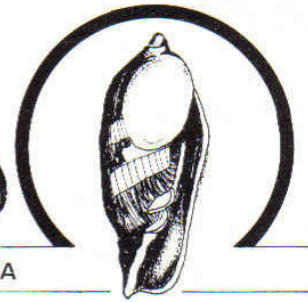


The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 208

NOVEMBER 1981

Page 1

SHELLING IN THE VAAL RIVER

by
MICHAEL CORTIE

PART II: BIVALVES



Upper: Unidentified bivalve
Lower: *Corbicula africana*



Upper: *Aspatharia wahlbergi*
Lower: *Unio caffer*

INTRODUCTION

The general nature and chemical characteristics of the Vaal River were discussed in Part I of this article. It is of specific importance, however, to the river's shallow water fauna that there is a tendency, despite the various dams along its length, to flood in the rainy season. When this occurs, or is threatening to occur, the authorities in charge of the Barrage tend to open the Barrage gates so as to lower the level of the water upstream of the Barrage and in this way to prevent flooding to the low-lying parts of Vereeniging.

The subsiding of the water level is a boon to the conchologist since the mud and sand flats on the river's edge are exposed as surely as if the tide had gone out. (The effect of this action on the shallow water fauna including juvenile fish and gastropods is, of course, disastrous). The water level drops typically by 2 to 3 metres but in some years it has dropped even more. At these times the shell collector is able to walk over the river bottom and dig up bivalves with ease.

NOTES ON THE BIVALVES FOUND

1. *Unio caffer* Krauss

This shell deserves an article of its own due to its abundant distribution in the rivers and dams of Southern Africa. The shell is relatively large, being typically up to 90mm long. The outer surface of this river mussel is fibrous and coloured from light to dark brown. The interior of these shells is very beautiful, being nacreous and variously tinted, from a pearly nacre through pink to

(Continued on page 2)

Continued from page 1

a deep orange. The regions nearer to the umbones are normally more deeply coloured than the rest of the shell. Juvenile shells (the smallest I have is 18mm long) are pearl coloured inside. The shells vary somewhat in shape as well, from angularly shouldered specimens through to more oval ones. I have also found a freak distorted shell which appeared to have been damaged while a juvenile.

The living mollusc is quite mobile and ploughs through the mud with its orange coloured foot leaving a characteristic trail. By skindiving in winter when the Vaal River water is at its clearest (Up to two metre visibility in some years) I have been able to ascertain that the shell lives on mud or muddy sand from one metre down through to five metres down and possibly even deeper. This chilly diving exploit was naturally carried out with a full-length wetsuit. I even have some misty underwater photographs to prove the event to disbelievers. (We'll take your word for it, Mike. -Ed.) I am curious to know if the shells also inhabit the deepest parts of the river where the water is up to 12 metres deep.

2. *Corbicula africana* Krauss

This is one of the most attractive of our freshwater molluscs having an olive green exterior with glossy concentric sculpture and a deep purple interior. The species is widely distributed over Central and Southern Africa. The shell may grow up to 25mm in size although specimens normally measure 10 to 15mm. It is found over the same regions of river bottom as *Unio caffer*. Specimens are less common and harder to find, however, due to the shell's smaller size and its tendency to dig itself deep into the mud or sand when the water level falls. Like *Unio caffer* it may also be found at times of normal water level by wading in the water and feeling for shells with one's toes.

3. *Pisidium* species

Pisidium is a truly tiny bivalve being less than 4mm wide. It apparently lives amongst underwater vege-

tation attached by its sticky foot¹. Due to its small size it is fairly difficult to find. The shells may be white or purplish coloured with broad rays radiating from the umbones. Although several species have been described, they are difficult to distinguish. The examples I have, were found lying on freshly exposed mud flats near patches of reeds during a period of low water levels.

4. Unidentified bivalve

This is a strange striking bivalve of which I obtained a single whole, though dead, example in 1975. The specimen was sent to Chris Appleton at the Bilharzia Field Research Unit and he confirmed that while the shell appeared to be of the family Cyrenidae (the same family as *Corbicula africana*) it bore no relation to any known African species². Unfortunately neither he, nor anyone else consulted by him, was able to offer any further comment since only the one specimen has been found so far. The shell itself was found partially buried in muddy sand about one meter below normal water level and measures 48 x 42mm.

5. *Aspatharia wahlbergi* Krauss

This is South Africa's largest freshwater mollusc and is apparently found in the Northern and South-Eastern Transvaal as well as Zululand³. The shell is far more common to the North of the Republic. Ken Brown and I were lucky to find no less than three of these bivalves, the largest measuring 137mm, at two localities separated by 7km whilst on a canoeing trip on the Vaal below Parys. The first locality was on a sandbank in the middle of the river at 27°18' E. and 26°51.5' S. All three shells contained the animal although only one was still alive.

Although the reader of this article might be incredulous concerning our finding a tropical African mollusc in the Westward flowing Orange-Vaal system, the shells found are so distinctive that misidentification seems unlikely.

Some of the distinctive features of this shell are⁴:

- i) Its maximum size of 130 to 140mm compared to the 80 to 90mm of *Unio caffer*.
- ii) The lack of hinge teeth in the shell in contrast to the well-developed hinge teeth of *Unio caffer*.
- iii) The muscle scars in the interior of the shell which are distinctive.
- iv) The greater altitude to length ratio of this species compared to *Unio caffer*.

REFERENCES:

1. Nichols, D., Cooke, J. & Whiteley, D., "The Oxford Book of Invertebrates" Oxford University Press 1971.
2. Appleton, C.C., Personal communication 27th Sept. 1976.
3. Brown, D.S., "A Review of the Fresh Water Mollusca of Natal and their Distribution" Ann. Natal Museum, 18 (3) Nov. 1967.
4. Appleton, C.C. "Freshwater Pelecypoda" Strandloper No 123, Oct. 1970.

DRILLED COWRIES

Beach specimens of our South African Cowries are often pierced by a small hole on the posterior ventral surface, and there has for a long time been fruitless speculation about the possible cause.

An article in the October 1980 issue of AUSTRALIAN SHELL NEWS, the newsletter of the Malacological Society of Australia, reports the discovery that *Octopus vulgaris*, and presumably other *Octopus* species, uses fine teeth on its salivary papilla to drill small holes in mollusc shells, through which it injects salivary secretions to paralyze the central nervous system. This facilitates the removal of the animal for eating.

