Pacific Conchological Club

Volume 38, Issue 1

Oct.-Nov., 2006

# President's Message

Welcome back from summer break. This is our 104th consecutive year of meeting and celebrating those remarkable works-of-art created by the humble mollusk. We have met at various places, by various names; our membership has evolved but the wonder and the beauty of Shells has inspired each new generation.

***Cypraea (Erosasria) helvola hawaiiensis***, Melvill 1888. Hawaiian Honey Cowry

I've often associated shells with places I've visited or wanted to visit. Maybe it's because I didn't get a real vacation this year (cast & crutches) that I re-visited certain shells in my collection; my photo-essay in this issue is about Hawaiian shells. And—because I didn't get a vacation, I'd like to see someone present a slide or a video or a show-and-tell presentation of their travels, collecting shells or diving or… My Hawaiian essay is as much about collecting as it is about shells. The nature of collecting will be the subject of at least one of our upcoming meetings. I encourage you all to suggest topics you'd like to have presented or search out speakers and/or videos on subjects of interest to the club.

Some collectors view shells as trophies (small game indeed!) to acquire and claim the bragging rights; I've been known to do that myself on occasion. Some collectors aspire to advance the science; the NHM is the right place to hang-out for that. Some collectors are just possessed by the collecting demon. We all share some of these traits sometimes.

Whatever inspired you to collect this summer (or at anytime) we would like you to share what you have at our next meeting. If anyone needed an official invitation to bring shells to a meeting—this is it. If you collected shells in exotic places or found a nice shell on eBay, bring something in and show it off.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all and another interesting season of meetings.

Terry Rutkas

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PACIFIC CONCHOLOGICAL CLUB

Las Conchas

**Las Conchas is a publication of the Pacific Conchological Club**

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| | | | |
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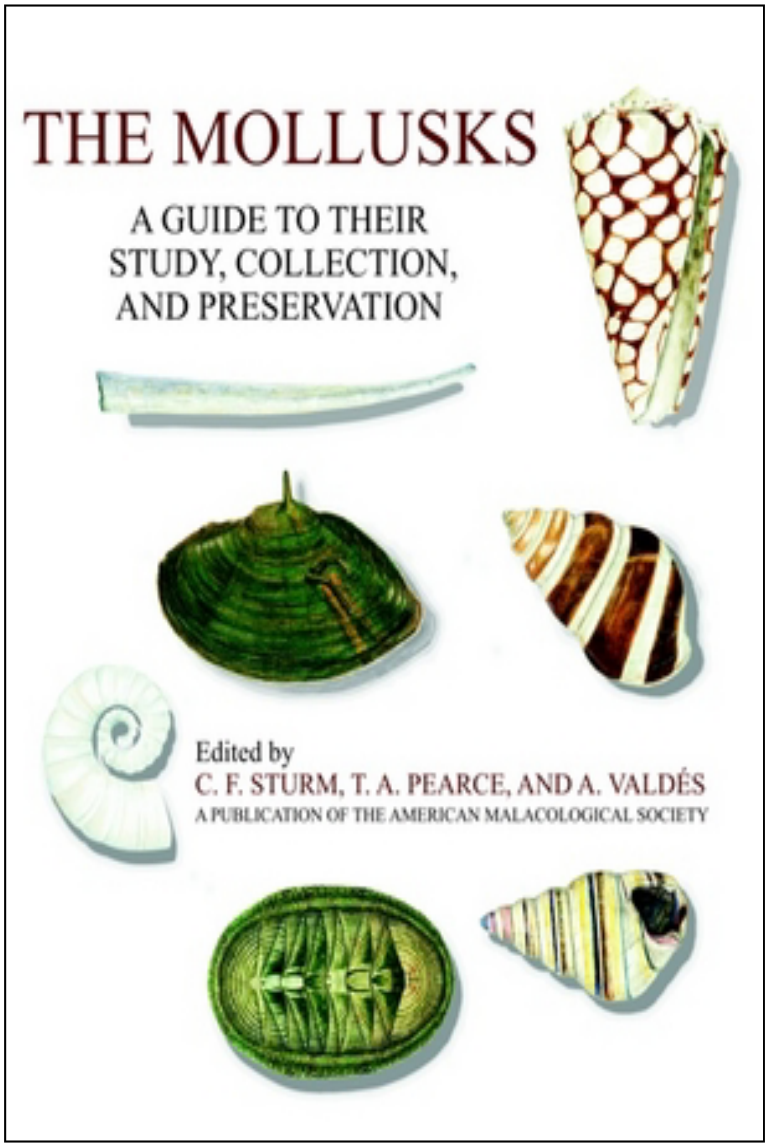
The Pacific Conchological Club was organized in 2003 as a result of the merger between the Pacific Shell Club and the Conchological Club of Southern California. Its mission is to further the interest in shell collecting and malacology and to provide a forum for individuals who love shells and other marine life. The Club meets on the second Sunday of each month from October through June at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles).

