

Mollusc World

Issue 31

March 2013

Azeca goodalli:
current UK
status?

Land snails in
Turkey

Shell art and
eating in the
Channel Isles



The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Helping to understand, identify, record and conserve molluscs

From the Hon. Editor



If you are a new member of 'Conc Soc', as we are affectionally called, then a warm welcome to our Society. This being the first issue of 2013, this may also be the first issue that you have received of the Conchological Society's magazine. Our members have wide areas of interest, and becoming involved in the activities

and work of the Society is the best way to meet others and learn more about this fascinating subject. Look out for future meetings and activities in the diary (see back cover) and on our web site (address at the foot of each page). If you have any suggestions for a field meeting or perhaps a speaker for our indoor meetings, please contact Bas Payne,

Currently, although some articles are in the pipeline, I need some interesting contributions for the next issue. Perhaps, for example, you may have been involved in an area of relevant research or conservation, or you may have a favourite shell/species that you would like to share with members, or even a poem or short note that you would like me to consider for publication. If so, the details of where to send these are on page 31. One or two people have also asked me to include more contact details of relevant Officers, including some clarification on where to send membership subscriptions. These are also to be found on page 31.

Peter Topley

Mollusc World

This magazine is intended as a medium for communication between Conchological Society members (and subscribers) on all aspects of molluscs. We include articles, field meeting reports, research news, results from the mapping schemes and identification aids. We welcome all contributions in whatever form they arrive (see page 31 for further details).

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Join us for a week of marine recording on the shores and in the sublittoral of beautiful Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland.

How many species can be found in seven days?

Strangford Lough is the only Marine Nature Reserve in the United Kingdom (Lundy Island & Skomer are now technically Marine Conservation Zones), with many important intertidal and sublittoral habitats, and on-going conservation concern over the decline of *Modiolus* (horse mussel) beds and associated species. Strangford Lough is the largest sea lough in the British Isles, and is normally sheltered from bad weather.

Strangford Lough is the largest sea lough in the British Isles – 24km long and 4-8km wide, linked to the Irish Sea via a channel known as the ‘Narrows’ (8km long, 1–2.5km wide). Currents run at up to 8 knots in this channel. Habitats include maerl, seagrass, *Modiolus* reefs, bedrock, boulders, gravel, sand, sandy mud, mud, marinas and a few small wrecks! Depths range from wide intertidal mud flats in the north of the Lough to steep current-swept bedrock and boulders at 66m in the channel.

Historically Strangford Lough has been a significant research area for marine biologists, with ~1500 marine species recorded. Of these, **more than 280 species of mollusc have been recorded living from the Lough**. It will be an interesting challenge to update this list with more recent records (find as many as we can in a week!!), to recognise any species that have apparently ‘disappeared’, and to increase the number of species found in the Lough.



A recent survey (2012) for non-indigenous marine species has resulted in a number of new species records (*Didemnum vexillum*, *Perophora japonica*) and extended distributions for others. More information concerning these species within the Lough would be very timely.

The goals of the project are:

- To collect a large number of species records from a range of intertidal and subtidal sites around the lough.
- To record the presence and distribution of non-native species.
- To target historical recording sites such as 'The Dorn'.
- To target priority habitats (maerl beds and seagrass beds) and priority species.
- To provide species records to the Centre for Environmental Data & Recording (CEDaR) at the National Museums Northern Ireland, who then makes the data available to other users.

- To provide an informal forum for the exchange of knowledge concerning identification of marine species and habitats.
- To have fun!



Logistically, it is an easy area to survey and host a field trip, as Portaferry, the principle town on the Ards Peninsula, has a Marine Station Laboratory (Queen’s University Belfast). The Laboratory can accommodate up to 40 scientists, and is available at **NO COST** to any participant.

There are facilities to project from laptops so it will be easy for photos/video taken during fieldwork to be shown to everyone for discussion and identification. The laboratory has running sea water available via taps. All other equipment should be brought by each participant, although individual arrangements could be made to supply material.