It was noted that the phenomenon occurs particularly in the cooler waters away from the tropics.

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TROCHIDAE OF SOUTH AFRICA

By Jim Springsteen

Jim is a member from Australia who has taken a particular interest in South African shells. He has done a lot of work for the Society. This is the first of his work being published by Strandloper. The TROCHIDAE consists of four parts, viz *Clanculus*, *Calliostoma*, *Monilea* and *Gibbula*. In this issue we will only be concentrating on the first three. *Gibbula* will follow in a subsequent issue. I have only been able to take extracts from Jim's work as it is far too long for publication in its entirety, however, if there are any members who would be interested in seeing the complete works, the originals will be in the Society's library here in Cape Town.

The originals contain descriptions of the radula and line drawings, there are maps for each species and also greater description of each species as well as a number of locality records.

Millard 1981

SECTION ONE

*Clanculus*1. *CLANCULUS puniceus* (Philippi, 1846)

SUB-FAMILY: TROCHINAE (Fisher 1885)

GENUS: *Clanculus* (Montfort 1810)SUB-GENUS: *Clanculus* (Montfort 1810)SPECIES: *puniceus* (Philippi 1846)

SYNONYMS:—

Monodonta puniceus (Philippi 1846)*Trochus puniceus* (Krauss 1848)*Clanculus puniceus* (Sowerby 1892) (as a variety of *pharaonis*)

DISTRIBUTION: Isipingo (Natal) to Quelimane (Mozambique)

DESCRIPTION: Often confused with *Clanculus atricatena* Tomlin 1921. Umbilicus open, with a white callous covering half the basal area. Aperture subquadrate; columella obliquely curved with a prominent tooth at the base usually bi-dentate. The umbilical opening surrounded by a series of thickened ridges (8–10), which extend out over the callous. Outer lip thick denticulate within, but not showing the prominent posterior tooth as seen in *atricatena*.

COLOUR: Deep pink-red, base usually lighter. Each whorl has two rows of black spots.

There are two types of this shell. Low form (14mm (alt) x 22mm (diam)) and high form (17mm (alt) x 22mm (diam)).

2. *CLANCULUS miniatus* (Anton 1839)

SUB-FAMILY: TROCHINAE (Fisher 1855)

GENUS: *Clanculus* (Montfort 1810)

SUB-GENUS: ?

SPECIES: *miniatus* (Anton 1839)

TYPE LOCALITY: Unknown (possibility Knysna)

SYNONYMS:—

Clanculus carinatus (A. Adams 1851)*Clanculus depressus* (von Martens 1874) (non Phil.)*Clanculus alfredensis* (Bartsch 1915)*Clanculus elevatus* (Turton 1932)*Claduculus trochiformis* (Turton 1932)*Clanculus becki* (Turton 1932)*Clanculus eucosmia* (Turton 1932)*Clanculus kowiensis* (Turton 1932)

DISTRIBUTION: False Bay to Delagoa Bay

DESCRIPTION: Umbilicus open; columella smooth and curved with a small tooth at the base. Outer lip crenulate within. Interior white with a nacreous overlay.

COLOUR: Light brown with darker maculations below the sutures and on the keel. The structure is very variable. There is no umbilicus in the juvenile specimens or columellar tooth or teeth on the outer lip.

SIZE: 16mm (alt) x 17mm (diam).

3. *CLANCULUS mixtus* Smith 1903

SUB-FAMILY: TROCHINAE (Fisher 1885)

GENUS: *Clanculus* (Montfort 1810)

SUB-GENUS: ?

SPECIES: *mixtus* (Smith 1903)

TYPE LOCALITY: Port Elizabeth

DISTRIBUTION: Port Elizabeth (Eastern Cape Province) to Umzamba (Pondoland).

DESCRIPTION: Umbilicus open; columella flattened and curved with outer margin thickened. Two or three additional ridges can be seen to cross the columella plate. A prominent denticle occurs at the end of the columella. In some adult specimens a weaker denticle can be seen where the columella enters the umbilicus. Outer lip moderately thick and denticulate within.

COLOUR: Ground colour a light pink-brown with subsutural areas of alternating light and dark patches. Base is much paler than the rest of the shell and the basal lirae show regular pinkish pattern on the granules.

SIZE: Up to 11mm (alt) x 12,5 mm (Diam).

Continued on page 4

Club Français des Collectionneurs de Coquillages

This club, founded in 1974, has a new management team whose main aim is to improve its service to members and develop contacts with overseas clubs.

Their bulletin, XENOPHORA, is of a high standard and we are happy to announce that copies are being exchanged for STRANDLOPERS and will be available in our library. We have received the first two issues, containing articles on the type species of Conidae in the Museum of Paris, and on the melanistic cowries of New Caledonia, among others.

The address of the club is:

6 rue de Pontoise
75005 Paris
France

Continued from page 3

4. CLANCULUS waltonae (Sowerby 1892)

SUB-FAMILY: TROCHINAE (Fisher 1885)

GENUS: Clanculus (Montfort 1810)

SUB-GENUS: ?

SPECIES: waltonae (Sowerby 1892)

TYPE LOCALITY: Port Elizabeth

SYNONYMS:—

Clanculus miniatus Turton 1932 non Anton.

DISTRIBUTION: False Bay to Gonubie (East London).

DESCRIPTION: Umbilicus open and bordered by a smooth slightly curved columella which exhibits two small ridges, one anteriorly, the other posteriorly. Aperture subquadrate, outer lip smooth and whitish within.

COLOUR: Light chocolate brown the first two whorls being darker (erosion?). The lirae are marked with darker brown spots, regularly spaced and usually involving one or two granules, the base also shows this brown spotting but the pattern is more irregular.

SIZE: 8.5mm (alt) x 11mm (diam) (type specimen).

5. CLANCULUS atricatena (Tomlin 1921)

SUB-FAMILY: TROCHINAE (Fisher 1885)

GENUS: Clanculus (Montfort 1810)

SUB-GENUS: Clanculus (Montfort 1810)

SPECIES: atricatena Tomlin 1921

TYPE LOCALITY: Natal (exact locality unknown)

SYNONYMS:—

Trochus puniceus (Krauss 1848)
Clanculus kraussi (Sowerby 1897) non Philippi.

