

# The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



Strandloper 250

June 1997

Page 1

## *Phenacovolva honkakujiana* (Kuroda, 1928)

by Dawn Brink

Few members of the Ovulidae are endemic to South African waters, although many species are to be found, especially in deeper water from 30 to 150 m. Some have been found in crayfish pots and occasionally in trawler fishing nets or *ex pisce*. Most collectors experience a thrill when finding an ovulid, be it only a beach specimen in worn condition. Shelly Beach in southern Natal is well known for occasional finds of these fascinating shells, as is Jeffrey's Bay in the eastern Cape, where they are known to the locals as 'jam tarts'.

A few years ago it may have been thought that *Primovula beckeri* (Sowerby III, 1900) was endemic to these waters, but this species has now been found in fairly shallow water off Mozambique, e.g. off Inhambane in 3 to 5 m, while our 'own' *Subsimnia zuidafrikaana* Cate, 1975 has proved to be no more than a synonym of *Phenacovolva brevirostris* (Schumacher, 1817) which is a fairly common Indo-Pacific species.

*Phenacovolva aurantia* (Sowerby III, 1889) appears to be one of the very few that may be endemic, but as that has been dredged in northern Natal, it would not be very surprising if it were to be found in Mozambique, as has

*Volva kilburni* Cate, 1975. It is uncertain whether *Primovula diaphana* Liltved, 1987 is endemic. This was dredged off northern Natal.

The acquisition of a beautiful *Phenacovolva honkakujiana* (Kuroda, 1928), found in southern Natal in the early part of 1997, was an exciting addition to an ovulid collection of many years duration, where only a small specimen from Taiwan and a very worn dredged specimen from southern Natal existed. The latest specimen was taken alive and came complete with dried animal inside, having been found at 150 m. This species would appear to be very limited in South Africa, probably from Amamzimtoti (just south of Durban) to the Park Rynie area, a distance of about 20 km. It can be considered very rare, only a very few specimens having been collected, in deep water, in recent years. This species is also known from Japan and Taiwan, and is rated by Shikama in Cate's 1973 revision of the Ovulidae<sup>1</sup> as being "extremely rare".

The live-taken specimen presented quite a cleaning problem! It had been dried out for a couple of months, possibly immersed in alcohol. After several unsuccessful attempts with well-tried cleaning methods, a tip from a

friend for stubborn cases came to mind - soak it in paraffin. It was possible to put the shell onto a bed of cotton wool and apply the paraffin into the aperture only. A zip plastic bag and a sealed container completed the process, being left in a sun-warmed spot to 'stew' for 2 to 3 days. A bucket of water and a powerful jet removed the stubborn creature at last, softening and decomposition having set in. Success was indeed blissful!

This method can be used for many shells, particularly the small Marginellidae and other difficult species, although the jet works well for any shell. Great care should be taken to hold the shell very firmly, while jetting underwater in the bucket, as the jet can be very powerful. Such a jet can be home-made with a finely tapered nozzle (copper or plastic) attached to a meter or two of garden hose, with the usual hose fittings at either end. It can save many hours of frustrated cleaning with other methods, but the animal must be softened and decomposing.

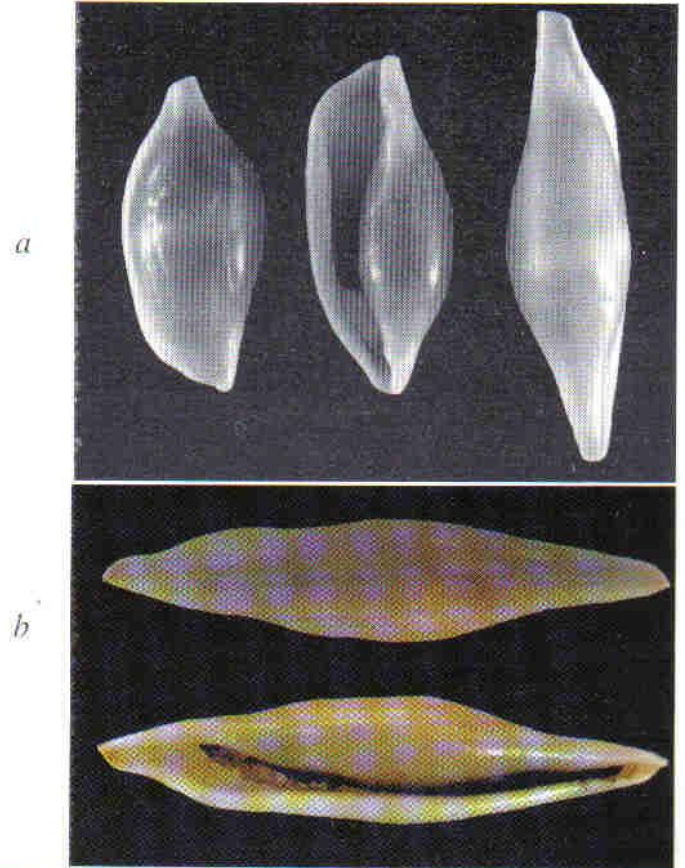
After this cleaning episode, there was an urge to know more about the origins of this rare and exquisite shell. After reading the information in W.R. Liltved's book<sup>2</sup> it was time to turn to

Illustrations for article by Mr Matthew Grote on page 3 of this issue.