The good tides in August are early in the morning:

Tuesday 20th 06.50 (0.3); Wednesday 21st 07.40 (0.1); Thursday 22nd 08.30 (0.1); Friday 23rd 09.10 (0.1); Saturday 24th 10.00 (0.2); Sunday 25th 10.40 (0.4); Monday 26th 11.20 (0.6)

There will be no charge for any intertidal visit – participants will be expected to make their own arrangements for transport to each site. Car sharing will be arranged on an *ad hoc* basis.

For those who enjoy diving and exploring the shore, the tide times mean that you can do both! As well as morning intertidal trips to a variety of shores, there is also a chance to take part in *Seasearch* diving and subtidal collecting.

Seasearch diving will take place on Saturday 24th to Monday 26th. It is likely that up to six dives would be organised over this long weekend period (3 days) for volunteers. The third day will be shore dives. The cost for the subsidised diving will be £25/day/person for two dives.

Additional diving Tuesday 20th to Friday 23rd will be organised if there is interest. This is likely to be charged at ~£50/day for two dives. It will be possible to hire diving equipment for anyone flying to the event.

Accommodation: There is a wide range of accommodation to suit any requirement. No responsibility will be taken for arranging accommodation for attendees. A list of accommodation is available at www.nmni.com/CEDaR/MarineBlitz. Please note that this is a bank holiday weekend. Make sure that you book your accommodation in good time.

Travel: There are good transport links to Northern Ireland via ferries and airports. There are also easy links to travel

through the Republic of Ireland. Details for travel are available at www.nmni.com/CEDaR/MarineBlitz.

Booking: To book your place please fill out the booking form which can be downloaded from www.nmni.com/CEDaR/MarineBlitz and send to: Dr Julia Nunn, CEDaR, National Museums Northern Ireland, Cultra, Holywood, Co. Down, BT18 0EU.

Julia Nunn

See also back cover [Ed.]

The three-toothed moss snail, *Azeca goodalli* (Ferussac, 1821)

Current status in the UK? Peter Topley, Martin Willing and Tony Wardaugh

Azeca goodalli ('tridens' of older publications) is a small (5–7 mm), attractive member of our terrestrial mollusc fauna. Called by Ralph Tate the 'Glossy Trident Snail' (Tate, 1866), its shape and distinctively toothed aperture (figure 1) make it easy to distinguish from similar species such as the related slippery moss snail, *Cochlicopa lubrica*.



figure 1. The typical form of *Azeca goodalli*. (height c. 6mm) (photo: Peter Topley)

Ellis (1926) describes the three varieties which were recognised by earlier authors:-

'In var. *nouletiana* Dupuy the shell is somewhat larger and thinner, with no parietal and columellar denticles. In var. *alzenensis* St. Simon there are two additional denticles inside the outer lip. Var. *crystallina* Dupuy has a transparent, whitish shell.' (figures 2 and 3)

The front cover photo of *A. goodalli* was taken by Tony Wardaugh, who explains: 'I found the *Azeca goodalli* in the photograph in a damp litter sample collected from Oakrigg Wood, near Staithes, VC62, NZ78151660, on 26th March 2012. There were five specimens in the sample; all dark ones. The litter sample was from by a beck on steeply sloping ground. The litter comprised oak leaves, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage and moss with some old hazel, ash and field maple leaves as minor components. The wood is

undoubtedly ancient semi-natural; a typical undisturbed North Yorks gill. I was looking specifically for *Leiostryla anglica* [English chrysalis snail] and *Vertigo substriata* [striated whorl snail], neither of which were present in the sample (nor found in the wood at all so far). There were 16 species in total in the sample, including *Spermodea lamellata* [plated snail] and *Ashfordia granulata* [silky snail]. *Azeca goodalli* is not common in my part of VC62; I know it from only about seven other sites, Oakrigg Wood being a new one. I have come across white shelled specimens in Airy Holme Wood (NZ580111) near Great Ayton in the recent past. Also, in my possession are *Azeca goodalli* shells collected by Bernard Lucas from Winston (VC66, NZ1416) on 3rd April 1928; eight brown and one white.'



figures 2 and 3: White shelled *A. goodalli* 'var. *crystallina*'. (photos: Peter Topley)

At the same time, following on from the e mail correspondence initiated by Mary Seddon on the relevant abundance of slugs and snails in the UK (see Mollusc World 30, 8-9), Mary wondered whether *A. goodalli* had been impacted by the possible decline in small species observed by some recorders.