DISTRIBUTION: Port St. Johns (Transkei) to Shakas Rock (Zululand).

DESCRIPTION: Umbilicus open and marked with a white callous which covers about half the basal area. Aperture subquadrate; columella oblique with a prominent tooth below, which may be bi- or tridentate. The outer lip strong, slightly denticulate and with a prominent tooth posteriorly. Interior nacreous.

COLOUR: The basic colour of the species is brownish though the apical area may be somewhat pinkish. The third lira on each whorl is distinguished by the regular series of black granules (two or three) between which are granules of a lighter colour.

SECTION 2

Calliostoma

6. CALLIOSTOMA circus Barnard 1969.

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: ?

SPECIES: circus Barnard 1969

TYPE LOCALITY: Off Cape Point, South Africa.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be confined to deep water off Cape Point.

DESCRIPTION: Shell with six whorls plus protoconch. Sutures impressed. Whorls with straight sides, but becoming more rounded towards the body whorl. Columella smooth and solid projecting downwards. Umbilicus closed. Aperture ovate, nearly circular. Outer lip smooth within.

COLOUR: Whitish.

SIZE: 23mm x 23mm (type specimen)

LOCALITY: Off Cape Point, South Africa. Trawled.

7. CALLIOSTOMA ornatum (Lamarck 1822)

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINA Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: ornatum (Lamarck 1822)

TYPE LOCALITY: Not available.

DISTRIBUTION: False Bay to Coffee Bay (Transkei).

SYNONYMS:—

Trochus ornatum Lamarck 1822
Trochus bicingulata Krauss 1852
Calliostoma ornatum Pilsbry 1889
Calliostoma eucosmia Bartsch 1915
Calliostoma bicingulata Turton 1932
Calliostoma albolineata Turton 1932
Calliostoma ornata var. similis Turton 1932.

DESCRIPTION: Shell is trochoid in shape. Seven to eight whorls, including one or two smooth nuclear whorls. Profile straight or slightly rounded. Sutures moderately impressed. Aperture subquadrate; outer lip sharp. Columella thick and slightly open.

COLOUR: Is usually orange-brown with irregular patches of darker brown. Suture pinkish in colour (more pronounced on worn specimens) and shows darker brown blotches at regular intervals. The base is speckled with brown and white spots in a regular pattern. This species shows considerable variation in the number of lirae on each whorl and also the shape of the granules.

SIZE: 22mm x 24mm in normal specimens to 22mm x 27mm in more squat specimens.

8. CALLIOSTOMA perfragile Sowerby 1903

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: perfragile Sowerby 1903

TYPE LOCALITY: Off Cape Point.

DISTRIBUTION: South West of Port Nolloth (Atlantic Cape Coast) to South of Cape Recife (Tsitsikama Coast).

SYNONYMS:—

Calliostoma ornatum von Martens 1903 (non Lamarck)

Calliostoma capense Thiele 1925.

DESCRIPTION: Shell is thin with well rounded whorls. Suture is impressed. The base may be smooth or covered with irregular number of spiral lirae (up to 25). Umbilicus moderately thick and slightly open. Aperture irregularly ovate. Outer lip thin.

COLOUR: A light orange-brown with light brown marks.

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SIZE: 24,5mm x 22,5mm.

There is a striking structural similarity between this species and *C. iridescens* and Kilburn suggests they may intergrade (pers.), however, their currently known distribution patterns are geographically isolated and until more material is examined, this point is still open to review.

9. CALLIOSTOMA burnupi Smith 1899

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: burnupi Smith 1899

TYPE LOCALITY: Durban, Natal.

DISTRIBUTION: Port Shepstone (Natal) to Bazaruto Island (Mozambique).

DESCRIPTION: Shell trochoidal and very thickly sculptured. The substructural lira on each whorl is smaller than the one preceding it. This gives the shell a profile such that each whorl appears to overhang the one after it.

COLOUR: The ground colour is orange-brown with an overlay of irregular blotches and streaks of darker brown. The first two post-natal whorls are blackish in colour. The subsutural lirae from the third whorl are spotted with brown and white. The spotted pattern is regular and usually consists of a white granule followed by two brown.

SIZE: 12mm x 10mm.

10. CALLIOSTOMA africanum Bartsch 1915

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: Africanum Bartsch 1915

TYPE LOCALITY: Port Alfred (East Cape Province).

DISTRIBUTION: Algoa Bay (Eastern Cape Province) to cape Vidal.

SYNONYMS:—

Calliostoma convexa Turton 1932.
DESCRIPTION: Shell conical. Whorls five or six with two smooth nuclear whorls. Post nuclear whorls encircled with spiral granulate lirae. The aperture is elongately ovate and the

umbilicus thick and slightly recurved. Outer lip thin. Shell is mainly orange in ground colour and is marked with brown spots which are most obvious at the sutures and the keel of the body whorl.

SIZE: Range from 13mm x 12mm to 18mm x 15mm. Originally thought to be a variety of *ornatum*, but radula examination shows it to be a distinct species. The distribution pattern is also more restricted.

11. CALLIOSTOMA layardi Sowerby 1897

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: layardi Sowerby 1897

TYPE LOCALITY: Pondoland (possibly Port Alfred).

DISTRIBUTION: Coffee Bay (Tranскей) to Pondoland. There is a possibility of an extension of range to Mozambique. (IN LIT. Kilburn.)

DESCRIPTION: Shell with seven whorls plus one (?) nuclear whorl. Umbilicus thick and slightly open. May be closed in more mature specimens. Aperture elongately ovate.

COLOUR: Normally brownish-orange, but in beach specimens may become mottled with areas of white and brown spots and maculations.

SIZE: Diameter slightly greater than the altitude. Range from 12mm x 13mm to 15mm x 16mm.

Observation of a large number of specimens suggests that the weaker sculptured varieties of this species are generally taller than the more heavily sculptured varieties. (IN LIT. Connolly.)

12. CALLIOSTOMA glaucophaos Barnard 1963

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: glaucophaos Barnard 1963

TYPE LOCALITY: Off Cape Point, South Africa.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be restricted to deep water off Cape Point.

