819. This name, according to the



article, is a synonym, and we quote: *Patella nigra* Da Costa 1771

Synonyms:

squamata Gmelin 1791
guineensis Gmelin 1791
plumbea Lamarck 1819
Safiana Lamarck 1819
lasiana Lam. in Richaud 1838
algira Deshayes 1840
conspicua Philippi 1851
adansonii Dunker 1853
Kraussi Dunker 1853.

Garden route travellers may be interested to know that Mrs Bruce who ran the shell shop in Knysna has moved to Plettenberg Bay where Alibaba is still in business.

The journal of the Dutch Malacological Society "BASTERIA" has started a series of papers on the living *Conidae*, commencing with their issue Vo. 43 of 1979. The authors are

Dr H.E. Coomans, R.G. Moolenbeek and E. Wils of the Zoological Museum of Amsterdam. Black and white photos of shells and distribution maps are supplied and the series will continue for a number of years. BASTERIA can be ordered from the Treasurer of the Dutch Malacological Society: Dr A.S.H. Breure, Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Postbox 9517, 2300 RA LEIDEN, The Netherlands.

The subscription price for one volume, in two parts per year with over 100 pages illustrated, is 42,50 Dutch Guilders.

A book on freak cowries for cowrie freaks is "Niger & Rostrate Cowries of New Caledonia" and it can be ordered from J.M. Chatenay, B.P. A2 Cedex, Service Topographique, NOUMEA, New Caledonia for 25 US Dollars. There are 120 pages with 50 colour plates and the text is French-English. (Continued on page 3 col. 1)

BOOK REVIEW

COQUILLAGES DES CÔTES ATLANTIQUES ET DE LA MANCHE

by P. Bouchet, F. Danrigal and C. Huyghens. Published by Editions du Pacifique; Papeete, Tahiti.

LIVING SEASHELLS: MOLLUSCS OF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL AND ATLANTIC COASTS

An English language version of the above. Published by Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, England.

SEA SHELLS OF WESTERN EUROPE

The American edition of the same book. Published by American Malacologists Inc., P.O. Box 2255, Melbourne, Florida 32901, U.S.A.

We have here a unique opportunity of reviewing three different versions of the same book, the format being identical in each case. The first 50 pages or so cover a general description of the various habitats such as rocky shores, sandy beaches, estuaries, all with diagrams and full colour illustrations. Then follows a brilliantly illustrated section of some 60 pages showing the live specimens in their environments. Nudibranchs, Chitons and bivalves are given good coverage. Finally there are 20 colour plates of shells with facing pages listing the scientific names with an indication of the habitat of each. Altogether some 200 species are listed.

A valid criticism is that authors and dates are not given, although there is a lot of empty space on the pages where the names are listed. Another slight problem that I found when using the book to identify some shells was that the scale of the illustrations varies, so that large and small shells in one or two instances appear to be roughly similar in size. Dimensions are not given in the text either. Despite these drawbacks the book is worth having. The photographs are first class and we have for a long time needed a book on the shells of Western Europe.

But now we must discuss a very unsatisfactory situation affecting the book-buying public in this country, viz the prices charged by the book trade. I have been given to understand by a bookseller in Cape Town that they are committed to a copyright agreement

which prohibits them from selling an American edition if the British edition is in print, despite the fact that the British book might be almost double the price of the transatlantic equivalent. In this particular case, the books are identical apart from the titles and some publishers' blurb on the covers. The British edition is available locally at R13.35. The American edition can be ordered privately direct from the publishers as mentioned above at \$8.95, which works out at around R7.00. The French version was bought in Paris for about three or four American dollars. If you have a bank account it is a relatively easy matter to arrange for a dollar draft and post your order direct to the publishers in the U.S.A.

As long as the book trade continues to hold its customers to ransom in this way, the Strandloper will make every effort to keep readers informed of where to get books at the lowest prices. Members are urged to let the editor have such information. Meanwhile we recommend the book lists issued by Tom Rice of the magazine *Of Sea & Shore*. Free enterprise cuts both ways.