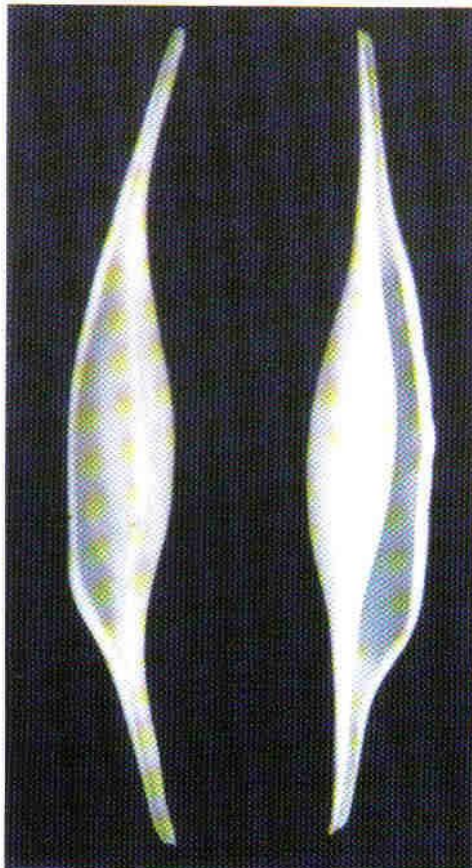


*Trivia sanctispiritis*

Illustrations for article by Mike Cortie on page 3



Illustrations for article by Mrs Dawn Brink on pgs. 1 & 3 of this issue

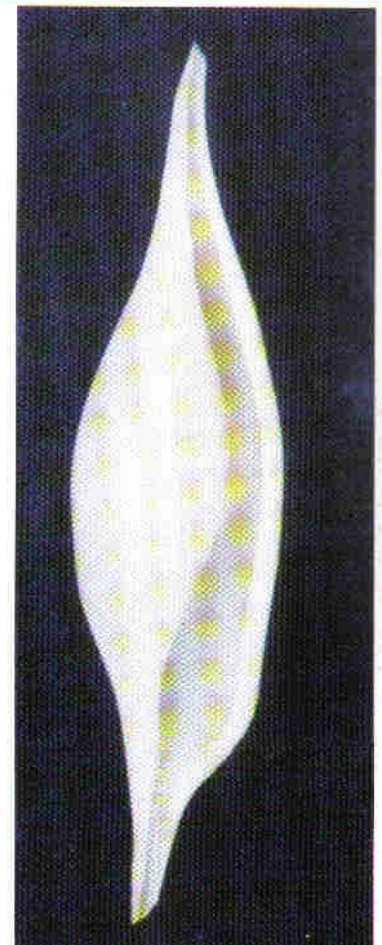


right - *Phenacovolva honkakujiana* (Kuroda, 1928). 67.1 mm (length), from southern Natal at 150 m.

left - *Phenacovolva gigantea* Azuma, 1974. 72.5 and 72.1 mm (length). From Balicasag Is., Bohol, Philippines.



above- *Phenacovolva aurantia* (Sowerby III, 1839). Top, smaller yellow : 21.0 mm (length), dredged alive at 100 m, Algoa Bay, bottom, larger reddish : 25.3 mm (length), beach collected at Jeffrey's Bay.



***Phenacovolva honkakujiana* - continued from front page**

C.N. Cate's revision of the Ovulidae<sup>1</sup>. This brought to light some interesting points and surprises. Firstly, the two specimens of *Phenacovolva honkakujiana* mentioned in this article from Natal are considerably longer and larger than the type specimens. In length alone, the holotype is 54.0 mm, the paratype 55.0 mm while the hypotype is only 46.9 mm. The Natal specimens measure 67.1 mm (live-taken) and 65.9 mm (dead). The specimen (in this collection) from Taiwan measures only 36.9 mm in length. It is also interesting to note the colour of the fresh specimen, which is a very pale greyish pink while the rod-like labrum (outer lip) is yellow, slightly more so towards the anterior terminal.

Secondly, and most significantly, is the whereabouts of the type specimens! They are "in possession of the Buddhist temple Honkaku-ji at Seto-Kanayama-Mura, near Tanabe, Kii (Japan)" according to Cate's revision. It would seem likely therefore, that this species was named in honour of the temple, as the type specimens were from Tanabe Bay or the nearby sea. One cannot but wonder whether this temple perhaps houses a shell collection of some merit, and whether these type specimens of *Phenacovolva honkakujiana* are displayed as a treasure or religious object. It would also be interesting to know how the type specimens were found and by whom. An examination of Kuroda's original description in 1928 might reveal this.

Thirdly, while Cate states that this ovulid is the biggest in the group, but for "*R. volva*" (*Volva volva* Linne, 1758) it is interesting to note that many of our Natal specimens of *Phenacovolva longirostrata* (Sowerby I, 1828) are longer though not as broad as *Phenacovolva honkakujiana*. Shortly after Cate's 1973 Revision, *Phenacovolva gigantea* was described by Azuma in 1974 and is also a longer though more slender shell. Two specimens from the Philippines, in this collection, measure 72.5 mm and 72.1

mm in length. This is another rare species, usually collected in tangle nets at about 140 m depth.

**Acknowledgement**

Markus Lussi - photography

**References**

1. Cate, C.N. A systematic revision of the recent cypraeid family Ovulidae, *The Veliger*, California, 1973.
2. Liltved, W.R. *Cowries and Their Relatives of Southern Africa*, Seacomber Publications, Cape Town, 1989.

However, my luck did not end then for, as I investigated the neatly labelled bottle further, I found an obviously different specimen in with the *P. brevisrostris*. Curiously, this specimen still had its animal inside, although obviously dried up. As it was significantly longer and more slender, not to mention coloured differently, I turned with interest to the pages of Liltved's book to see what it was. It looks like I was really in luck that day because the closest match is *Phenacovolva gracillima* (E.A. Smith, 1901) which is considered a very rare shell. Since this species dwells in rather deep water, and is rather unlikely to make it onto the beach in one piece, it seems possible that my specimen may have been *ex pisce*. The 27 mm long shell is illustrated on page 3 as Figure *b*.

