

The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 235

APRIL 1993

Page 1

JANTHINIDAE in South African waters

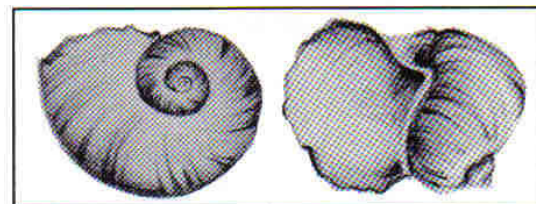
compiled by Olive Peel

Introduction

The Janthinidae is a small family consisting of about eight species of which six occur in southern African waters.

The beautiful pelagic *Janthina*, or violet snails are very common and fortunately for collectors, are sometimes blown ashore in great numbers after heavy onshore winds in the summer, together with bluebottles and pteropods. A perfect specimen is somewhat difficult to obtain because the shells are extremely fragile. Occasionally shells can be found with goose barnacles attached.

Violet snails trap bubbles of air in a gelatinous substance secreted by and attached to the foot. As they are unable to swim they drift with ocean currents, hanging upside down from their floats. They are blind and feed on the pelagic jellyfish *Veleva*, plankton and sometimes on each other! If the float of a violet snail is in the way of the animal while it is feeding, it may be temporarily discarded. A new float is formed only if the anterior bubble-blowing end of the foot can reach the surface film of the ocean, otherwise the snail drops to the ocean bottom and dies.

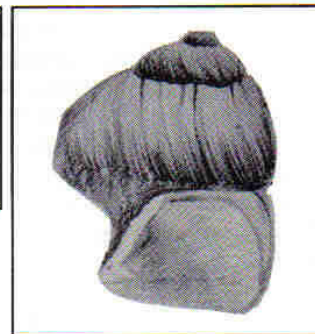


Janthinas are hermaphrodites, with the male phase occurring first. There is no penis. Instead, a large "feathery" mobile sperm carrier transports the sperm to the oviduct of a snail in the female stage. Some species, like *Janthina prolongata* and *Janthina pallida* attach egg capsules to the underside of the float. A single float may carry from 250-400 egg capsules, each egg capsule, depending on species, carrying between 75 and 7,500 embryos. The young are born as free-swimming veligers.

Environmental conditions appear to influence the colouration and shape of the shell. The natural colours of the violet snails will be retained if live specimens are soaked for a few hours in warm fresh water and the soft parts then extracted.

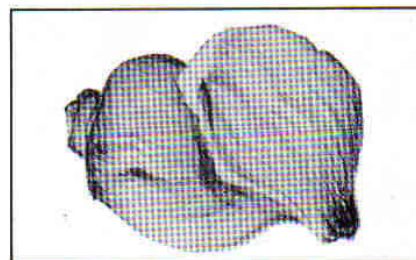
References:

Abbott, R. Tucker: *Seashells of North America*, 1968.
 Kilburn and Rippey: *Seashells of southern Africa*, 1982.
 Richards, Deirdre: *Seashells of southern Africa*, second edition, 1987.
Sketches by Debi Gallery from shells in collection of Olive Peel.