BRAZILIAN MARINE MOLLUSKS

ICONOGRAPHY: by E.C. Rios, published by the Oceanographic Museum of the University of Rio Grande, Brazil, with text in English; 331 pages plus a further 91 plates containing 1328 black and white illustrations, mostly photos.

The illustrations are small and not very clear by comparison with what we have become used to nowadays, but the book is still a useful reference work. The text lists the species, with authors and dates, localities, range and habitat, and some synonyms. Dimensions are given, including those of the holotypes in some cases. The price, through the English booksellers Wheldon & Wesley, was £15 in English money, equivalent to R26.93 which is expensive. However, I know of no other book on the shells of Brazil and the neighbouring coastal areas although, of course, many Caribbean species extend into that region. An interesting addition to any conchological library.

COWRIES – by Jerry G. Walls.

Second revised edition published by T.F.H. Publications in 1979. Distributed in South Africa by Valiant Publishers, P.O. Box 78236, Sandton City 2146. Price about R27.00.

A number of changes have been made to photographs, captions and text. Some errors have been corrected and new species added. Nevertheless, the book remains the proverbial curate's egg. It should have been possible to arrange the pictures in some sort of order, grouping similar species together and drawing distinctions in the captions or at least in the main text. As it is, they are not even in alphabetical order, so checking a doubtful specimen against the illustrations can be a tedious chore.

One might well ask on what grounds he makes some categorical statements, e.g. that *cohenae* is a hybrid of *edentula* and *algoensis*; that *amphithales* is a hybrid of *edentula* and *capensis*; that *iutsui* is a variant of *fuscorubra*. The facts are that we don't really know yet and in my opinion it would be wiser to wait until enough live material has been properly studied before jumping to conclusions. In this connection, I can recommend the very useful article by Les Whatmore of the Natal Shell Society, which was published in the American quarterly magazine, *Of Sea & Shore*, Vol 10, No 2, for Fall 1979.

On the credit side, we have a book that is compact and easier to handle than the big "family bible" by Burgess; colour plates that are mostly very good; some 60 pages of general information about cowries, well supported by excellent photos of living shells; and a very full index at the end, listing about 1000 names. Despite its faults the book makes a most useful supplement to *The Living Cowries* by Burgess, and I don't for one moment regret having bought it.

BACK COPIES OF CIRCULARS

Copies of back numbers of the Society's bulletin are available at the following prices:

Nos. 1 to 170 15c each

Nos. 171 onwards 50c each

No. 195 R1.00 each

Write to the Secretary, P.O. Box 98, Howard Place 7450.

(Continued from page 1)

Anyone using Wagner & Abbot's Standard Catalog of Shells should be careful of the very large number of typographical errors appearing in the latest (third) edition of 1977. Many of these appear to have occurred when transcribing the text from the previous edition. Species names are spelt incorrectly and authors' dates are also sometimes wrong, e.g. *Marginella spyri* instead of *spyri* and 1898 instead of 1889. Readers are advised to refer to the earlier edition wherever possible to verify spellings, and to any other reference works for authors and dates. This problem was discovered while researching articles on Cones and Marginellas, and it is likely that it extends to other sections as well.

Notes on the South African Trochidae will be published in the Strandloper in coming months. Our Australian member, Jim Springsteen, has sent us a series of papers which we intend issuing with illustrations on a centre page, so that they can be removed if necessary for filing. The genera *Calliostoma*, *Clanculus* and *Monilea* will be done first.

From Canada we hear that the Vancouver & District Shell Club has just completed its first year of operation. They have also just started a newsletter as we did 21 years ago and we wish them well. Anyone interested can write to Ted Davies, 319 East 56th Avenue, VANCOUVER V5X 1P2, CANADA.

A Defence Dept truck sporting a shield with three scallop shells was spotted in Cape Town by Bobby Botes. With the help of news columnist Willem Steenkamp and army PRO Lieutenant Riana Appel, Bobby discovered that it belonged to 11 Air Depot which was opened recently at Epping. Would they be *Pecten volans*, the flying scallop?