Descriptions by nineteenth century naturalists of this species' habitat preferences and distribution vary, but some ring true today:-

'This pretty shell, though scarce and local, is, nevertheless, widely distributed in England, ...and occurring, for the most part, in wooded districts, where it is found among moss. ...Where it occurs, it is quite as plentiful in the north as in the south, but appears to be rare in the south-west. It is probably most abundant in the northern English counties, whence it may extend into the southernmost Scotch counties, but soon reaches its limits.' (Forbes & Hanley, 1852)

'This snail is rare and sparingly distributed throughout England....inhabiting the moss and dead leaves in moist woods, congregated in little parties of six to nine.' (Tate, 1866)

'I have taken it in the crevices of limestone rocks in Derbyshire.' (Adams, 1896)

Paul (1974) and Kerney (1999) mention the sharply defined and small extent of colonies of *Azeca* within areas of apparently uniform character, the former author concluding that there is no correlation of ecology or distribution with the observed variations in shell dentition. Tony Wardaugh adds the comment that from his own experience the colonies he knows all appear to be small and discrete and most are in moist sites amid grass, leaf litter and sometimes opposite-leaved golden saxifrage. One exception is a colony on a derelict, calcareous, ivy-clad dry-stone wall on Ashberry Hill (SE566855) near Helmsley, North Yorkshire (VC62). *Pomatias elegans*, the round-mouthed snail, occurs in the immediate vicinity at one of its most northerly sites in England.

In the last century, A. E. Boycott, in his classic habitat paper, describes an association with a snail associated with acidic habitats:-

'...*Azeca tridens*...[is a] calciphile species which occasionally overlap[s] into acid places...lives in colonies mostly on calcareous ground but also with *Zonitoides*

excavatus [the hollowed glass snail] in the moist sheltered woods of the Marple valley [Stockport, nr. Manchester].' (Boycott, 1934)

Generally speaking, e mail correspondents have not noted significant changes in the recorded instances of this species over the last few years in areas such as the Cotswolds, North Yorkshire and still hanging on at a couple of sites in Scotland, however frequency of records may relate to the intensity of recording as much as to variation in the status of *A. goodalli*. Earlier last year Adrian Norris took Peter Topley to one of the classic sites for this species at Raynard's Ings, near Ilkley, West Yorkshire (figure 4) where they found that both the forms illustrated here were still reasonably common in a restricted area.

The Conchological Society's Hon. Conservation Officer, Martin Willing recounts his recent experience with this species as follows:

'In autumn 2010 and 2011 I undertook a series of surveys of quite a large block of carr and damp, shaded woodland near

Petworth [West Sussex]. This was an area where I had recorded *Azeca* back in 1990 (in one location only). The study involved field sieving and removing bulk samples to get smaller 'critters' like *Acicula fusca* [point snail]. I did re-find *Azeca*, but, as previously, only at one spot in this block. Although the habitat seemed rather homogeneous and so one might have expected *Azeca* to be widespread, it was very localised (moss samples sieved only 15m from the *Azeca* 'hotspot' failed to produce it) [agreeing with the earlier statements and observations].... I have also since revisited another former chalk hanger population where I had recorded it in the late 1980s and again only systematic searching picked up a small pocket of the snail: a brief cursory visit would have missed it. Based upon these recent, perhaps more objective observations, I do not feel that I can say that it has declined in Sussex.'

'Another recent *Azeca* find (autumn 2011) that I made was in woodland on the slopes of Craig-y-Cilau in the Brecon Beacons (not a new VC record, but new site). As on the Downs, the snail was only picked up as a consequence of many small areas being sampled – it could easily have been over-looked.'