DESCRIPTION: Shell consists of three half whorls plus a smooth protoconch. Whorls fairly rounded but showing a shouldered area in the upper third of each whorl. The umbilicus is open and is bordered by a strong lira-like cord. Within the umbilicus may be seen weakly structured lirae and also some faint axial growth lines. The columella is bordered by a lira-like cord. Aperture sub-circular.

COLOUR: White

SIZE: 11mm x 12,5mm (Type specimen).

13. CALLIOSTOMA scotti Kilburn 1973

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Komboligion Clench & Turner 1960

SPECIES: scotti Kilburn 1973

TYPE LOCALITY: Durban, Natal.

DISTRIBUTION: Durban to Ponta da Barra Falsa (Mozambique).

DESCRIPTION: Shell conical, the width being greater than the height. There are about nine whorls including a smooth protoconch. Umbilicus closed. Aperture slightly ovate.

COLOUR: Usually a light orange shade but a pinkish tinge may be obvious. Protoconch and sutural areas usually a light buff colour.

SIZE: Altitude varies from 30mm to 34mm and the diameter from 35mm to 38mm.

14. CALLIOSTOMA iridescens Sowerby 1893

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

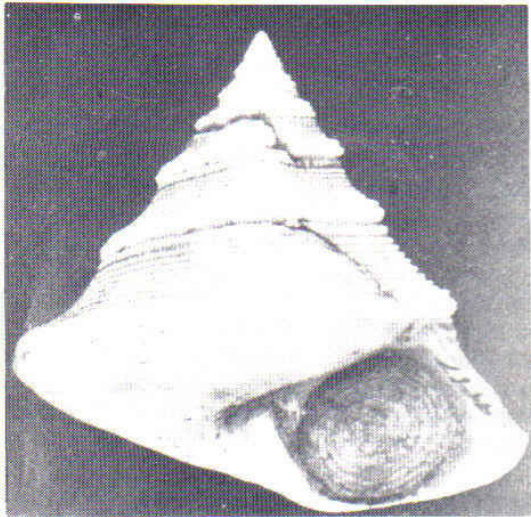
SPECIES: iridescens Sowerby 1893

TYPE LOCALITY: Off Cape Natal.

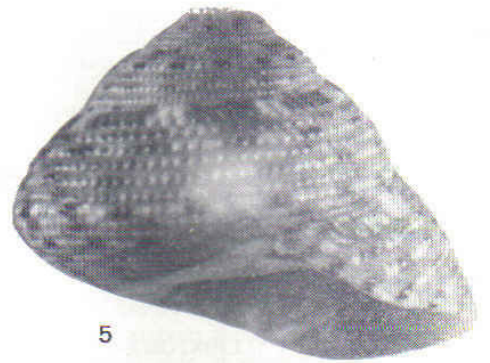
DISTRIBUTION: Present information limits this distribution to Natal Waters.

DESCRIPTION: Shell thin and conical. Profile straight with a slight concavity. Whorls eight to nine including a smooth protoconch. The base has about 16 lirae. Aperture sub-quadrate. Umbilicus slightly open.