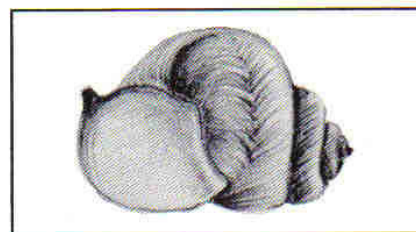


J. janthina (Linné, 1758)
35 mm

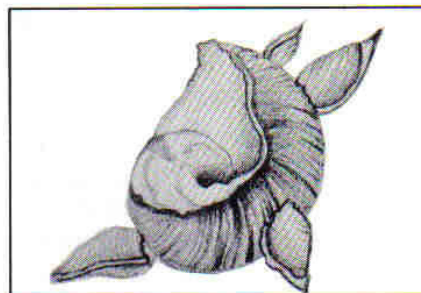
J. pallida (Thompson, 1840)
15 mm



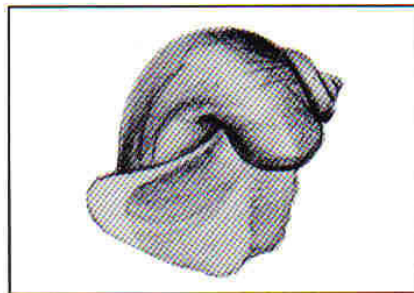
J. prolongata (Blainville, 1822)
30 mm



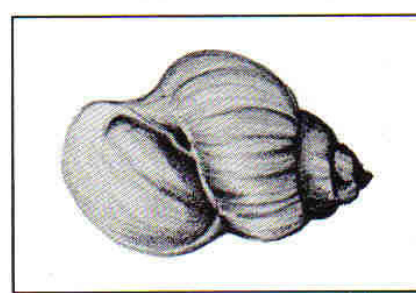
J. exigua (Lamarck, 1816)
15 mm



J. janthina with "goose" barnacles



J. umbilicata (d'Orbigny, 1840)
9 mm



Recluzia rollandiana (Petit, 1853)
13 mm

FEATURE SHELL

by
M. Lussi

MELAPIUM ELATUM

(Schubert & Wagner, 1829)

The genus *Melapium*, commonly known as the "onion shells", belongs to the family Olividae. There are two species which occur off South Africa, namely *Melapium lineatum* (Lamarck, 1822) and the rare and striking *M. elatum* (Schubert & Wagner, 1829). For a pictorial comparison between the two species refer to Richards (1987). The specimen figured was obtained from a Natal fishing trawler and measures 61,1 mm.

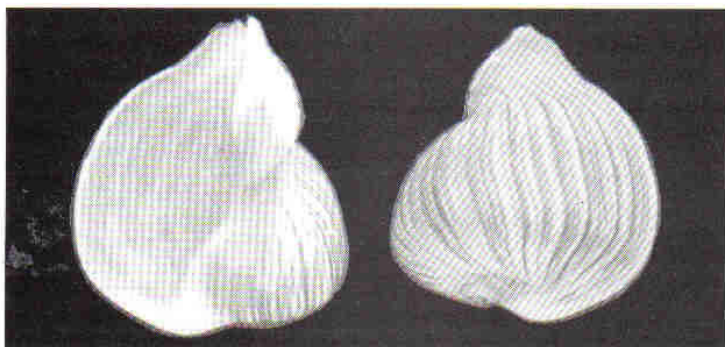
Melapium elatum occurs at depths of 250-300 m off Natal. Examples from Mozambique occur in shallower water, are more roundly shouldered and have more widely spaced brown axial lines.

The suture is also partly masked by a callus deposit.

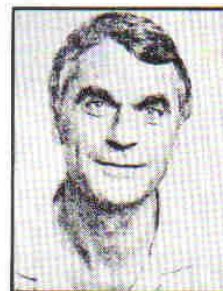
A unique feature of the genus is that egg-capsules are attached externally to the columella just above the keeled margin. No operculum is present in the genus.

References and Literature cited:

- Richards, D. 1987. Shells of southern Africa. 2nd ed. Cape Town: Struik.
 Kilburn, R. & Rippey, E. 1982. Sea Shells of southern Africa. Johannesburg: MacMillan.
 Kilburn, R. 1974. Taxonomic notes of South African Marine Mollusca. Part 3. Annals of the Natal Museum 22 (1): 210-211



An Interesting Personality WERNER MASSIER



Werner was born in Hamlyn, the quaint town of the Pied Piper! He came to South West Africa 25 years ago as a professional football (soccer) player and now plays for the pensioners' soccer team in Margate, where he presently lives. He met his English wife whilst visiting a crocodile farm in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). He trains dogs for competition and obedience and whilst in S.W.A. trained cheetahs and exchanged these overseas for shells! His shell room overlooks the sea. He has had four species named after him.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It was with a certain sense of horror that we read your reprinted 1962 article "Do ocean currents drift shells" by John Grindlay in the Strandloper of March, 1992 and so have penned this letter to put the record straight. This article may have been acceptable science in 1962 but since then Oceanography has undergone several revolutions and the information contained in it is simply not true.

The article in question refers to the Mozambique Current, generally called the Agulhas Current in our waters, which is one of the strongest oceanic currents in the world. This current reaches surface velocities of 6 knots in places, higher than many rivers. The Agulhas Current is in fact analogous to a river, several kilometres wide, flowing north-to-south past our shores and like a river it transports vast volumes of sand. Subaqueous dunes, similar to desert dunes, 17 m high and kilometres long have been formed on the continental shelf at depths of 40-90 m. Bottom currents of 2,6 knots are required to produce such bedforms.

Shelly material is more easily moved by currents than sand so the Agulhas Current will certainly transport them. In conclusion, when a sheller says that the Agulhas (or Mozambique) Current has transported a shell he may very well be correct.

Alan Smith, Peter Ramsay and Lisa Guastella.

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This title is derived from the Greek for "word" and the Latin *litus* meaning shore (the name for the periwinkle *Littorina* is derived from the same root) and the article is a plea to make more extensive use of the scientific names of our shells.