CHANGES TO 1979 MEMBERSHIP LIST
A new list of members as at January 1980 is being compiled and will include all changes since the last Strandloper. The next lot of amendments will therefore be published only after the new list has been sent to members.

EXCHANGES WANTED

- Mrs Grace Johns, 1203 33rd St, Orlando, Florida 32805, U.S.A. offers Florida shells.
- Mrs Clarice Connolly, 45 Monton Rd., Kenwyn 7764, wants land shells.
- Mrs G. Rowse, 19 Farrell St, Townsville, Queensland 4814, Australia, offers a general shell exchange.
- Mr Roland Houart, St Jobsstraat 8, B-3330 Landen (Ezemaal), Belgium, is interested in all the Muricidae of South Africa but requires good data and not acid treated shells. He offers many European and worldwide gastropoda and bivalvia.
- Susan Mathews, 5 Elizabeth St., Newton, Conn 06470, U.S.A. has asked for African shells.
- Mr R. Baker, Sandwich County School, St Barts Road, Sandwich, Kent, England, asks whether any member would be prepared to donate specimens of recent echinoderms to the school, or perhaps exchange if required.
- Mr Yves Rodrigue, Consul General of France, 13A Old Peak Road, Hong Kong, asks for specimens of Cones endemic to South Africa and the East African coast.
- Mr Werner Richter, D 7950 Biberach 1, Lupinstrasse 10, Germany, offers gem quality Cypraea, Conus and Marginellas from West Africa in exchange for top quality South Africa Cypraea and Conus.
- Mr J. Trondle, B.P. 1753, Papeete, Tahiti, requests contact with members to obtain worldwide shells in exchange for Polynesian shells. Interested in Mitridae.

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We would welcome any article of
interest to Shell Collectors
for
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SHELLS EX PISCE

We often see references to shells "ex pisce" which is just another technical Latin term meaning "out of a fish" and indicating that the specimen was found in the stomach of a fish. A number of species have been found for the first time in this way, notably our *Cypraea fultoni*, but many other molluscs are taken as food by bottom-feeding fish of various species.

Our member from Ramsgate on the lower South Coast of Natal, Mrs Hilda Spurgeon, has a very accommodating husband who is an angler and skiboat owner, and she has been able to compile the following interesting list of ex pisce shells, with the names of the fish species from which they were taken, and the localities as well. Most of the species occur often, showing that they are a normal part of the diet of these fishes.

From MUSSELCRACKER fish:

off Marina Beach:

Babylonia papillaris, Babylonia pintado, Euthria queketti, Cypraea citrina, Cypraea teres, Sinum desertsii, Fusinus ocelliferus, Diodora elizabethae, Scutus unguis, Fissurellidea aperta, Harpa amouretta, Lyria ponsonbyi.

off Port Edward:

Cantharus undosus, Fusinus africanus

off Hibberdene:

Cypraea tigris

off Trafalgar:

Lyria africana

off Ramsgate:

Chicoreus ramosus (austroamosus?)
Ancilla contusa

From SLINGER fish:

off Marina Beach:

Cypraea citrina, Cypraea helvola, Cypraea staphylea, Cypraea teres, Cypraea ziczac, Haliotis queketti.

off Trafalgar:

Cypraea fimbriata, Gyryneum pusillum

Off Ramsgate:

Cypraea oweni, Harpa davidis.

We would like to find out whether there is any special significance in the selection of these particular species of mollusca as food, and we will be reporting back as soon as further information is available. Meanwhile we would welcome further contributions on the subject by our readers.

THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
(Founded 1958)

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Ordinary Members receiving The Strandloper	R5,00
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Corresponding Members (Members not resident in South Africa or adjoining territories)	R6,00 or U.S.A. \$9,00
Student Members (Members attending full time educational institution in South Africa)	R2,00

The Financial Year runs from 1st July to 30th June, and members joining after December need only pay one half the subscription to ensure membership to 30th June. Members joining after March are expected to pay a full subscription which will be carried forward to the following year.