***Trivia sanctispiritus* : a collector's item**

by Matthew H. Grote\*

*Trivia sanctispiritus* Shikama, 1974, has many qualities that make it a favourite collector's item. The first of these qualities are its two forms. This mollusc has a smaller shallow water form (less than 20 mm), and a larger inflated deep water form (over 20 mm). Continuing with the differences seen in the two forms - the smaller *Trivia sanctispiritus* is generally white with fine ribbing, while the deep water one has coarser ribs and comes in a few colours. These colours range from white to tan to shades of pink and violet.

In addition to the colour forms are *Trivia sanctispiritus*'s interesting rib formation. Its dorsal ribbing has a tendency to mesh at the centre of the dorsum. This feature easily separates it from *Trivia aperta*, which generally has a dorsal groove. *Trivia sanctispiritus* also has a ribbed base that

**Eastern Cape Beach****Treasures**

by Mike Cortie

I was recently given some shells which, according to their labels, were collected on the beach at the Kowie Mouth some time in the 1930s. I was naturally delighted to find some reasonably intact *Phenacovolva brevisrostris* (Schumacher 1817) amongst them. Most of the Ovulidae inhabit deep water and this is one of the very few species that occasionally washes ashore in a recognizable condition. The biggest of the three illustrated on page 2 Figure *a*, is 24.2 mm long.

is quite thick. Similarly, *Trivia aperta* has a ribbed base, but not thickened.

Another shell that could be confused with *Trivia sanctispiritus* is *Trivia neglecta*. *Trivia neglecta* is a dense shell that is usually mushroom in colour. This shell appears to be static in size (15 to 20 mm). *Trivia neglecta*'s margins produce a 'flange' around the dorsum. It is easy to see that *Trivia sanctispiritus* is among South Africa's most beautiful shells. I'm sure that this shell holds a prize place in many collections.

The illustration for this article is on page 2.

\*Mr Grote lives in the USA at 5262 Carmelite Drive, LaPlata, MD 20646-3639.

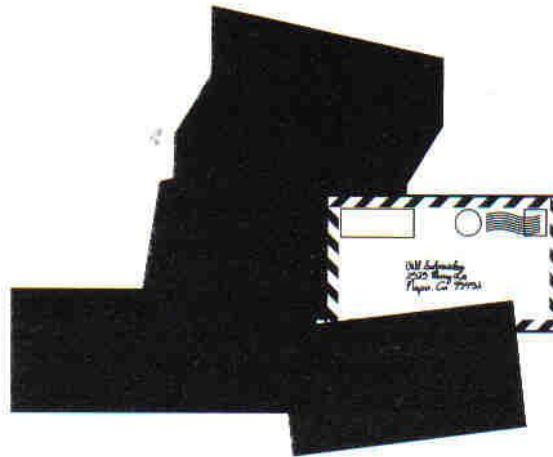
## A letter to the readers of *Strandloper*

As already said by fellow conchologists, there is much about the subject on the Internet. I have found something interesting to share with those who don't have access to the Internet. But I have a serious question to ask my fellow shell-friends:

Why don't you mention your newly described species to your own people???? That is what the *Strandloper* is there for, to share information..... or isn't it?????

You can contact me at:  
peabrain@global.co.za  
Please share your knowledge...A lot of people will be very grateful!!

Happy Shelling,  
Kobie du Preez



## A list of new South African species

Compiled from the *Vita Marina* Website on the Internet by Kobie du Preez

### Architectonicidae

*Solatisonax kilburni*, Bieler, 1993

### Conidae

*Thelecytharella metuloides*, Kilburn, 1995

### Coralliophilidae

*Mipus brinkae*, Kosuge, 1993

### Cypraeidae

*Crossia iutsui levissima*, Raybaudi Massilia, 1995  
*Cypraeovula luponia amphithales perdentata*, Raybaudi Massilia, 1995  
*Cypraeovula crossia amphithales iutsuina*, Raybaudi Massilia, 1995  
*Cypraeovula capensis gonubiensis*, Massier, 1993

### Eulimidae

*Clypeastericola*, Waren, 1994  
*C. natalensis*, Waren, 1994

### Fasciolaridae

*Fusinus hayesi*, Snyder, 1996

*Latirus brinkae*, Lussi, 1996

*Dolicholatirus bozzetti*, Lussi, 1993

### Marginellidae

*Volvarina pulchralinetata*, Lussi & Smith, 1996  
*V. fasciata*, Lussi & Smith, 1996  
*V. dawnae*, Lussi & Smith, 1996  
*V. umlaasens diana*, Lussi & Smith, 1996  
*Marginella croukampi*, Hayes, 1996  
*M. lussii*, Hayes & Millard, 1995  
*M. lorentzi*, Bozzetti, 1995  
*M. (Glabella) rosadoi*, Kilburn, 1994  
*M. peelae*, Bozzetti, 1993  
*M. westhuizeni*, Massier, 1993  
*M. roseafasciata*, Massier, 1993  
*M. natalcineria*, Massier, 1993  
*M. hayesi*, Bozzetti, 1993  
*Prunum dawabrinkae* (?*dawnbrinkae*?), Massier, 1993

### Mitridae

*Mitra (Mitra) brinkae*, Salisbury & Kilburn, 1996  
*Charitodoron rosadoi*, Kilburn, 1995