Not that I'm against common names. There are some that I would hate to see vanish like olly-croc (*Turbo sarmaticus*), periwinkle and perlemoen (*Haliotis midae*) which is as South African as "braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies and . . .". There are also some common names which are descriptive or appropriate such as chinese hat (*Calyptrea chinensis*), duck foot (*Diodora elizabethae* with its strong ribs giving the shell the appearance of a webbed foot), baby toes (*Triveta spp.*) and ticks (*Nassarius kraussianus*) but no matter how easily common names flow on the tongue or are familiar to the ear, they do have their problems.

The first problem is with that group of names that are utterly meaningless and should be discarded from the shell collector's vocabulary. I will mention them one last time: "rock shell" which could apply to almost anything that lives on the rocks including the Muricidae and the Thaididae. "Necklace shell" has been applied to many shells including *Natica forata*, *Tricolia capensis*, *Marginella piperata* and *Ancilla albozonata*. Indeed many shells have been used in making necklaces, pride of place going to *Burnupena cincta*. This shell, bored for use as a pendant was found with archaeological remains dating to 100,000 years ago at a middle stone-age site in the Kalahari (P. Beaumont, 1991. *pers comm.*). "Sand mussel" is another vague name which could apply to *Donax serra*, *Maetra glabrata*, *Tellina alfredensis*, *Venus verrucosa* and a host of others.

In the same vein there are colloquial names that are given to widely differing species such as "piggy" which refers to *Marginella piperata*, *Amalda obesa*, *Ancilla fasciata*, *Ancilla obtusa* and *Pseudactaeon albus*. Both *Cypraea moneta* and *Nerita albicilla* are counted as "lucky shells" and "angel wings" could be *Pholas dactylus*, *Tellina alfredensis* or *Lima rotundata*.

Adding to the confusion are the shells that have different common names in different places. For example *Tonna variegata* is known as a "barrel shell"

LEXICON LITTORALIS

by
R.M. Tietz
(Border Shell Club)

except at Jeffrey's Bay where it is called a "boxing glove". *Haliotis spadicea* is more generally known as "siffie" on the west coast while in the Eastern Cape it is called the "Venus ear".

Pteropurpura uncinarius is colloquially known as a "stag" or "takbok" in Jeffreys Bay but on the Border I have learned to call it a "pagoda shell". Another idiosyncrasy of the Border is the naming of *Turbo* a "cockle" while it is known elsewhere as an "alikeukel" or "olly-croc". (A cockle is an exotic edible clam, so this name for *Turbo* is misleading, a fact which lends strength to the plea for the use of scientific names).

Apart from the confusion caused by common names, there just aren't enough to go round the more than 1,000 species of shell that are found round our coast and one has to resort to the scientific name to distinguish one from the other, and to know exactly which shell was found where. What is more, if you go to the trouble of looking up the meaning of the scientific name, you will learn more about your shell.

Take the limpets for example, the saucer-shaped shells which cling to rocks in the intertidal zone. One can find as many as five different species in one square metre and one needs to differentiate them. Limpets belong to the genus *patella*, so-called from the Latin, *patella* for the human knee-cap which is also saucer-shaped. Then you get the species:

P. longicosta from "longus = long, "costa" = rib

P. granularts from "granosis" = seed, grain

P. miniata from "miniatus" = coloured with vermilion

P. oculus from "oculus" = eye, denoting the black eye on the underside of the shell

P. compressa from "compressus" = flattened

P. tabularis from "tabularis" = flat surfaced, boarded

Finding out about the scientific names can also be fun. Let's have a look at *Amblychilepas scutellum* using the accompanying lexicon:

Amblys from the Greek meaning blunt or stupid

chl the Greek letter X used to mark something wrong, false

lepas from the Greek meaning limpet and

scutellum from the Latin for oblong shield. So our keyhole limpet can be translated into a "blunt-false-limpet-with-oblong-shield".



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Introduction

The carrier-shells, members of the family Xenophoridae, are a small group of specialised gastropod molluscs related to the conchs (Strombidae) and slipper-shells (Calyptaeidae). Their popular name derives from their unusual habit of cementing foreign objects to the shell and indeed this is probably their most characteristic feature. The scientific name also stems from this habit, *xenos* (Greek) a stranger; *-phora* (Greek) a carrier or bearer.