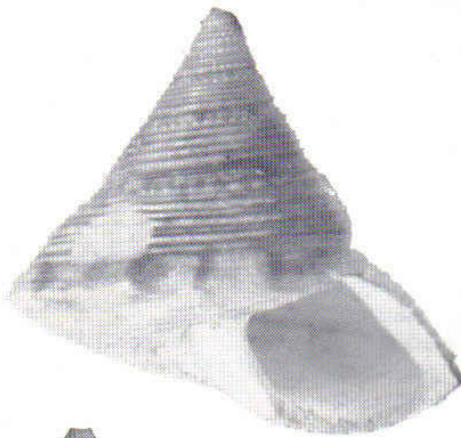
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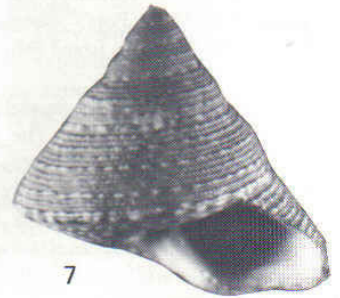
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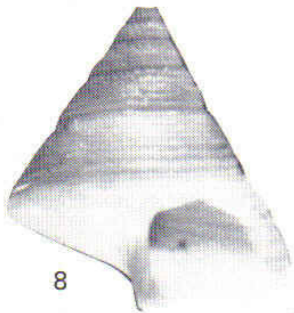
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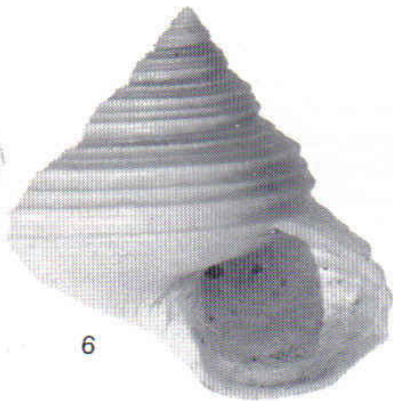
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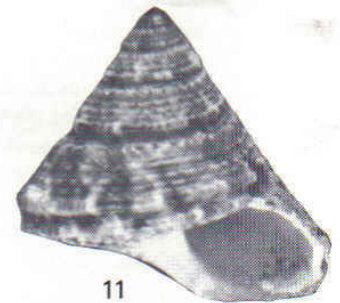
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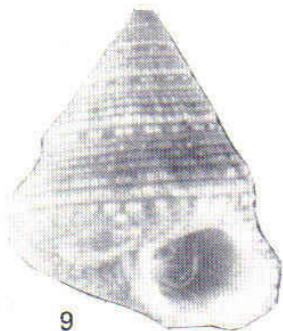
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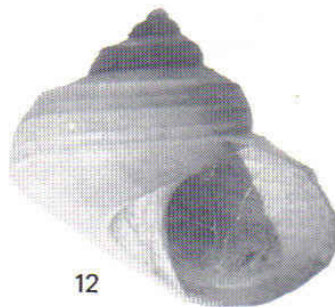
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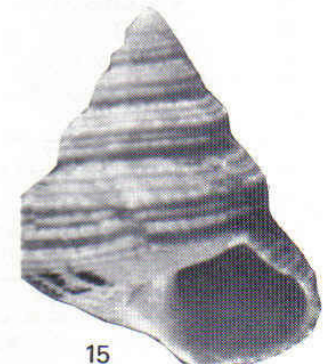
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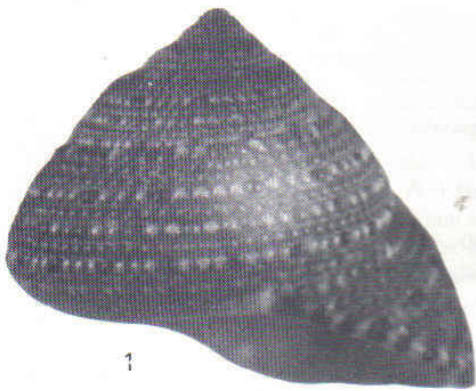
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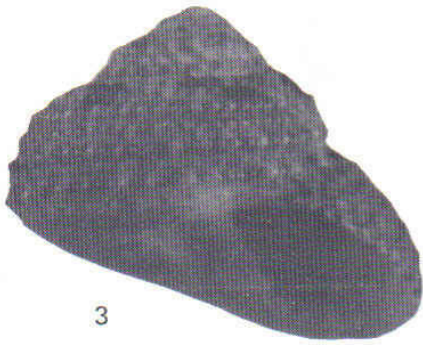
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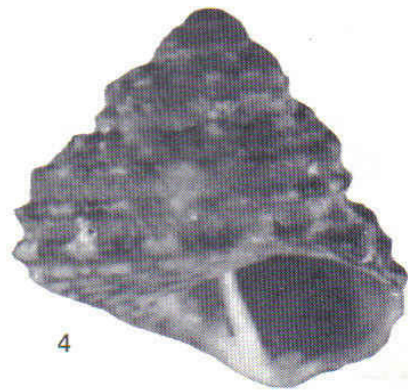
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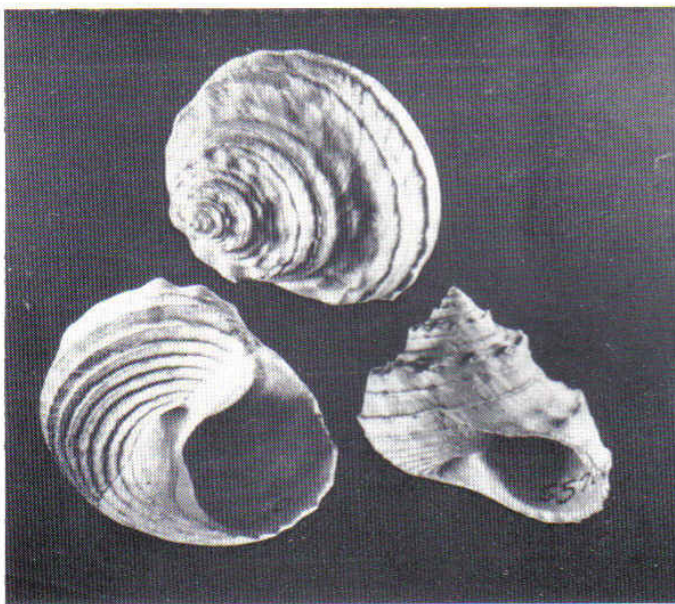
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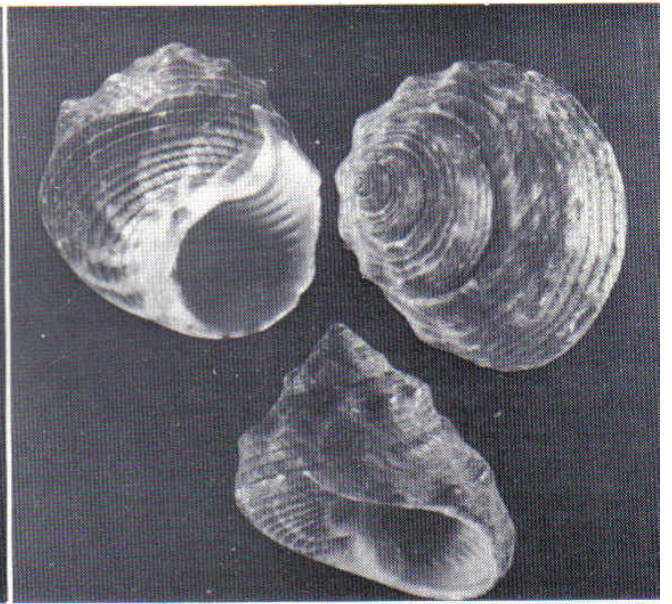
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16



17

TROCHIDAE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Continued from page 5

COLOUR: Ground colour usually light orange with darker areas of streak and blotches, mainly on the body whorl.

SIZE: Up to 16mm x 17mm.

This species is very similar to *Astele subcarinatum* Swainson 1854. It differs in lacking the marked umbilical flaring of *subcarinatum* and also the pronounced volutions which extend to the apex of the umbilical canal, the sutures are also not as channeled as in *subcarinatum*.

15. CALLIOSTOMA crossleyae Smith 1910

SUB-FAMILY: CALLIOSTOMATINAE Thiele 1921.

GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Calliostoma Swainson 1840

SPECIES: crossleyae Smith 1910.

TYPE LOCALITY: Sowerby originally designated *Zyziphinus multiliratus* to the "Cape of Good Hope" where the species does not exist.

SYNONYMS:—

Zyziphinus multiliratus Sowerby 1875

Calliostoma multiliratus Pilsbry 1889

Calliostoma liratum (laps. cal.)

Calliostoma crossleyae Smith 1910.

Kilburn (IN LIT.) indicated that the original figure of *Zyziphinus multiliratus* Sowerby 1875 bears little resemblance to the species currently designated *Calliostoma multiliratum*. In view of the obviously incorrect type locality of the species the name *Calliostoma crossleyae* Smith 1910 is used. (Kil. 395).

DESCRIPTION: Shell with five or six whorls, the first usually eroded. Whorls convex, markedly so on the body whorl. Sutures deeply channeled. Umbilicus moderately thick and slightly open. The base has ten or 11 spiral lirae which appear smooth.

COLOUR: Light orange with a series of brown blotches on some of the inner basal lirae. Aperture sub-circular.

SIZE: 8mm x 7mm, 11mm x 10mm, 14mm x 13mm.