Annual dues are $10 for an individual and $12 for a family membership. Checks can be mailed to Treasurer, Kathy Kalohi (13901 Wilkie Avenue, Gardena, CA 90249).

## Announcing
## *The Mollusks: A Guide to Their Study, Collection, and Preservation*
## A new publication from the American Malacological Society




Have you ever wondered about collecting snails with a leaf blower? How about the ins and outs of preserving a giant squid? Do you know what a bail, grab, or box corer are? Maybe you have pondered what types of plastics are safe to use for storing specimens or how to use an optical scanner to image shells. If questions like these arise from time to time, you want a copy of the American Malacological Society's latest publication, *The Mollusks: A Guide to Their Study, Collection, and Preservation.*

The American Malacological Society, founded in 1931 as the American Malacological Union, is an organization that brings together folks interested in mollusks. In 1942, papers presented at the annual meeting in Maine dealt with studying and collecting shells. These papers were published in the Annual Report of 1942 and were reprinted in 1955, 1966, and 1974. With each reprinting, a few more papers from other publications were added. The 1974 booklet, entitled *How to Study and Collect Shells*, was 107 pages in length and had two illustrations. Now, *The Mollusks: A Guide to Their Study, Collection, and Preservations* is the first update of the 1974 booklet in 32 years. If you are looking for a book full of glossy photos, this book is not for you. If you want a book giving the latest information on all modern classes of mollusks and the best methods to study, collect, and preserve them, look no further. \

*The Mollusks*, 445 pages long, with 31 chapters, 101 figures, and 28 tables, is a completely new book. The book was edited by Charlie Sturm, Tim

Pearce, and Ángel Valdés. An international team of 29 individuals contributed to these chapters. *The Mollusks* differs in several significant ways from its predecessors.

While the former books were compendia of articles, *The Mollusks* consists of chapters, each covering a specific topic. Some chapters deal with collecting and preserving mollusks, both the shells and soft parts, remote bottom collecting, and SCUBA diving. Other chapters cover archival practices, writing taxonomic papers, the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, constructing databases, digital imaging, and film photography. Chapter 9 lists over 750 books, monographs, and papers on mollusks indexed by biogeographic region and taxonomic group. If you collected land snails in southern Africa, go to the "Ethiopian (Afrotropic) – terrestrial" listing and you will find a list of 20 books to help you with your material.

All modern classes of mollusks are treated in *The Mollusks*. The Aplacophora, Monoplacophora, Polyplacophora, Scaphopoda, and Cephalopoda have their own chapters. The Bivalvia are covered in three chapters while the Gastropoda are covered in four chapters. There is even a chapter on fossil mollusks. These chapters cover the biology and ecology of these groups, where to find these organisms, and how to collect them. Each chapter has a list of cited references for further information.