The family probably evolved during the Cretaceous (135-65 million years ago) and is thought to have radiated during the Paleogene period (65-26 mya). The different species are now widespread on the continental shelf and slope in tropical and warm temperate regions of the world. There have been several scientific publications dealing with the Xenophoridae, the most recent and most comprehensive of which was the review by Ponder (1983) and readers with a special interest in the family should refer to that work.

Biology

Most carrier-shells inhabit sandy or muddy substrata, the family as a whole being represented from just below the intertidal zone to depths in excess of 1 000 m. Some have also been found living on intertidal sand flats in Mozambique. They are essentially non-selective deposit-feeders, ingesting organic and inorganic, surface and interstitial material. The organic fraction doubtlessly contains microscopic algae, bacteria, diatoms and assorted protozoans, both living and dead. Some species, however, are thought to exhibit a degree of feeding selectivity.

The external appearance of the living animal is rather simple. The head is often more brightly pigmented than the rest of the body, and bears a pair of tentacles each with a small, black eye situated laterally at the base. The head arises from the muscular, cylindrical body column which terminates in an elongate foot, to which is attached a more or less oval, horny operculum. The sexes are separate and fertilization is internal, but nothing is known of the spawn or larval development. The small, many-whorled larval shell, however, suggests a planktonic stage during development.

The attachment of foreign objects occurs at the peripheral portion of the shell

The Carrier-Shells of south

by D.G. Herbert



aperture, either on the outer lip or on the peripheral flange. An item, such as a small stone or shell, is selected and manipulated by the snout and/or foot so as to lie in the desired position. It is then cemented in place by some sort of "glue", probably a proteinaceous secretion of the mantle edge. The attachment is then further strengthened by the deposition of shell around the base of the object. The articles selected for attachment are far from random, some species showing a distinct preference for bivalve shells, some for gastropod shells and others for stones. In some circumstances, however, it is evident that individuals simply make-do with whatever is available and this may include human artifacts such as bottle tops. Orientation of the selected objects is also not random. Bivalves are normally attached with the inner surface of the valve facing outward and gastropods are usually orientated with the aperture uppermost. Furthermore elongate objects are much more often placed with the long axis aligned radially.

The process of foreign object attachment is probably rather slow and the animal presumably moves around little, if at all, during this time. How often new objects are added under natural conditions is not known, but a specimen of *Xenophora corrugata* maintained in a small aquarium at the Natal Museum added six articles (= approx. half a whorl) in a period of about 18 months.

It has long been thought that the major purpose of attaching foreign objects to the shell was to enhance camouflage. That camouflage is the primary reason for this unusual habit, however, is unlikely. It seems more probable that the primary function of the attached objects is to raise the shell above the substratum, increasing the space available below the shell where the animal can feed in safety and where detrital material may accumulate. Indeed, those species which attach the

fewest foreign objects to the shell tend either to have a wide peripheral flange, or a series of peripheral digitations or tubular spines which no doubt have the same effect. Furthermore, species with many attached objects generally orientate them with the long axes arranged radially (see figures of *X. pallidula*), maximising the amount to which the shell is raised. If camouflage was the primary purpose then a more random orientation would be expected, but this notwithstanding, species of *Xenophora* can be extremely well camouflaged on their natural substratum. It has also been suggested that the attachment of foreign objects to the shell is a means of increasing the mass of the shell (for stability and perhaps protection from predators) at minimal expense to the *Xenophora* itself - a kind of molluscan economic measure.

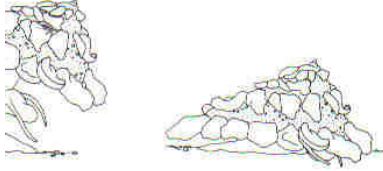
Xenophora species move in a rather discontinuous manner, interspersing a series of "spasmodic jerks" with periods of immobility. The actual method of locomotion has been given a variety of names ranging from a "gallop" to a "one-legged stomp". The latter, to my mind, is most appropriate, though the term "mushrooming" also comes to mind. Typically, when active, the body column and foot together form an inverted T-shaped leg. The body column is extended and the shell is lifted off the substratum and topples forward, gaining a distance of about half its diameter. Locomotion thus proceeds by a series of such hops. Fine details of this process and the extent to which the operculum is involved appear to vary between species.

Taxonomy

There are 25 species and subspecies of Xenophoridae alive today and all are currently referred to a single genus, *Xenophora* Fischer von Waldheim, 1807, which is divided in to three subgenera, *Xenophora sensu stricto*, *Onustus* Swainson, 1840, and *Stellaria*

ern Africa & Mozambique

al Museum)



Möller, 1832. They are characterised as follows:

1) *Xenophora s.s.*: Shell small or large with narrow, simple peripheral flange; foreign objects attached to all whorls and frequently occupying more than one third of the dorsal surface. Two local species.