### Muricidae

*Ocenebra hayesi*, Lorenz, 1995  
*Typhis (Typhinellus) amoenus*, Houart, 1994

### Nuculanidae

*Jupiteria isikela*, Kilburn, 1994  
*Yoldiella lingulifer*, Kilburn, 1994  
*Y. elingoor*, Kilburn, 1994  
*Scissileda* gen.n, Kilburn, 1994  
*S. iris*, Kilburn, 1994  
*S. crassicardo*, Kilburn, 1994

### Olividae

*Amalda danilai*, Kilburn, 1996  
*A. trippneri*, Kilburn, 1996  
*A. lindae*, Kilburn, 1993  
*A. cupedula*, Kilburn, 1993  
*A. telaaranae*, Kilburn, 1993

*A. whatmoughi*, Kilburn, 1993  
*A. scopulocetti*, Kilburn, 1993  
*Naudoliva vorsteri*, Lussi, 1995

### Pectinidae

*Pecten afribenedictus*, Kilburn & Dijkstra, 1995

### Polyplacophora (Class)

*Lepidozona debuini*, Strack, 1996

### Spondylidae

*Spondylus groschi*, Lamprell & Kilburn, 1995

### Triviidae

*Trivia debuini*, Lorenz, 1994  
*T. (Pseudotrivia) sharonae*, Hayes, 1993

### Trochidae

*Herbertina hayesi*, Herbert, 1995  
*Clanculus (Clanculus) natalensis*, Herbert, 1993

### Turridae

*Pseudorhaphitoma sienna*, Kilburn, 1993  
*P. epistomifer*, Kilburn, 1993  
*P. ethekwinii*, Kilburn, 1993  
*P. obturata*, Kilburn, 1993  
*P. stipendiarii*, Kilburn, 1993

### Ungulinidae

*Ungulina scleratinica*, Kilburn, 1996  
*Diplodonta (Diplodonta) planissima*, Kilburn, 1996  
*Microstagon lacrima*, Kilburn, 1996

### Veneridae

*Tivela valae*, Lussi, 1996

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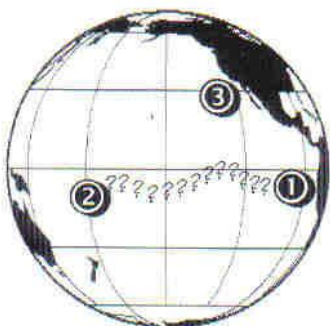
Stanislas Leclefstraat,8 - 2600Berchem - Belgium  
Tel:32 2 217 01 10 - Fax 32 2 217 36 28



# Flotsam

## El Nino talk

There has been quite a bit of discussion on the Internet about the El Nino phenomenon in the Pacific off Peru (at 1), which has apparently already started to cause some quite noticeable changes in sea (and shelling) conditions. Unusually heavy rains and cool temperatures over the island of Samoa (at 2) have caused plankton to boom, while off the coast of southern California (at 3) it is reported that the ocean is warmer and clearer than it has ever been before. As far as the effect on shell life is concerned, it seems that cooler waters generally cause more prolific molluscan populations and with larger individuals to boot. This is because cooler water generally contains more nutrients.



## New light

Kobie du Preez, Pretoria Group

I have read something interesting, which I want to share with the readers of *Strandloper*. Nature has provided an answer once again.....

Aequorin is a bioluminescent protein found in a jellyfish, *Aequorea* sp. The aequorin photoprotein was first isolated by scientists in 1962 while investigating the mechanisms of luminescence of *Aequorea forskalea* (synonym *Aequorea aquorea*). The luminescence from this protein is specially triggered by the presence of calcium ions. It therefore offers exciting possibilities for the development of a one-shot bioluminescence based bio-sensor for calcium.



*Pelagia* - another phosphorescent jellyfish

Calcium is difficult to determine in protein bound samples by conventional methods, and it always involves handling of the sample. In today's life with all the risks of contamination, this is great news for people who have to work with biological samples, as the risk of contamination can greatly be reduced by the new development. I hope that all goes well with the development, and that we will see it on the market soon!! I can't help to think that there are still people who don't believe that God exists.

Bibliography: *The Analyst*, December 1996, Vol. 121, pp.1975-1978.



## Snail power!!

The 3 mm long land snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* has been causing quite a headache to certain highway developers in Britain. Regarded as being relatively rare in the British Isles, it was discovered in some numbers right in the path of a proposed highway. I can just imagine the site engineer saying, 'Run that by me again Jack, you want me to stop work because there are some *snails* there???' For a while it looked as if this David might defeat its Goliath, however, naturalists eventually opted to create a new habitat for the snail in a safe location. It remains to be seen whether this experiment will be successful.

### Reference

Bailey, W. The snail and the juggernauts, *Bull. Malacological Soc. London*, no.27, Aug 1996, p.1.

## Exchanges wanted

Mr Jose Eduardo Moreira from Brazil is a keen collector who wants to make contact with South African conchologists. If you have email, why not contact him at [edumoreira@cntr.telebras.com.br](mailto:edumoreira@cntr.telebras.com.br).