**Editor's Note: This new volume is a wonderful resource for any collector. In addition, one of the book's co-editors is our own Dr. Angel Valdés!**

The last four chapters of the book cover a variety of topics. Two chapters deal with conservation, one with freshwater mollusks, and the other with marine mollusks. One chapter discusses maintaining a marine aquarium. The fourth chapter is on non-molluscan marine organisms that have calcareous structures and might be mistaken for mollusks.

*The Mollusks* is a soft covered book retailing for $35.95. For more information and where to order it go to < http://www.malacological.org/publications/molluskguide.html>. At this site you will find a link to the publisher's website, here you can read the first chapter of *The Mollusks*. This chapter is a detailed introduction to the rest of the book. Questions about the book can be sent to the editors at doc.fossil@gmail.com.

**Minus low tides** provide great conditions for observing mollusks and other marine life on Southern California shores. Listed below are some minus low tides that occur during daylight hours in the summer months:

*Please be sure that you are familiar with the California Dept. of Fish and Game regulations regarding the collecting of live mollusks– for details see Las Conchas, vol 33, no. 3)*

**October, 2006**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Friday, October 6 | 3:26 pm | -0.2 |
| Saturday, October 7 | 4:13 pm | -0.6 |
| Sunday, October 8 | 5:02 pm | -0.7 |
| Monday, October 9 | 5:55 pm | -0.6 |
| Tuesday, October 10 | 6:57 pm | -0.2 |

**November, 2006**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Friday, November 3 | 1:35 pm | -0.3 |
| Saturday, November 4 | 2:20 pm | -0.9 |
| Sunday, November 5 | 3:07 pm | -1.2 |
| Monday, November 6 | 3:55 pm | -1.2 |
| Tuesday, November 7 | 4:46 pm | -1.0 |
| Wednesday, November 8 | 5:42 pm | -0.6 |
| Thursday, November 9 | 6:45 pm | -0.2 |
| Sunday, November 19 | 2:33 pm | -0.2 |
| Monday, November 20 | 3:07 pm | -0.4 |
| Tuesday, November 21 | 3:44 pm | -0.5 |
| Wednesday, November 22 | 4:25 pm | -0.5 |
| Thursday, November 23 | 5:11 pm | -0.4 |
| Friday, November 24 | 6:03 pm | -0.3 |

# Hawaiian Shells—searching for significance

Terry Rutkas

Lately, it seems I'm more interested in the "next new shell" (or rather the hunt and acquisition) than the collection I have. Since we moved, I still have half my shells in storage and I'm beginning to forget what I've got. I *will* eventually work on more storage and display space but is that all? Is it enough to just fill collection trays and display cabinets? Ok, sometimes it is, but is there any greater significance?

At one time, when I had few shells, I would only collect specimens from places where I had been, e.g., Hawaii, Tahiti, Samoa... *This* was some form of significance. Even though I may not have collected them in the field, I found a greater sense of connection to those specimens and they reified my time spent abroad. Whatever happened to those shells? I had to find them to see where I'd been, literally as well as figuratively!

For the most part, I keep my shells grouped by families but there's a lot of material that has yet to be integrated and it's spread throughout the house and garage. The shells I was looking for were around somewhere—actually, everywhere.

*(Continued on page 7)*

***Cypraea (Luria) tessellata,*** Checkered Cowrie, Swainson 1822. An endemic Hawaiian species found nowhere else. The small example on the far left is a juvenile. Largest specimen 37.5 mm. Kaena Point, Oahu, 60 feet by diver

***C. (Erosaria) granulata,*** Pease 1862. Far left and right specimens are beach worn. Second from the right is a juvenile. Dentition with fine red lines extends to the margins of the base. Largest specimen 31 mm. North shore Oahu, taken by diver at 50 ft. at night.

***Cypraea (Mauritia) maculifera,*** Reticulated Cowrie. Schilder 1932. 59.5 mm. Kapalua Bay, Maui. Taken by diver at night, crevices 30-40 ft.

Left: ***Trivia exigua, Gray 1831.*** Largest: 3 mm. North shore, Oahu, 20 ft. at night. Right: ***Trivia hordacea,*** Kiener, 1846 6.5mm. Found east shore Oahu in the tide line.