An Entrance Fee of R1,00 (U.S.A. \$1,50) is payable by all applicants except Student members.

The Society's Bulletin, The Strandloper, is issued free to members.

The Society has active groups in the following areas:—

Cape Town:	Secretary: Mrs. P. Coles, 101 Main Road, Heathfield 7800	Tel.: 72-3459
Port Elizabeth:	Secretary Mr. F. Graeve, P.O. Box 2054, Port Elizabeth 6056	Tel.: 54-3374
East London:	Secretary: Mrs. P. Palmer, 5 John Bailie Road, Bunkers Hill 5241.	Tel.: 5-4306
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Cape Town. Interesting speakers at recent meetings were Mr Alan Noyce of Stellenbosch University who spoke on evolutionary trends in molluscs, using fossil records in support of one particular theory; Mr Mike Wilson of the S.A. Museum who spoke on his work on the archaeological deposits in the Gansbaai area; and Dr Terry Gosliner of the S.A. Museum who showed slides illustrating molluscs in a progression from the primitive to the most advanced forms, with a commentary on the characteristic structure of each group. Shells for display have been Murex, Patella, Conus and Haliotis.

The group's shell show was held in the Golden Acre shopping complex in the centre of Cape Town from April 22nd to May 3rd. This strategic venue ensured a constant flow of visitors but as usual the heavy load of organising and running the show fell on the shoulders of a small band of members whose enthusiasm had begun to wear thin by the end of the show.

A distinguished visitor who attended the meeting in May was Dr C.M. Burgess from whom we learned that the new edition of his great book on Cowries is being arranged.

ROUND THE GROUPS

Port Shepstone. The group has studied shells of the families Harpidae, Cerithiidae, Toninidae, Ficidae. A number of books have been added to their library and talks have been given to the Arcadia Garden Club and to the Port Shepstone High School Wildlife Society whose collection of shells have also been labelled for them. Members are cautioned against collecting shells in the Transkei due to the actions of the Transkei police, and the committee was to write to the magistrate at Bizana for clarification of the Society's position. Negotiations are continuing with other groups for an exchange of shells for sale to local members, the object being to raise funds for the groups' activities.

Durban. The group has studied shells of the families Marginellidae and Fasciolaridae and workshop meetings have been scheduled. The programme for the rest of 1980 has been circulated to members.

Port Elizabeth. Mrs Clarrie Watters bade farewell to the group on her transfer to Cape Town. Mrs Hoogenhout reported finding Haliotis speciosa at Jeffreys Bay. Shells of the families Conidae, Terebridae and Turritellidae have been studied. The municipality of Jeffreys Bay has asked for the group to help rearrange the shell museum housed at the local library, and several members might assist with this project.

Pretoria. Die groep is uitgenooi om aan die skou Flora 80 deel te neem. 'n Praatjie oor Conus is gelever en twee uitstekende films is vertoon. 'n Artikel oor die groep se skou van verlede jaar het in die oorsese tydskrif Of Sea & Shore verskyn.

It was reported that an article in Levantina, the bulletin of the Malacological Society of Israel, mentioned that a collector from South Africa had been sending parcels of poor quality shells at very high prices to overseas collectors. This was giving South African conchologists a bad name.

'n Nuusberig in een van die Sondagkoerante oor varswatermossels by Hartebeespoortdam is bespreek. Laurie Smith het genoem dat, volgens mev Conolly, daar 'n hernude belangstelling in landsakke in Europa is en dat ons gerus ook aan hierdie dikwels verwaarloose lede van die slakfamilie aandag kan gee, en met oorsese versamelaars kan uitruil.

Committee changes effected at the group's annual general meeting were:

Chairman: Laurie Smith
Vice-Chairman: Han Vandenberg
Secretary/Treasurer: Tom Duncan
Members: Henk, Slingerland,
Bets Slingerland,
Lizeke Vandenberg
Jeannie Willemsse.

East London. The group has studied Patellidae, Buccinidae and Fasciolaridae and meetings continue to be held at members' homes.

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