Mr Gianbattista Mardi is a student of Natural Sciences at Milan University in Italy. He wants to swap Italian and Mediterranean sea and non-marine shells for South African non-marine shells. If you have some spare land snails then why not contact him at **via Tracconaglia, 11 25016 Ghedi (Brescia) ITALY**

## Weird Taxonomy

*Odds 'n ends from CONCH-L on the Internet. Thanks to all the many contributors to that enjoyable 'thread'*

Latin might be a dead language but that has not stopped taxonomists from having a bit of fun when they name molluscs or other organisms. Readers may remember from the previous *Strandloper* that Linnaeus himself had a sense of humour, especially with regard to the Cypraeidae. Of course some of this taxonomic mirth may have been quite unconsciously introduced by an original scientist. What is one to make, for example of the enormous name *Nannoteretispira megalomastoma* (Olsson & McGinty 1958) which is the name of a marine snail only 1 mm long!? Mega indeed. And then there was the quaintly named little bivalve *Abra cadabra*, (figured) whose genus was later changed (regrettably I think) to the more prosaic *Theora*.



*Abra cadabra*

Not only have malacologists had a field day. I am told that there is a legume named *Lablab lablab*, and a salamander called *Oedipus rex*!

The three shortest molluscan genera are most likely *Aa* (family Helixarionidae), *Ba* (family Charopidae) and *Io* (family Pleuroceridae). There are however plenty of candidates for the longest molluscan genus name, such as that of the land snail genus *Pseudoparastrophia*. On the other hand a man called Alan Solem seemed to have decided that his new land snail genera should be the first and the last on any future list of species because he named one genus *Aaadonta* and another *Zyzyxdonta*.

Aside from whimsy, some names,

such as the clumsily named *Parapecten ntlakapamuxanus* are just ridiculous, whereas genera such as *Toxophthalmoechinogammarus* and *Swartschewkiechinogammarus* (amphipods described in the 60s) should probably have been banned by the Geneva Convention for biological warfare.

However, lest the reader be under the impression that taxonomy is a kind of free-for-all, be assured that there are actually a thick book of rules. Did you know, for example, that if an organism is named after a person then the name is usually feminized? Also, if a genus is named after somebody then it is regarded as very rude indeed to later prefix anything (such as *Sub-whatever*) to it. However, it is quite OK to place a diminutive suffix such as *-ella* or *-ina*, after somebody's name. However, the most serious infraction of all, one guaranteed to cause a sense-of-humour-failure in most professional taxonomists, is to name a shell after yourself !! This might explain why so many female first names appear in taxonomy. The author is presumably naming it after his wife, girlfriend, mother or, just possibly, his

mistress. Example abound, such as *judithae*, *elizabethae*, *helenae* and many, many more. Of course, there are always some different people, such as a well-known author of shell books who has named a shell after his cat.

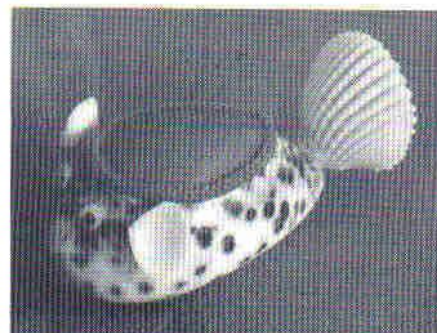
However only a very few shells are named after the first names of men, and usually in that case named after sons or brothers of the author. Presumably this is because taxonomists were previously nearly all male, and while they would not have normally objected to being known for having close acquaintances of the female gender, over-familiarity with their colleagues was not a good thing. However, there are a great many molluscs that bear the surnames of other malacologists, it apparently being regarded as a good career move to honour one's Director, Professor or sponsor in this manner. And then, finally, there are one or two 'whole name' shells such as *Pecten ernestsmithi* and *Pecten gilbertharrisii*, apparently named in this way because a species name based only on the relevant surname was already in use in that genus or family.

### An Exhibit at a Hobbies Fair, by Laurie Smith

The council members decided to do some promotion to canvas for new members for the Society so Mike Cortie, Lizeke and Han van den Berg, and Laurie Smith joined a group of other hobby fans one sunny Sunday morning at Blairgowrie in Johannesburg. The Society had a stand in a prominent position at which were displayed books and shells of all kinds. The display included Lizeke's exhibits of shells-and-man, and my own growth series of *Charonia lampas pustulata*. Mike had a display of cowries. We discovered how little people know about snails and shells and had to do a lot of explaining.

One exhibit drew the attention of many of the visitors. It was a cowry shell

changed into a fish ornament. Mike, tongue-in-cheek, told the kiddies that it was a live cowry and would be returned to its aquarium after the show. Mike was so convincing that his story was believed by many. It shows how a simple little ornament can draw the attention of people to an exhibit. Congratulations Mike!



## Unhappy Families

by David Freeman

There used to be a children's card game called 'Happy Families'. Now there's another family game being played by taxonomists with less happy consequences:

Within the phylum Mollusca, animals are classified into related groups on the basis of features which they have in common. While some of these features are evident in the structure of their shells, and the arrangement of teeth on their radular ribbons, it has become fashionable to look for other, more obscure, anatomical features to link them.

This now seems to be happening at or above the family level, i.e. just above the genus. Presumably researchers have seen a need for a new set of parameters on which to re-group the Mollusca at this level.

Problems arise when the taxonomists begin to ignore shell shape altogether at a level of classification where the similarity or diversity of forms is still too compelling a piece of evidence to be cast aside. This has led recently to some strange decisions. The credibility of classifiers is further compromised by their failure to agree with one another. It is approaching the point where one can validly ask for whose benefit they are creating their hypothetical hierarchies.

Here are just a couple of examples:

In 1988 the genus *Distorsio* was removed from the family Ranellidae Gray, 1854 and placed in the family *Personidae* Gray, 1854, by Beu. So far, so good, but it took a while for the information to filter through from the paper in which it was published. I first noticed it more or less by accident in another publication in 1990.