SECTION 3

Monilea

16. MONILEA ponsonbyi (Sowerby 1888)

SUB-FAMILY: UMBONIINAE H & A Adams 1854

GENUS: Monilea Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Priotrochus P. Fischer in Kiener & P. Fischer 1879

SPECIES: ponsonbyi (Sowerby 1888)

TYPE LOCALITY: Presumably the raised Pleistocene beaches near the Zwartkops River in Algoa Bay.

SYNONYMS:—

Priotrochus obscurus (non Wood) Smith in Rogers 1906.

Trochus (*Gibbula*?) *ponsonbyi* Sowerby 1888

Priotrochus alexandri Tomlin 1926.

DISTRIBUTION: This species is probably extinct. The present distribution is Algoa Bay to Mossel Bay. The species distribution in this case is dependant on the discovery of new fossil beds.

DESCRIPTION: Shell consists of five whorls plus a smooth protoconch. Each whorl is shouldered, just below the suture. Axial retractive growth lines are visible on the earlier whorls and are most pronounced in the base. Umbilicus partly closed by a white callous. Fine oblique striae radiate from the umbilical opening. Aperture sub-circular.

SIZE: From 3,5mm x 3,5mm to 18,5mm x 17mm.

17. MONILEA obscurus (Wood 1828)

SUB-FAMILY: UMBONIINAE H & A Adams 1854

GENUS: Monilea Swainson 1840

SUB-GENUS: Priotrochus P. Fischer in Kiener & Fischer 1879

SPECIES: obscurus (Wood 1828)

TYPE LOCALITY: Does not appear to have been reported.

SYNONYMS:—

Trochus obscurus Wood 1828.

Priotrochus obscurus (Wood 1828).

DISTRIBUTION: Durban to Mozambique Island.

DESCRIPTION: In young specimens there is a superficial resemblance to *ponsonbyi* but as the shells mature differences become obvious. The shell has five whorls plus a smooth protoconch. The first whorl is generally smooth but may show three or four weak spiral lirae. Umbilicus is almost closed in young specimens but tend to open as the species matures though not to the extent as seen in *ponsonbyi*. The umbilicus callous projects onto the columella and shows three or four small denticles. The aperture is elongately ovate, striated within and slightly nacreous. The outer lip is smooth.

COLOUR: Grey with greenish axial flames, extending in most cases from the suture to the base.

SIZE: 17mm x 15mm to 28mm x 18mm.

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CONUS ALGOENSIS AGULHASI

and its place in the
C. algoensis species complex

by H.E. COOMANS
(Zoological Museum, Amsterdam)

After the description of *Conus algoensis agulhasi* Coomans, Moolenbeek & Wils, 1980 (in *Basteria* vol. 44: 20–22, figs. 51, 68), two articles about this new taxon were published in the *Strandloper* (No. 202: 1; 204: 3, 1980). The anonymous author(s) of these articles stated that *agulhasi* is only a colour form of the subspecies *C. algoensis scitulus*. This conclusion seems to be correct when only the shells are considered from Cape Agulhas, where *scitulus* and *agulhasi* live sympatric. However, when the total species complex of *Conus algoensis* Sowerby I, 1834 is studied (including *C. simplex* Sowerby II, 1857–1858, with *C. scitulus* Reeve, 1849, and *agulhasi*), the outcome is different.

Kilburn (1971) recognized three geographically distinct subspecies, he considered *C. scitulus* the nominate. Since 1971 the known ranges of the subspecies are extended, presently there is an almost uninterrupted distribution from Table Bay to Cape Agulhas. In addition *C. algoensis* is considered the nominate, being the eldest name in the complex.

Studying the colour pattern of the subspecies, for which also can be referred to the excellent plates A and B by Millard & Freeman (1979, *Strandloper* No. 195: 6–7), it is evident that a gradual change in pattern exists, correlated to the distribution.

C. algoensis algoensis varies from dark brown with only a narrow white band in the middle of the last whorl (pl. B fig. y), to specimens in which the light band extends in axial directions (pl. B figs. w and x). These shells are known from Table Bay and southward along the Atlantic coast of the Cape Peninsula.

When the white axial areas enlarge further, a shell with white and brown axial flames appears (pl. B fig. z), this is *C. algoensis simplex*. In other specimens the flames start to fall apart, causing a pattern of axial stripes with larger and smaller dots (pl. B. fig v).

Below the shoulder a brown spiral band remains (p. B fig. aa). All these shells occur in False Bay.

The overlap to the pattern of *C. algoensis scitulus* begins at Cape Hangklip, the ziczac lines are disintegrating into spiral lines (pl. B fig. bb). The final result is a shell with a brown band below the shoulder, spiral lines of small dots in the middle, and a brown area at the base (pl. B fig. cc); these shells are recorded from Hermanus to Cape Agulhas.

At Cape Agulhas, being the limit of the distribution, also specimens are living in which the pattern is further reduced to a white shell with only the brown shoulder band, and some traces of brown at the base. These shells were named *C. algoensis agulhasi*. The holotype of *agulhasi* still has the periostracum preserved, thus the light colour of the last whorl is natural, it is not a bleached specimen of *simplex* (cf. *Strandloper* No. 205:4).

The reason, to describe *agulhasi* as a distinct "subspecies", was to put the attention on this unnamed and extreme variant in the *Conus algoensis* species complex. In this complex the type specimens of the four nominal subspecies have well defined and recognizable colour patterns, but we have to keep in mind that there are intermediates. Considering *simplex*, *scitulus* and *agulhasi* as colour formae of *C. algoensis* is not advisable, because they are not found in the total range of the species complex, but succeed each other geographically.

We must conclude that *Conus algoensis* shows clinal variation. The dark *algoensis* s. str. and the light *agulhasi* are the extremes, not only in colour but also in distribution, whereas *simplex* and *scitulus* are intermediates in pattern and in distribution.

The author is grateful to his colleague R.G. Moolenbeek for reading the manuscript. It was impossible to write about this species without studying the material from the Natal Museum, thanks to its curator R.N. Kilburn, and to Mrs. C. Connolly for her donations to the Zoological Museum, Amsterdam.

CONE SHELLS FROM CAPE VERDE ISLANDS A DIFFICULT PUZZLE by Dieter Röckel, E. Rolán, A. Monteiro.