2) *Stellaria*: Shell large with a wide peripheral flange which may be simple or drawn out into well developed projections; flange not porcelaineous below; foreign objects small, covering little of the dorsal surface. Three local species.

3) *Ornustus*: Shell similar to *Stellaria*, but peripheral flange at most weakly digitate and always porcelaineous below. None yet recorded from southern Africa.

The five species of *Xenophora* recorded to date from southern Africa are all easily distinguishable from each other. The two most similar species are *X. pallidula* and *X. corrugata*, but the latter is readily separable by its smaller size and the strong spiral sculpture on its base. Four of the five species discussed herein occur in Natal, one of these extending into Transkei. They are warm water, Indian Ocean species and reach the southwestern-most end of their range in this area. The fifth species is the only one known from the Atlantic coast of southern Africa.

Xenophora (Xenophora) corrugata (Reeve, 1842)
(Figs 1-3)

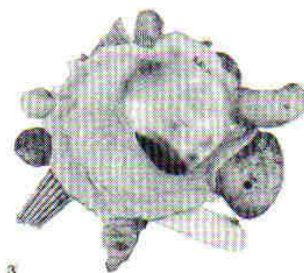
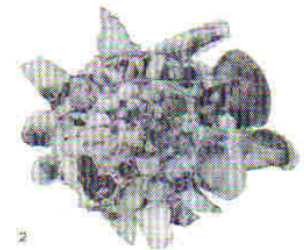
This is probably the most common carrier-shell in southern Africa. Characterised by 5-7 well developed spiral ridges surrounding umbilical region of the base; ridges nodular and crossed by radiating growth-lamellae; dorsal surface normally relatively densely covered with foreign objects, usually stones and bivalve shells, less often gastropod shells; umbilicus closed in adult specimens, open in juveniles;

base yellowish-brown to pale orange, dorsal surface more nearly white. Few specimens exceed 60 mm in diameter.

This species has been found as far south as southern Transkei and ranges throughout the western and north-western Indian Ocean to S.E. India and Sri Lanka, 0-200 m. A relatively shallow-water species, normally dredged on sandy substrata, but has been found alive intertidally in Mozambique. Worn shells occasionally wash ashore in Natal and Transkei. *X. caperatus* Philippi, 1849, is a synonym.

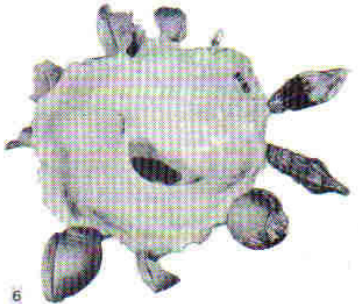
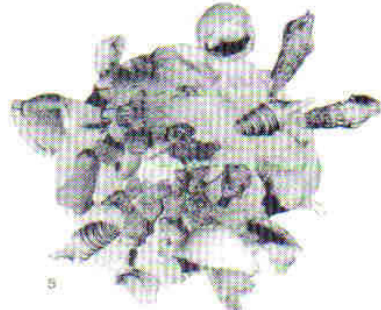
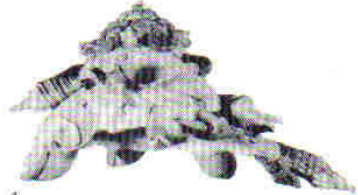
Xenophora (Xenophora) pallidula (Reeve, 1842)
(Figs 4-6)

A large species, often exceeding 70 mm in diameter, with one third or more of the dorsal surface remaining exposed. Attached objects tend to be large, frequently stones when juvenile, often gastropod shells or fragments thereof when adult, but much dependent on the materials available. Dorsal surface whitish, covered by close-set, wavy riblets crossing irregular ridges and folds. Base yellowish-white with well developed growth-lines and folds radiating from the umbilicus which cross and disrupt numerous fine spiral threads. Peripheral flange narrow;



umbilicus almost totally closed in largest specimens, but usually only partly obscured.

A wide ranging species found throughout most of the Indo-West Pacific region from Natal to S. Japan and E. Australia; continental slope, 50-1050 m. Most specimens from southern Africa have been obtained from fishing trawlers operating from Durban, north



to southern Mozambique. An old record of this species from Cape Town is most improbable.