***Conus flavidus,*** Yellow Cone**.** Lamark 1810. Ka'anapali, maui. 36 mm. Taken in 20 feet by diver. The *Yellow Cone* also come in violet and brown.

***Conus vexillum,*** Gmelin 1791. Fort Kam, Oahu, The smaller, juvenile specimens were take live in 6 feet on a flat in coral rubble. Younger *vexillum* are more colorful than adults.

***Conus obscurus,*** Sowerby 1833. Largest: 35 mm. Haleiwa, Oahu. Found under coral rubble.

***Conus pennaceus,*** Born 1780. Large Shell: 53 mm. Oahu, taken by diver in 40 meters.

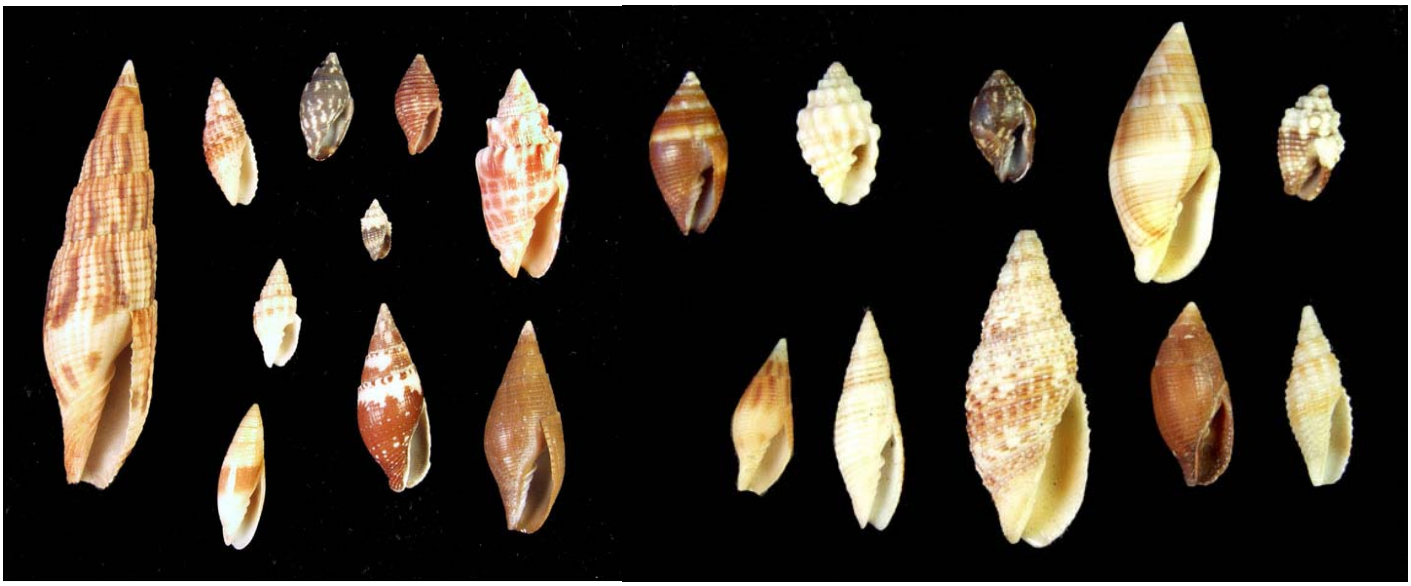
***Conus ebraeus,*** Linneaus 1758. 34 mm. Collected on Kona Coast, Hawaii. Taken by diver on flats, rocks and sand, 20-30 feet.

***Conus quercinius,*** Lightfoot 1786, Oahu, on sand.

***Conus moreleti***, Crosse 1858, Ka'anapali, Maui—Black Beach, collected at 10-20 feet in sand by diver.

***Harpa major conoidalis (f),*** Lamark, 1843. Not as rare as that other Hawaiian Harp, *Harpa goodwini,* in deep water from the Leeward Islands to Midway.