If the average conchologist has trouble keeping up with changes of that kind without having access to all the

scientific papers, it's not surprising that one also gets confused by a subsequent report that two other scientists had left the hapless *Distorsio* genus right back among the Ranellidae: Ponder and Warén published a *Classification of the Caenogastropoda and Heterostropha - A List of Group Names and Higher Taxa* in the *Malacological Review*, also in 1988, in which they either ignore or disagree with Beu's position.

Some of the other changes made by Ponder and Warén are:

- They decided to use the ending -oidea for superfamily name instead of the -acea as recommended by the International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature.
- Genera previously included in the diverse families Fascioliariidae, Melongenidae, and Nassariidae are moved into the family Buccinidae.
- The strombid genus *Terebellum* is moved into the family Seraphidae.
- Coral shells (previously Corallophilidae) are now classed under Muricidae.

The most startling of the above changes would be the merging into the Buccinidae of the widely diverse genera *Fasciolaria*, *Fusinus*, *Latirus*, *Melongena*, *Busycon*, *Nassarius* etc. The reason? - 'because there are virtually no known characters that consistently and reliably separate them at family level'.

What about the shells of these animals?

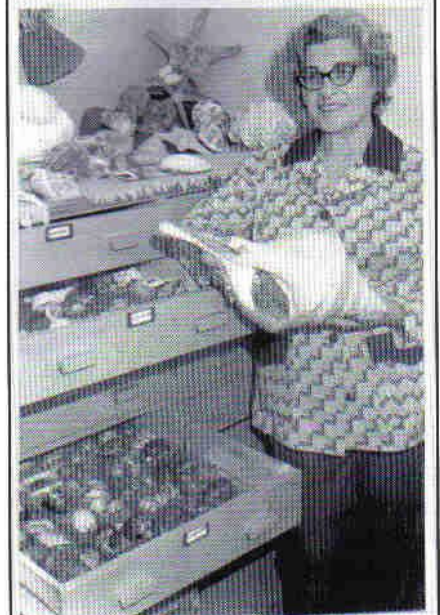
It looks as if we are getting to the point where the characteristics defining a family are being broadened to what we had previously seen as the parameters of an order or a class.

### Obituary - Anne Wilson

One of the oldest members of the Society, Anne Wilson, passed away recently. She was a founder member of the Pretoria Group of the Society and a very special collector. She not only had a very scientific collection of shells but also taught new members how to collect shells in order to have a scientific collection. She was meticulous in the pursuit of her hobby. Anne was especially interested in families with large shells and, when she sold her collection a few years ago, her shells went to collectors all over the world, many of them personal friends.

Apart from having been an ardent conchologist she was also a trained pianist, and in earlier years had been a model for fashion houses and an actress. She had a full life and in later years also supported anti-animal-cruelty organisations. We offer our condolences to her family of whom she had a very high regard. We shall miss her at our meetings because of her sincere interest in shells.

Laurie Smith  
Chairman Pretoria Group.





## Issue Number 250 !!! Hoorah !!

Who would have thought when the Society started in May 1958 with 31 members that it would still be going strong in 1997 ??? And my, how South Africa and the world have changed since then. Then we were in the Commonwealth and Mr Mandela was a young lawyer practising his profession out of the public eye. And soon, the tumultuous years of the Sixties were upon us - South Africa became a republic, the ANC was banned, a state of UDI in Rhodesia. The Seventies started a bit more quietly with regular shelling trips to Mozambique for the lucky ones, but after June 16th 1976 South Africa could never be the same again.

The Eighties saw plenty of conflict in our land, and somewhat incidentally the demise of the two previously strongest local groups of the Society, first the Johannesburg Group, and then, more surprisingly, the Cape Town one. Noggs Newman of the East London group staged an emergency rescue of the Society's records in June 1985, after which the headquarters and archives were moved up to Durban (barring the Society's library books which are still in the care of Mr V. Millard of Cape Town). Finally, in 1993 the head quarters of the Society was moved to Pretoria. In 1994 we had the universal general elections in South Africa, a new government, and the onset of what many have come to call the New South Africa. And over all this span of time the *Strandloper* has kept coming, if not exactly regularly, then at least on a reliable basis.

I thought that, to celebrate this 250th issue, I would like to thank all the past editors, who have diligently kept our unique common point of contact going through thick and thin. The first of these was Mr C. Swaneveld, who produced the initial 14 issues. He was followed by Mrs Leila Kerr who edited 90 issues of the newsletter from November 1960 through to early 1969. Issue number 105 (March 1969) was produced by Mrs Elizabeth Giles, and then from April 1969 to mid-1992, the *Strandloper* was edited by Richard Carlsson. Richard produced 86 issues, and was responsible not only for the introduction of the *Afrivoluta pringlei* on our masthead (August 1970), but also for the

newsletter's name (November 1970), and the present professionally printed format introduced in April 1975 (issue number 171 onwards).

Pressure of work forced Richard Carlsson to hand over the baton in October 1978 (*Strandloper* number 192) to David Freeman, and David, assisted later by Victor Millard, produced the *Strandloper* through to mid-1983. Issue number 211 was the first produced by Victor Millard on his own. Victor then went on to produce several magnificently colour issues culminating in number 228 in October 1990. Back issues of most of these are still available from our archives. I guess that the logistic strain of having the headquarters in Durban and the *Strandloper* in Cape Town proved too much of a head ache because after October 1990, issues 228 through to 236 (early 1993) were produced by Olive Peel. Issues since number 237 (October 1993) have been produced by me.

One thing that really struck me as I paged through the back numbers in preparation for this editorial is that every editor, from Mr Swaneveld onwards, has consistently appealed for articles to grace his or her pages. I am not any exception. I also need your contributions - whether as shelling reports, funny stories, or systematic descriptions of taxa. Don't be shy... take pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, or camera to eye, and send me your shelly thoughts!!