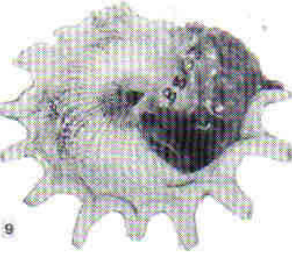
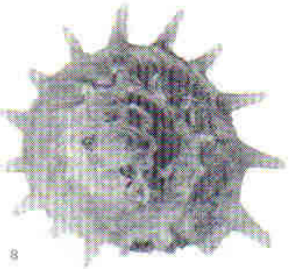
Interesting and unusual shells are often found attached to this species. In the Natal Museum we have specimens with *Phalium craticulatum* (Euthyme, 1895), *Lyria queketti* (Smith, 1901), *Volutoorbis gilchristi* (Sowerby, 1902) and *Conus orbigny aratus* Kilburn, 1973, attached. Elongate species of the turrid genera *Lophiotoma*, *Gemmula* and *Inquisitor* are particularly favoured.

Xenophora (Stellaria) solaris (Linné, 1764)

(Figs 7-9)

An easily recognised species characterised by the tubular spines which project from the periphery. The dorsal surface is sculptured by very fine radial threads and often somewhat

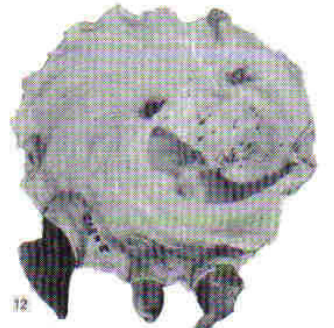
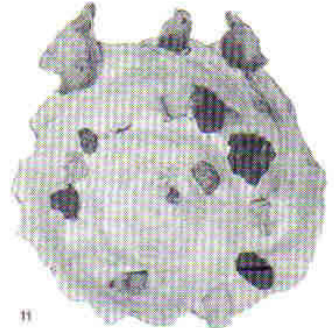
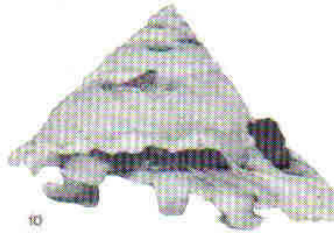
sinuous, irregular folds of varying strength. Base with open umbilicus and relatively coarse radial pliculae, sometimes also with distinct spiral threads. Attachment of foreign objects is limited to the first 2.5-4 whorls, most of the dorsal surface remaining visible; the objects chosen, usually small stones



Xenophora (Stellaria) gigantea
Schepman, 1909

(Figs 10-12)

A large, thin-shelled species with a wide, non-digitate peripheral flange; foreign material is attached to the edge of the flange, but is mostly lost on the spire whorls and the bulk of the shell is visible; dorsal surface radially sculptured by wavy threads and uneven



growth-lines; base convex, sculptured by growth-lines radiating from the umbilicus which cross and disrupt very fine spiral lines; umbilicus relatively wide, but almost completely closed off

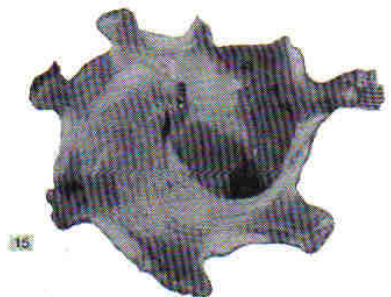
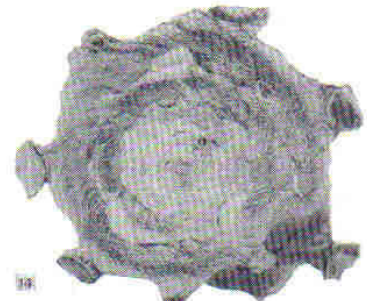
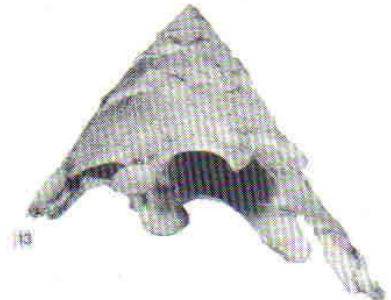
by a thin, transparent shell film when mature; colour yellowish-white to pale brown or orange; up to 120 mm in diameter.

The largest and thinnest-shelled southern African species, *X. gigantea* ranges from Durban throughout most of the Indo-West Pacific to S. Japan and N. Australia.

Xenophora (Stellaria) testigera digitata
von Martens, 1878

(Figs 13-15)

This is the only *Xenophora* known from Namibia. Like *X. solaris* it has well developed peripheral processes, but these are fewer, broader and bluntly rounded; a foreign object, usually a shell fragment, is attached to the end of each projection. The shell reaches up to 80 mm in diameter and is relatively more elevated with a distinctly conical



and shell fragments, easily become detached. Colour light yellowish-brown to pale orange, interior usually darker. May exceed 120 mm in diameter, but largest local specimen 80 mm.