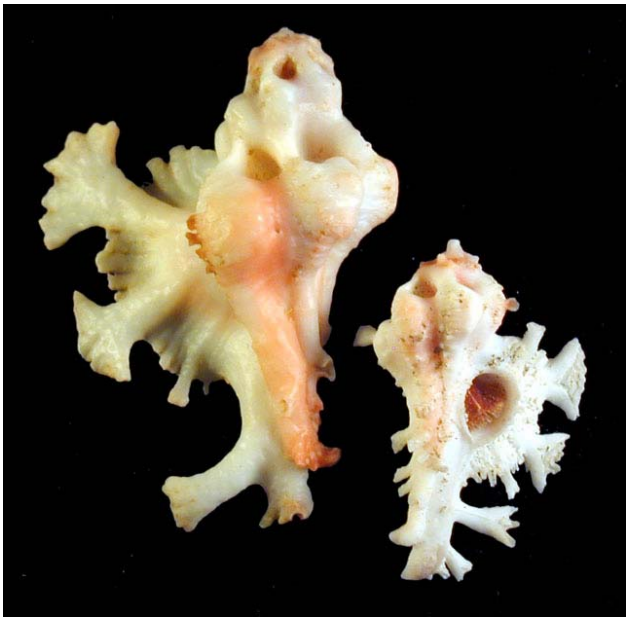
## Hawaiian Shells—continued



Top row: **1.** ***Mitra incompta***, Solander 1768. 68 mm, live collected in under coral, 50 feet, East Oahu. **2.** ***Neocancilla papilio langfordiana***, Cate, 1962, live in sand, 70 feet, West Oahu. **3.** ***Mitra (Strigatella) litterata***, Lamark 1811. **4.** ***Mitra tuberosum*** (formerly *Vexillum*), Reeve, 1845, under coral 50 feet, North Oahu. **5.** ***Vexillum (Pusia) unifacialis***, Lamark 1811. Live, 100 feet, East Oahu. **6.** ***Mitra stictica***, Link, 1807. Live in shallow water, East Oahu in sand. **7.** ***Mitra (Strigatlla) assimillis***, Pease 1868. **8.** ***Vexillum (Pusia) cancellellarioides***, Anton 1839, Kahuku, Oahu, 6 feet in rubble. **9.** ***Mitra (Strigatella) litterata***, Lamark 1811, Makaha, Oahu, in tidepool rubble pile. **10.** ***Mitra (Strigatella) fastigium,*** Reeve 1845. **11.** ***Mitra tuberosum,*** Ali'i beach, Oahu, beach collected.

Bottom row: **1.** ***Scabricola (Swainsonia) newcombii***, Pease 1869, Mokuelia, Oahu, beach collected. **2.** ***Vexillum (Costellaria) pacificum***, Reeve, 1849. **3.** ***Mitra (Nebularia) aurora aurora***, Dohrn 1861, Haleiwa, Oahu, 6 feet in rubble. **4.** ***Mitra coffea***, Shubert & Wagner **5.** ***Mitra (Nebularia) contracta,*** Swainson 1820, Oahu. **6.** ***Mitra (Nebularia) earlei***, Oahu. **7.** ***Neocancilla papilio langfordiana***, Ali'i Beach, Oahu. **8.** ***Mitra (Nebularia) ticaonica***, Reeve 1844,Kahala, Oahu, 4 feet in rubble. **9.** ***Vexillum (Costellaria) bellum***, Pease 1860.

***Mitra mitra***, Linneaus 1758, Nanakuli, Oahu, in sand at the bottom of a ledge at 90 feet, 84 mm. Most specimens I've seen have the lip filed or haven't developed denticles as this mid-sized specimen.