'In assessing the continued presence of *Azeca* at former sites it therefore seems necessary (due to this 'hotspot' behaviour) to undertake searches at many spots; a quick negative result in one location may not be sufficient to conclude its actual loss from a site.'



figure 4: *Azeca goodalli* habitat; a mossy northeast facing bank at Raynard's Ings, West Yorkshire. (photo: Peter Topley)

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An after School slug and snail treat for Diggers Club

Caroline Levitt

July 2012 at Steep and Sheet Primary Schools, Nr Petersfield, Hampshire

I am a fully qualified Forest School Leader and run ‘Diggers Club’. Diggers Club is an after school club running at a number of schools in Hampshire and West Sussex focusing on learning about all aspects of our environment, natural history, gardening, hedgerow cooking (stinging nettle soup, elderflower cordial and wild garlic scrambled egg to name a few), sustainability, community cohesion (for example: cleaning out the vicar’s chickens!) and wildlife. I try to link all sessions to the National Curriculum, covering aspects of the topics that the teachers are delivering in class.

This is a real burning passion of mine as after bringing up four children, all totally different in their academic achievements, the main concern I had and do still have is that all the basic knowledge skills about nature and all Mother Earth has to offer are missing from our children’s/grandchildren’s education and life experience.

The teachers, I know, work extremely hard and do a fabulous job, working under enormous pressure, but the extra risk assessments, health and safety considerations and extra staffing needed to take the children outside in the woodland or even gardening etc, really puts an extra strain on the teachers’ already large workload.

This is where Diggers Club comes in! I arrive at the school fully equipped with my relevant health and safety checks and risk assessments and after a day of normal school in the classroom the children meet me, get changed and are ready for an hour or two outside, learning about the ‘great outdoors’. I keep my session plans simple and allow time for spontaneous moments; a very important ingredient in education that is often left out in the pressures of the curriculum and achievement of targets.

Diggers Club has also led me to meet some wonderful, inspiring people. Firstly, at a craft fair in Petersfield, I met Judith Nelson, who is a member of the Conc. Soc. She is an amazing knitter and has knitted well over 100 ‘woolly worms’ for the Diggers Club ‘woolly worm point system’, which is behaviour linked. She is now knitting snails for my Year 6 group. Judith then recommended that Diggers Club join the Conc Soc. and speak to June Chatfield, who lives in our area.

So ...Diggers Club joined the Conch. Soc. and I spoke to June. After a few telephone conversations, in July 2012, during the last week of the Summer Term, June drove down each afternoon to Sheet and Steep Primary Schools, near Petersfield, to help teach Diggers Club all about slugs and snails.

To be frank, June was amazing and spoke to all the children in a very adult manner, which all the Diggers responded to in such a positive way. Her knowledge was exemplary! I learnt so much too and have since passed this knowledge onto my other groups.

After an initial talk from June, the children, carrying old margarine cartons, were free to go and find some slugs and snails for themselves (figure 2). This job they did with gusto, bringing back loads of species for June to identify and collate. In all 14 different species were found! (table 1).



figure 1: June Chatfield talking to the Monday Diggers group at Steep School.

Common name	Latin name	SU/745 254 Steep School	SU/757 246 Sheet School
Rounded snail	<i>Discus rotundatus</i>	+	
Garlic snail	<i>Oxychilus alliarius</i>	+	
Waxy glass snail	<i>Aegopinella nitidula</i>	+	
Common garden snail	<i>Cornu aspersum</i>		+
Brown lipped snail	<i>Cepaea nemoralis</i>	+	
White lipped snail	<i>Cepaea hortensis</i>		+
Field slug	<i>Deroceras reticulatum</i>	+	
Great slug	<i>Arion ater agg.</i>	+	+
Dusky slug	<i>Arion subfuscus</i>	+	+
Hedgehog slug	<i>Arion intermedius</i>	+	
Worm slug	<i>Boettgerilla pallens</i>	+	
Tree slug	<i>Lehmannia marginata</i>	+	
Leopard slug	<i>Limax maximus</i>	+	
Budapest slug	<i>Tandonia budapestensis</i>	+	

table 1: Snails and slugs found the Diggers Club searches



figure 2: Diggers hunting for slugs and snails, ready for June to identify.

A few children were very reluctant to handle these slimy creatures, but seeing the others' enthusiasm and with gentle encouragement, nearly all children were able to hold a slug at the end of the session.