A rare species locally, but widely distributed in the Indo-West Pacific; 18-300 m. The subspecies *paucispinosa* Kosuge & Nomoto, 1972, was introduced for more coarsely sculptured specimens from the northern Indian Ocean, but Ponder (1983) did not consider this justified.

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- Morton, J.E. 1958. The adaptations and relationships of the Xenophoridae (Mesogastropoda). *Proc. malac. Soc. Lond.*, 33(3): 89-101.
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Shank, P. 1969. The timorous carrier shell: close observations of *Xenophora conchyliophora* Born. *New York Shell Club Notes*, 151:5-7.

profile; dorsal surface sculptured by wavy spiral threads; umbilicus open, but partially obscured; base with radiating growth-lines; dorsal surface light yellowish-brown to pale orange, base whiter.

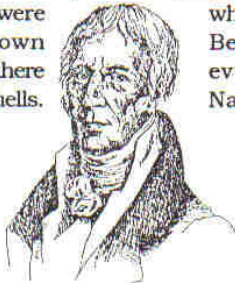
Possibly the rarest local species. It ranges from Senegal to Namibia at

depths from 100-650 m. *X. testigera digitata* is one of two living subspecies of *X. testigera testigera* (Bronn, 1832) an extinct species which inhabited the Mediterranean region 2-38 million years ago. The other living subspecies, *X. testigera profunda* Ponder, 1983 occurs in the extreme north-western Indian Ocean.

LAMARCK

Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, Comte de Lamarck (1744 - 1829)

Lamarck was regarded as one of the world's greatest natural philosophers. He was appointed Professor of Zoology at the Natural History Museum of Paris when he was 50 years of age. Many of his descriptions of new shells were based on shells in his own collection, but unfortunately there were no illustrations of the shells. Collectors and serious students who regarded the Linnaean genera to be perfect objected to Lamarck's proposals of new molluscan



genera. In Britain, Linnaeus was regarded as a hero and any attempt to overthrow his system was regarded as heresy! After Lamarck's death his collection was sold to Prince Masséna, who in 1840 sold it to Baron Benjamin Delessert. It was eventually acquired by the Natural History Museum of Geneva.

Reference: A History of Shell Collecting by S. Peter Dance.

HARPA IDENTIFICATION

As related to Olive Peel by Graham Melvin

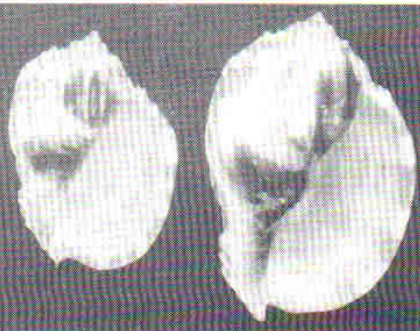
The other day I almost discovered the difference between *Harpa major* Röding, 1798 and *Harpa ventricosa* Lamarck, 1816. Olive Peel invited me to morning tea. I didn't want to go to a hen's tea party, but when Olive told me that she and Dawn Brink were going to identify her *Harpa*'s, I changed my mind. I couldn't miss such a golden opportunity to have two expert conchologists teach me all about *Harpa*'s. Armed with my own *Harpa*'s in a packet, so as not to look conspicuous, I set off, brain alert, ready to be taught something new.

Dawn arrived with an enormous drawer of *Harpa*'s of all sizes. The double doors had to be opened for her majestic entrance.

Olive asked me to fetch her drawer. There they were, and there I was - a mere amateur spectator - wondering what the morning was to unfold. The curtains opened for me on the mysteries of the *Harpa* world.

Olive: I've put all my common *Harpa*'s together because I can't tell which are which. They all look alike to me.

Dawn: They are easy to identify. We'll put *Harpa major* in that corner and



Left: *Harpa ventricosa* Lamarck, 1816
Right: *Harpa major* Röding, 1798

Harpa ventricosa in this corner, because you have both.

Olive: Hurrah!

Dawn: You can tell the difference easily because *H. major* has a definite point here where the pale section cuts through the brown. However, Dick told me that although this one has no point, it is a *H. major*.

Olive: Well, then this one is a *ventricosa* and not a *major*.

Dawn: Yes, I agree, so we'll put it in this corner.

Olive: Then this is a *ventricosa* as well, and also this one.