***Homalocantha anatomica pele***, Pilsbry 1921. 50 mm.On rubble in 12-18 meters.

Reference:


***Hawaiian Marine Shells***, E. Alison Kay, Bishop Museum Press
***Hawaiian Seashells***, Mike Severns, Island Heritage Publishing
***Miter Shells from the Pacific and Indian Oceans***, Pechar/Prior/Parkinson, Robert Brown and Associates.
***Living Terebras of the World***, Bratcher/Cernohorsky, American Malocologists
***A Concological Iconography: Family Harpidae***, Poppe/Groh, ConchBooks.
***Native use of Marine Invertebrates in Old Hawaii***, Margaret Titcomb, Pacific Science.

Left to right: ***Terebra argus brachgyra***, Pilsbry, 1921, 39 mm, at reef runway, Oahu, in sand pockets along reef wave, diver 50 feet. ***Terebra nebulosa***, Sowerby, 1825, 110 feet in sand at night, North Oahu. ***Terebra babylonia***, Lamark, 1822, 100 feet on sand at night, East Oahu. ***Terebra pertusa***, Born, 1778, 100 feet on sand at night, East Oahu. ***Hastula strigilata***, Linneaus, 1758, 110 feet in sand at night, North Oahu. ***Hastula pencillata***, Hinds, 1844, Waikiki, Oahu, 20 feet in sand. Terebra lauta, Pease, 1869. Pokai Bay, Oahu, dredged 100 feet. ***Hastula lanceata***, Linneaus, 1767, Pokai Bay, 30-45 feet in sand.

***Terebra achaetes***, Weaver, 1960, 99.5 mm. ***Terebra guttata***, Roding 1798, 116 mm, Fort Kam, Oahu. In sand channel 50 feet.

***Drupa rubusidaceus***, Roding 1798, on coral reef at low tide, Oahu.

Left: ***Epitonium (Ebunicala) alatum***, Sowerby 1844, 24 mm, live collected in shallow water in sand, East Oahu.
Right: ***Epitonimum(nitidiscala) hindsii***, synonym of *paumotensis*, from an old Hawaiian collection.

**Hawaiian Puka shells**. *Conus* shells that have tumbled in the surf until all that remains is the top of the shell with the spire worn through, *da kine puka.*

*(Continued from page 4)*

I was searching for Hawaiian specimens because there were more of them. Hawaiian endemics, such as *Cypraea tessellata,* are unique and easily spotted among the cowries. Finding the rest took some digging. For one thing all Hawaiian shells may be Indo-Pacific but not all Indo-Pacific are Hawaiian; that's why we keep data slips.

Having culled all the shells from Hawaii I could find, the next task was to cross-check the shell, the data and the reference books. Some shells were easy; others, like the miters, were thrown together in bags with the data listed on a single sheet. Not everything could be confirmed or even found.

In the end it was a lot of work. I pulled out many more Hawaiian shells than are pictured here. Did I find significance? Well I found gratification in "using" my collection and my reference books for a purpose. And, I did end up remembering when, where and why I collected these shells.

**HOLD THE DATE**
**Meeting dates for 2006-2007**

**October 8, 2006**

**November 12, 2006**

**December 10, 2006**
*Holiday party*

**January 14, 2007**

**February 11, 2007**

**March 11, 2007**

**April 15, 2007**

**May 20, 2007**

**June 10, 2007**
*Auction and party*

**<u>October Meeting</u>: SUNDAY, October 8, 2006 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm**

**A Shell Collector's Road Trip–** Shawn Wiedrich will present the shelled results of a recent road trip from Southern Florida to Los Angeles., looking at both land and marine shells collecting along the way.

**<u>November Meeting</u>: SUNDAY, Nov. 12, 2006 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm**

**Shell Storage, Cataloguing and Display**– A member-participation program that will examine the ways that we store and display our shells as well the methods we use to keep track of them. Different approaches to labeling and cataloguing will be explored.

Stay tuned for details!

Refreshments are potluck. Please brink a snack, drink or dessert item to the meeting.



Pacific Conchological Club

2447 Kemper Avenue
La Crescenta, CA 91214

**DATED MATERIAL**