On the last session June brought Micro (her tortoise) down to see the children. One little boy decided that he would save up his pocket money and buy a tortoise!

Some of these children have learning difficulties and do 'switch off' in the classroom and to witness these same children as 'keen as mustard' to learn all about slugs and snails was so rewarding.

Sadly, **before** June's visit 99% of children and their parents, categorized ALL slugs and snails as 'pests'. Perhaps this is partly due to how they are depicted in the media. One little

girl's first question to June was - 'How can we kill the slugs and snails as they eat all our lettuces?'

After June's visit the children and parents had gained the knowledge to understand more about these little creatures, therefore respecting them as friends rather than foes.

In conclusion, I have seen, first hand that these children I teach are all 'thirsty' for more knowledge about slugs and snails and perhaps now is the time to try to encourage a new generation of Conchological Society members. Just one spark could ignite a future career, studying Natural History for one of these children who may otherwise spend a life as a discontented sales assistant! Lets get to it!!!!



A Little Digger really enjoying the slug and snail session!!!

Membership update

The following members have joined the society recently and have not previously been included in either this column of Mollusc World or in the latest edition of the Members' Guide (February 2011). **Please note that to be included here members must sign a data protection consent form.** If you have not been included and now wish to be please contact the membership secretary (details on page 31).

The codes in italics after the member's address indicate the member's interests:

A – Applied Conchology (shell artefacts, shell money cooking, decorations etc), **B** – Conchological books, **C** – Conservation

D – Diving, **E** – Ecology and Pollution, **F** – Fossils

G – General Malacology including genetics and physiology

Mb – British Marine, **Mf** – Foreign Marine

Nb – British Non-marine, **Nf** – Foreign Non-marine

P – Photography, **W** – Conchological poetry and prose

Z – Captive breeding of molluscs

2013 Mrs U. GARLAND
Hayes, Knapps Lane,
Harpford,
Sidmouth,
Devon, EX10 0NH,
hayesgarland@hotmail.co.uk
B,C,G,Mb,Nb,Nf,W

2013 Mr D. TEASDALE
98 Beech Lane,
Liverpool, L18 3ER,
davidteasdale@mac.com
C,G,Mb,Nb,B,P

2013 Mr F. M. E. BEELEY
The Cottage Lodge,
Kennel Drive
Badminton,
Gloucestershire, GL9 1DJ,
fbeeley@natureconservationchannel.com
C,E,F,Nb,Z

More fishy tales (ormers and scallops) from Alderney...the sequel John Glasgow

Previously I wrote in *Mollusc World* (issue 23, 2010) of the use of ormers (*Haliotis tuberculata*) and great scallops (*Pecten maximus*) as a decorative wall feature. I'm 'going live' this time.

My most recent visit was an enjoyable week in September 2012 staying with my friend, distant cousin and Alderney resident, Louis Jean and his wife Caroline. This coincided with Low Water Spring Tides (LWST), the lowest being 0.56 m on Monday 17th September 2012. Louis went off 'ormering' at the eastern end of Braye Bay, to rocks beneath the Victorian Fort Albert and Mount Hale Battery. Being suitably attired in chest waders, his technique was turning over boulders and quickly pulling off ormers before they could clamp on. In some instances they would fall off into the water on disturbance, in which case they could be deftly caught before sinking to the bottom. This of course meant delving in at arms length to the shoulders thus ensuring water getting uncomfortably in at the top of the waders. The resulting catch was 16 for the pot. These ranged in size from maximum 120 mm shell length \times 83 mm shell width to minimum 82 mm \times 55 mm with a mean of 100 mm \times 67 mm. Anything smaller was left, which demonstrated a self regulatory respect for natural replenishment and size of catch borne out of Louis's lifetime experience of ormering.

A catch of great scallops was taken on Sunday 16th September 2012 by Louis's cousin Peter Allen. These were obtained by diving to 20 m just off the southeast coast of Alderney, 12 of which were brought in to go with the ormers (figures 1–3).



figure 1: Ormers (*H. tuberculata*) collected at LWST at Braye Bay, Alderney.



figure 2: Ormers (*H. tuberculata*) being shucked prior to cooking.



figure 3: Great scallops (*P. maximus*).