This small (21 x 15cm) paperback book is dedicated to Luis Burnay known to members from articles written for the *Strandloper* as co-author with A. Monteiro. (See *Strandloper* 187, 188, 190).

D. Röckel well known to us from valuable criticism and notes on our Cone article (*Strandloper* 195) and the Cone Shells by Jerry Walls.

The first 42 pages of this 166 page book is a very interesting introduction to the Cape Verde islands liberally scattered with maps of the areas, maps of where the shells were found, X-ray pictures of Cones, discussions of fossil Cones, interesting notes, advice and anecdotes for prospective visitors.

It is divided into two sections, one on the endemic species and the other other on the non-endemic.

Each species has a map to show where that particular species was found and a line drawing showing the normal habitat of the Cone (e.g. under rocks, in the seaweed etc.), name synonymy, dimensions, comparison with similar shells and animal comparison.

There is a list of the species with a list of where the holotypes are to be found followed by a 1–5 scale of rarity. This book introduces five new species.

I found that the maps were good and illustrated what they should, very well. The black and white photographs of all the species had too great a contrast and were not always as clear as they could have been. This book is reasonably well set out with detailed comparison of alike species. The eight colour plates at the end of the book are a pleasant jolt, well set out with enough specimens for comparison.

For the ordinary collector this book is probably too specialised and remote for the South African collector.

For the Conchological book collector it would be a good addition to the library. For the serious CONE collector it is a must.

HAWAIIAN MARINE SHELLS. By Dr. E. Alison Kay. Publishers B.P. Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu, Hawaii. (Jan. 1979). Price varies from bookseller to bookseller. \$30.00 A from The Shell Cabinet, P.O. Box 29, Falls Church, Virginia, 22046, U.S.A. Can also be purchased direct from the Bishop Museum. Price was \$30.00A when released.

Discussion — This extremely interesting book is Section 4, in a series of works on Hawaiian Marine fauna. The original single volume was published in 1933, and the section on Mollusca was but a part of this original work. The release of this updated version of the section on Mollusca is most timely, as there has been a significant gap in works covering the malaco-fauna of the North Eastern Pacific.

Dr. Kay is well known in Hawaiian Malacological circles, and no one could be better qualified to undertake the task of revising and updating the molluscan fauna of Hawaiian waters. The book is somewhat larger than we have come to expect, and has 653 pages including index and corrigenda. The first section of the book deals with the Ecology, distribution, Historical and Fossil aspects of Hawaiian Malacofauna. The next section deals with Mollusca proper. The various sections are clearly and concisely set out from the order level, right down to the sub-family level. Descriptions of species are concise and accurate, and all are accompanied by author and date. Synonyms, where applicable, are listed. The majority of plates are in black and white but detail is excellent, and serious students should have no trouble matching specimens to the plates. Of special interest, is the excellent treatment of the Family Omalogyridae. This small, neglected family is discussed and features extremely detailed photographs of the several Hawaiian species. Obviously taken with low power on an S.E.M. (Scanning Electron Microscope). Regrettably, Genus authors are not listed, which necessitates interested collectors wading through other references for this data.

Two sections in the Gastropod section which deserve special mention,

are those on the Triphoridae and the Turridae. These two families are among the most interesting to study, as well as being among the hardest. Dr. Kay's text and photographs are a real help to those interested in these families. There are several species in both families, apparently not covered by Cernohorsky in his last two books. If anything, these two sections will help fill an obvious gap in relation to species found in the Pacific region. Another interesting point is the occurrence of the Cerithiid *Scaliola bella* in Hawaiian waters. This species is recorded from Durban, and so it seems this little species has a truly extensive distribution.

As in most publications with a large field to cover, mistakes invariably occur. Among those noted in this book are:

1. The use of *Leptothyra* Pease, 1869 which is a synonym of *Homalopoma* Carpenter, 1864 (p. 56).
2. The use of *Schwartziella* Nevill, 1881 as a genus. Should be sub-genus of *Rissoina* d'Orbigny, 1840 (pp. 85-86).
3. The placement of several species in the family eratoidea, needs revision, both on a family and generic level. Interested collectors should consult Crawford Cate, 1979 — A Review of the Triviidae, and also Crawford Cate, 1977, A Review of the Eratoidea.
4. *Drupella elata* Blainville, 1832 is a synonym of *Drupella cornus* Roeding, 1798.
5. *Maculotriton bracteatus* (Hinds, 1844) is a synonym for *Maculotriton serriale* (Deshayes, in Laborde & Linant, 1834)

6. *Engina albocincta* Pease, 1860, is a *Cantharus*

7. *Macteola segesta* (Chenu, 1850) is a synonym for *Macteola interrupta* (Reeve, 1846)

8. *Daphnella ornata* (Hinds, 1840) is a synonym for *Daphnella (Daphnella) lymneiformis* (Kiener, 1840).

Several other corrections may probably crop up from time to time, but they are really of little importance.

The sections on NUDIBRANCHS and BIVALVES is also well covered in later sections! There are only two or three colour plates that are very interesting and show live Marine animals in their natural habitats. The colour plates on various octopus species are particularly striking.

At the end of this monumental work is an extremely concise selection of authors and their relevant works. The index is also concise and accurate.

In summary, Dr. Kay's book is an incredible feat to say the least. She has covered all known Hawaiian Molluscan species, and has in many cases, named many species hitherto undescribed. The book fills a large gap in literature describing Indo Pacific Mollusca, namely the NORTH EASTERN PACIFIC region. It is a book that all serious conchology students should try to obtain, as it will definitely prove indispensable. The price may be a little high, but then, concise reference texts never come cheap.

F.J. Springsteen

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BOOK REVIEWS

SOUTH AFRICAN SHELLS: A COLLECTOR'S GUIDE. By Deirdre Richards. 158 pp and index. C. Struik Publishers, Cape Town. R12.95 plus postage.

The Field Guide is a sturdy, hard-cover volume, 120mm x 220mm, with 60 colour plates illustrating more than 700 specimens representing 527 distinct species. The colour rendition is realistic. The type is clear and the shell descriptions are well spaced on the page. The short introduction to most of the families is most enlightening.

The descriptions of the species are clear and concise. If difficulty is found, the glossary and notations with the diagrams of a gastropod and bivalve easily solve the scientific language barrier.