Turn to the back page of this issue to attach faces to the names of some of the *Strandloper* editors. Unfortunately, I could not find a photo of the late Mr Swaneveld while the Carlssons proved unexpectedly camera shy!

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The editor welcomes original articles, news, shelling reports, feedback, advertisements (rates on application) and any other material likely to be of interest to members of the Society. If possible, send articles on a MS-DOS diskette in Word for Windows, WordPerfect, or ASCII format. Photographs and line drawings are especially welcome. Please address correspondence and submissions to

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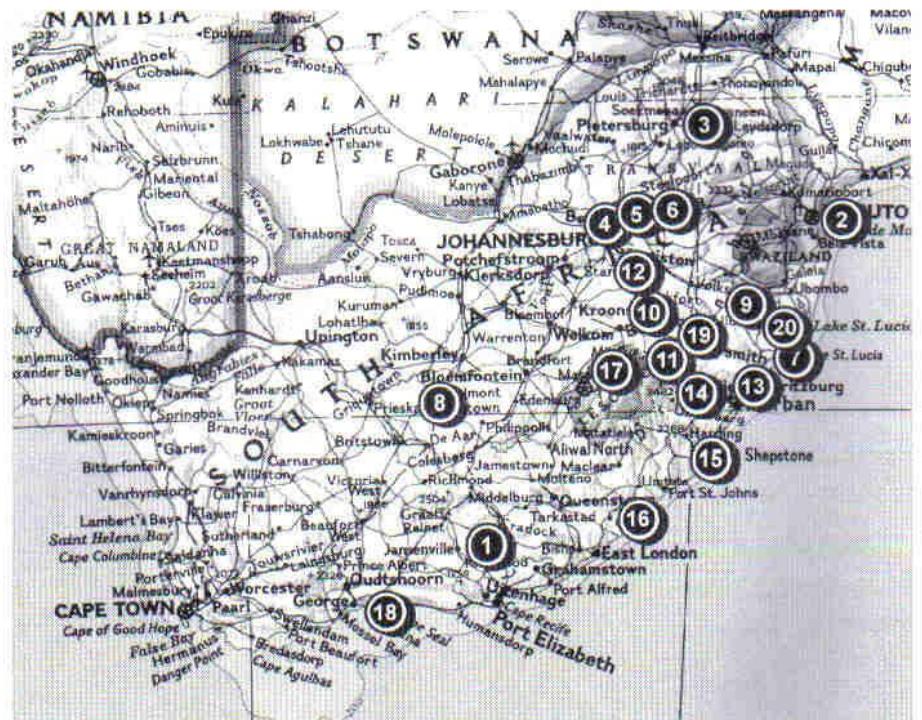
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## Update on the Achatinidae

by Mike Cortie

**S**trandloper 247 of September 1996 featured the achatinid land snails of South Africa. The article was based largely on the unpublished work of the late Don Aiken. Since then, I have been able to study and photograph material in the Natal Museum which has enabled me to assemble a full set of colour photographs of specimens of verified identity. Some of these photographs are reproduced here for the benefit of those members who might have these shells in their collections.

The new information has also been comprehensively written up as a booklet titled *The Achatinid Land Snails of South Africa*. This is available from the Society as Special Publication No. 7. It contains much additional information including distribution maps, and is illustrated with life size colour images of each species. Colour photocopying will be used to produce copies on demand. The price up until the end of 1997 will be R57 (local) or US\$ 20 (foreign and airmailed). The cost is dictated largely by the 8 colour plates. There is also a 15% levy towards Society funds. Anybody interested after that date should write to



me first to ascertain the actual cost.

With regard to the specimens figured on the right, please refer to *Strandloper 247* for additional details regarding authors, distribution etc. The dimension quoted is in every case the length. Please note the very different magnifications used here for each shell! The astute reader may notice that *Achatina zebra* and *A. varicosa* are among the species missing from these figures. The shells of these species are exceedingly variable in appearance and deserve a plate of their own.

1. *Achatina crawfordi*, 55 mm, from Somerset East. Definitely not a synonym of *A. simplex* as wrongly stated in *Strandloper 247*.
2. *A. immaculata* var *panthera*, 114 mm, Inhaca Island.
3. *A. craveni*, 59 mm, Sibasa.
4. *A. penestes*, 61mm, Hennops River
5. *A. smithi*, 68 mm, Pretoria