Dawn: It looks as though all are *ventricosa*.

Olive: I don't believe it! Do you mean to tell me that after all my years of collecting, all I have left are *Harpa ventricosa*? I've given away all my *Harpa major*!

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Dawn: Yes, I'm afraid so. No, on second thoughts, this one could easily be a *major*. What do you think?

Olive: Well, there is no point there but it looks just like the one Dick says is a *Harpa major*.

Back and forth went the specimens. My neck was beginning to ache. I could have been at a tennis match - first to the left, then the right. Specimens of *Harpa*'s moving from one corner to the other - first too many *ventricosa*, then too many *major*, then some of both and then all in one corner again. I felt as though I was watching some newly developed game, one up, one down, first one corner, then another, I wondered when tea would come or if I should say that I had an urgent errand - but no, the drama was too exciting. I might miss something, and I wanted to see which was going to win: *Harpa ventricosa* or *Harpa major*.

Dawn: I don't know. I thought I had them all sorted, but I'm so muddled now I'll have to recheck them. This one feels different but I know it's a *major*. The note on this one from overseas says *ventricosa* but it is a *major*.

So Olive crosses out *ventricosa* and puts *major*. But by now she is cautious

and writes in pencil, for who knows what the next two seconds will bring forth - just in time, too, for Dawn has decided otherwise and the name was changed back to *ventricosa*.

As far as I'm concerned, they all look the same and I am going to keep my specimens right where they are, in my packet on the floor.

After an hour Olive gave up and said she didn't care whether they were *Harpa*

ventricosa or *Harpa major* and went to make tea. Well, if these two women are the "real" thing, what chance have I? So I kept my big mouth shut and my packet on the floor. I was so muddled, I left, forgetting I was supposed to stay for lunch. But I couldn't think of lunch after all the excitement of the morning!

(Ack: HSN 334)

EDITORIAL

Because of the high cost, approximately R7 000, for the colour issue, there will probably only be two issues during 1993, that is, this issue and one other, of eight pages each. The *Patella* issue will in all probability be the last colour issue. Paying a membership fee of R25 per annum does not cover a colour issue and black and white issues. Kindly bear this in mind when writing those letters asking where your Strandloper is! Perhaps members would like to comment on this!

If members make no comments at all on issues the Editor does not know whether the issue was acceptable or not. The *Patella* issue which took months of hard work (and talent) to prepare brought only a handful of responses from our whole membership - not very encouraging! Our Treasurer made a remark: "It has taken me years to build up a 'kitty' and you have blown it in two minutes" - sorry Olive. O.P.

CAPE TOWN GROUP

It is with regret that the Executive Committee of the Society has learned of the disbandment of the former Western Province Group. This is particularly sad in view of the fact that it was in Cape Town that the C.S.S.A. was originally founded in 1958. We would like to see the Cape Town members of the Society get together again to form an active Group to promote the interests of the Society in the area.

Any members wishing to start the Group again should contact the secretary at the official Durban address.

G. Wallace
DIRECTOR

EXCHANGES

The following would like to exchange shells:

Jose Sanchez, c/o Juan Cortes Cortes, 2-7^F, 29010 Malaga, Spain.
Philippe Labarde, Saumont, 19500 Lostanges, France.

Bernadine Monteiro, Rua Estado da India, 382 H 27, 4400 V.N. de Gaia, Portugal.

I. Yeroslavsky, P.O. Box 6085, Beer Yaakov, 70300 Israel would like to buy or exchange unusual or freaky cowries.

Donation of Shells

If anyone would like to donate a parcel of shells to be sold at the A.G.M. for Society funds this would be very much appreciated.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

DATE: Saturday 1st May 1993 commencing at 8.30am

VENUE: Treasure Beach, Durban
Speakers will be Dr R.N. Kilburn, Professor Pat Berjak, Darrol Smith and Lizeke v.d. Berg.

Anyone wishing to take part in this event should contact the Secretary for a programme.

The Society Constitution will be re-drafted, up-dated and tabled at the A.G.M.

NEW MEMBERS

The Executive Council would like to welcome all new members to the Society. If you have any conchological queries please contact the secretary.

If you do not pay your outstanding 1992 subscription **NOW** this will be your last Strandloper

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SCIENTIFIC CONSULTANTS

Drs. R.N. Kilburn and D.G. Herbert

CORRECTION

The gremlins really did it this time: back page, No. 234

Patella tabularis range is False Bay to eastern **Transkei** - who can blame me. I put this issue together in the eastern Transvaal - not even my two proofreaders spotted it!

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