A beginner to shell collection will find this publication a boon as he is told exactly how to collect, what equipment to use and how to clean and store specimens. These are only a few of the facets of the book which will also enlighten you about collecting regulations, classification of molluscs, currents and tides and the growth of the shell.

At R12.95 South African Shells: A Collector's Guide is a bargain when compared to prices of other shell books. A copy belongs in your shell library.

EXTENSION OF RANGE

Mrs. Connolly would like confirmation and any other information about the following species of which she has been given shells from Luderitz, S.W.A. These records are an extension of the range as previously known: *Burnupena papyracea*; *Fusinus ocelliferus*; *Thais cingulata*; *Argobuccinum argus*.

CONUS NATALIS

Mrs. Clarry Watters reports, in connection with our Cone article in issue No. 195, that she has found live *Conus natalis* (both forms) at Cebe and Silver Bay in Transkei. This extends the known range for live material of this species as given in the article.

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 Erik Verlinden; Hellevoortstaat 16, B-2260 Nijlen, Antwerp, Belgium; specialises in Cone shells and can offer also radula slides of some species. Write for his exchange list, and please specify the quality of the specimens you have for exchange. He asks for perfect shells if possible. Also interested in Strombidae.
 Goerges Markens, 11 Place de la Nation, 75011 Paris, France; has shells for sale. Send him your want list.
 Anne Wilson, 283 Silver Street, Muckleneuk, 0002 Pretoria; would like fully preserved South African Chitons.
 Miss Jessica Jacks is interested in Haliotidae and wants information on locality, distribution, etc. Also prepared to buy or exchange specimens. Please contact at 72 Sandown Manor, Stella Street, Sandton 2199 or telephone Johannesburg 7844023.
 Mrs. Helene Boswell, "Bandula", P.O. Box 21027, Valhalla, Tvl. 0137 would like to buy live taken Cape shells, in particular live taken Chitons and Patella.
 Mrs. P. Sydie, 16 Vaal Road, Farramere, Benoni 1500; is looking for Cape Marginella and Cones and can offer Cypraea from Mozambique and shells from Italy and Australia in exchange.
 Miss Olive Peel, University of Natal, Land Surveying Department, King George V Avenue, Durban, Natal 4001, is looking for some Cape trawled shells and has in exchange some Natal trawled shells.
 E. Manach, 95 Rue Le'tanduère, 49000 Angers, France; wishes to exchange shells with South African collectors and has bivalves and gastropods from the French coast, the channel and the Atlantic Ocean.
 Help wanted with any knowledge of South African Pectinidae. Write to: Connolly, 45 Monton Road, Kenwyn 7764. Pectins, Chlamys, Spondylus, Lima, Plicatula, will trade for specimens - especially if trawled. Am helping with a book on worldwide Pectinidae.
 Mr. Enzo Villosi, Via Calalzo 11, 00135 Roma, Italy; is interested in obtaining Marginella epipolia, grata, cleo, perla, electrina, bensoni, stuarti, paula and has in exchange *Conus*, *Cypraea*, *Pecten*, *Oliva* and *Murex*.
 Mr. Alfred Xuereb, "Jennifer", Liedna Street, Fgura, Malta, is interested in South African shells, especially Patella and also collects shark teeth. He has in exchange shells from Malta and else where.
 Mr. G. Persson, Sandfjärdsgaten 105, 12str, S-121 69 Johanneshov, Sweden, wishes to buy or exchange South African shells.
 Ian Kirk, Deep Bay, Tory Channel, Privat Bag Picton, New Zealand; would like to add to his collection of South African Shells and offers New Zealand shells in exchange.

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Durban and Districts: At the May meeting Dick Kilburn of the Natal Museum gave an interesting talk on Bullia. This meeting was held in the DMS Advertising Conference Room in Smith Street, Durban.

At the June meeting Marueen Quickelberge gave an informative talk on the Turbinidae and Trochidae families. Also discussed was the possibility of having shell labels printed for locality data.

Border and Transkei: At the May meeting it was decided to have a beginner co-opted to help with the research by more advanced members for talks at meetings. In June this group held their 18th Annual General Meeting and elected were: Mrs. Eva Roscoe — Chairman; Mrs. Natalie Russel — Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Jill Linsdell — Immediate Past Chairman; Dr. David Grieg — Librarian; Mrs. Pat Palmer — Additional member; Mrs. Joan Tasker — Treasurer; Mr. Noggs Newman — Secretary.

Southern Natal: At the March meeting discussion was held on directions from Dick Kilburn on labelling of specimens, and local Conidae and Trochidae. At the April meeting the outing to Oslo beach was discussed. It was found during this outing, at this time of the year, that the medium low tide zone the most prolific for live shells and crabbed specimens. Mrs. Smith spoke on Archi-tectonicidae and Cymatiidae. At the May meeting correspondence was discussed and recent new publications on South African shells that are scheduled for publication soon.

Eastern Cape: At the April meeting the field day at Cape Recife was discussed. Fewer shells than hoped for were found. The family Fasciolaridae was discussed.

In May the Annual General Meeting was held and the following members elected: Mr. F. Graeve — Chairman; Mrs. M.W. Mears — Vice-Chairman; Mrs. L. Hope — Secretary; Mrs. L.W. Evans — Co-opted member for Port Alfred; Mrs. R.E. Hoogenhout — Co-opted member for Jeffreys Bay.

The gera Bullia and Demoulla were discussed.

At the June meeting the Families Nassariidae and Janthinidae were discussed. Several members had trouble distinguishing between the smaller Nassarius species.

At the July meeting the families Haliotiidae, Calyptraeidae and Cancellariidae were discussed as well as methods of cleaning shells.

Cape Town: At the June meeting Mr. Ray Cruickshank spoke on *Cypraea cruickshanki* and on shells in general, especially those trawled off the Natal coast.

At the July meeting there was a discussion on shells in general giving members a chance to discuss their latest finds and to get information on where next to go and collect. New publications were also discussed. The family Marginellidae was for discussion. *Marginella rosea* was discussed at length and many of the variations of this shell were on display. Mrs. Connolly showed the great variability of *Marginella biannulata*. She had no less than 14 variations on display. At the previous meeting the book 'Cone Shells from Cape Verde' was on display, by Dieter Röckel et al, and at this last meeting the latest S.A. shell book, viz 'South African Shells' by D. Richards was shown to members for the first time.