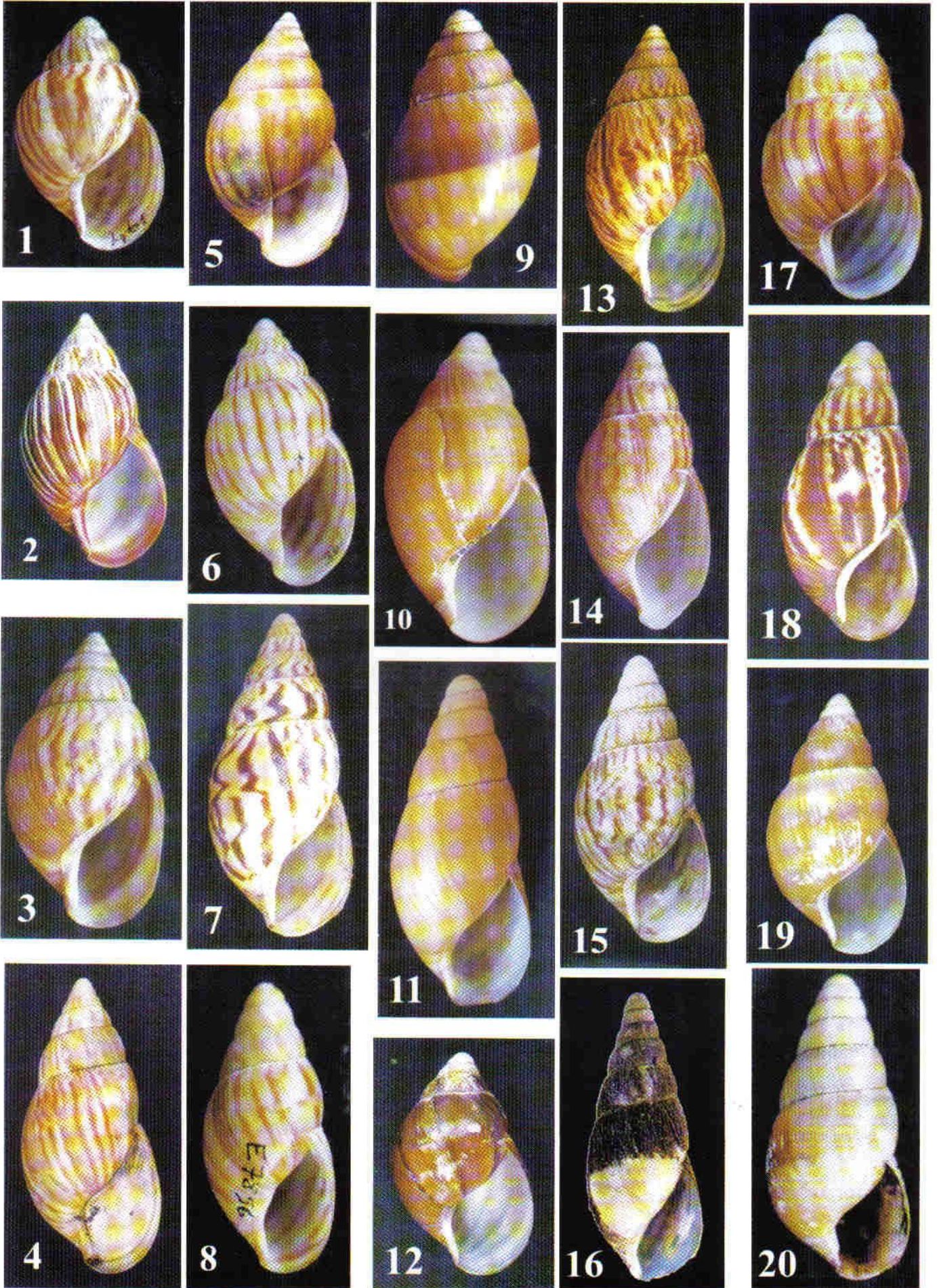
6. *A. biscalpta*, 47 mm, Middelburg
7. *A. zuluensis*, 73 mm, Mapelane
8. *A. livingstonei*, 38 mm, Hopetown.
9. *A. dimidiata*, 68 mm, Vryheid
10. *A. burnupi*, 67 mm, Van Reenen
11. *A. ommissa*, 59 mm, Cathedral Peak
12. *A. cinnamomea*, 51 mm, Grootvlei
13. *A. granulata*, 115 mm, Ballitoville
14. *A. drakensbergensis*, 72 mm, Dargle
15. *A. semidecussata*, 74 mm, Shelly Beach
16. *A. vestita*, 59 mm, Dwesa
17. *A. machachensis*, 41 mm, Roma
18. *A. ustulata*, 66 mm, Knysna
19. *A. simplex*, 58 mm, Ladysmith
20. *A. transvaalensis*, 36 mm, Hluhluwe

### Acknowledgements

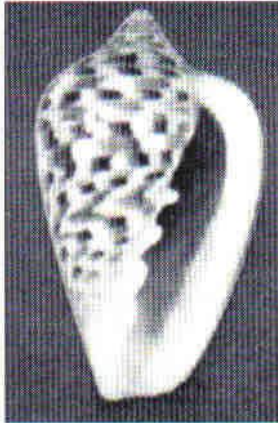
Aiken family - 5, 7, 12, 13, 17, 19  
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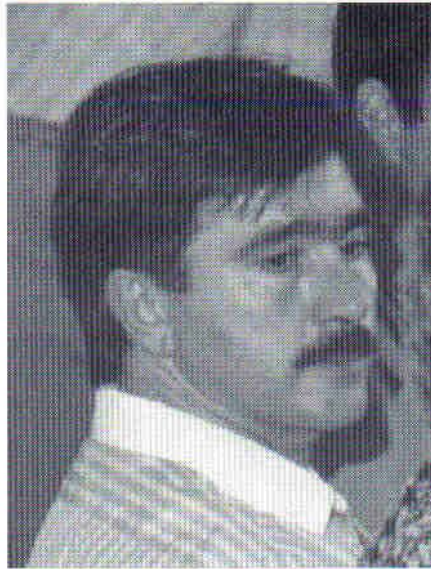
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## Issue Number 250 !!! Hoorah !! continued from pg.9



I was unable to get a photo of Richard Carlsson - issues 106 to 191 - as the Carlssons' felt that readers would surely prefer to look at a nice *Marginitella mosaica* instead.



Victor Millard - issues 211 to 228



David Freeman with an *Afrivoluta pringlei* - issues 192 to 210



Olive Peel, issues 229 to 236.



The late Leila Kerr - issues 15 to 104



Present editor - issues 237 onward - seen here at work on issue 247.

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