An interesting feature observed in some remaining shells shows damage to both the ormer and great scallop by the colonisation of the boring sponge, *Cliona celata*. This species occurs on soft limestone substrate of rocks and shells and will bore into them using an acid secretion so they are penetrated by a network of canals filled with the sponge body. The outer surface of the affected rock or shell shows many holes of about 2 mm diameter. An example of a colonised great scallop is illustrated figure 4 and that of an ormer in figure 5. Both examples show the distinct affected areas leading to a lumpy interior surface of the shell and the response of the mollusc to repair the same. In the case of the ormer, more significant is the secretion from the mantle resulting in a local build up of nacre giving a prominent pearl growth in one area.



figure 4: Great scallop (*P. maximus*) shell damaged by boring sponge, (*C. celata*) colonisation.



figure 5: Ormer (*H. tuberculata*) shell damaged by boring sponge, (*C. celata*) colonisation.

During the November 2012 visit of the Conchological Society to the Bournemouth Natural Science Society (BNSS), my attention was directed to a memoir from their library on *Haliotis* (Crofts, 1929). Coincidentally the author was a native of Alderney. The following extracts are quoted from this work:

Introduction

The name *Haliotis* meaning 'sea ear' was given by Linnaeus in 1740, to this Gastropod genus with the ear shaped shell. These molluscs, widely distributed on granite rocks in tropical and temperate seas are much sought after because of their decorative shells and the food value and delectable quality of the soft parts. At one time they made a staple food for many savage nations.

On early over collecting and regulation

T.A. Stephenson, in 1924, published some notes on *Haliotis tuberculata* based on his three months' investigation for the Guernsey States concerning the reason for the serious diminution of ormers off the shore of that island. The Guernsey States adopted his suggestion for a two years' suspension of 'ormering' (1924–1926) but it is yet too early for recovery in numbers to be obvious. I think that permanent reservation areas would produce lasting increase in ormers. On the neighbouring islands of Alderney and Brecqhou and the rocks of Burhou, Ecrehos and Minquiers, ormers are still so abundant that one can easily obtain fourteen dozen at low tide of good spring tides. On one occasion, in 1927, I estimated the catch of a party on one small beach as 1,750. Stephenson, therefore, is doubtless correct in his view that over fishing and disturbance of rocks bearing the seaweed food of *Haliotis* is mainly responsible for the extra shortage in Guernsey. Since 1898 a Guernsey 'Ordinance' has forbidden the gathering of and import or export of ormers less than 3 inches in largest diameter.

On parasites.

I have found no records of parasites of *Haliotis*. Out of over four hundred *Haliotis* examined at different times of the year, many of which were put back in the sea, only two

showed noticeable disease of the soft parts, although the shells were frequently damaged by boring organisms such as *Lithodomus* and *Pholadidea* and regeneration may produce abnormalities in the shell.

On economic importance

Haliotis tuberculata is of considerable economic importance and is met with in the fish markets in the Channel Islands under the popular name of 'ormer', a contraction of 'orielle de mer' (ear of the sea). Ormers are gathered at the extreme Spring Tides of November to April and are sold at four pence each.

The present author recalls in 1947 the wonderful array in the fish section of the indoor Market Hall of St Peter Port Guernsey, where of course ormers were on display in season and escapee crabs wandered freely about on the floor .

I don't think Louis would have parted with his catch for four pence each.

Au revoir, 'orielle de mer'.

Note on the collection of ormers in the Channel Isles

In Guernsey it is only permitted to collect ormers on certain tides between January and April. This does not apply on Alderney and it is legal to collect for personal consumption only (as opposed to commercially) at other times, but only where there is an 'R' in the month, for example during the September low water Spring Tides, as in this instance.

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to June Chatfield for her information on *Cliona celata*, the boring sponge, to John Cresswell of BNSS for my perusal of their library copy of 'Haliotis' and to Louis Jean for catching the ormers and to Peter Allen for catching the scallops.

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Two more sites for *Hygromia cinctella* on Portland, Dorset Adrian Brokenshire

More investigation on Portland for interesting land snail sites has turned up two more locations for the girdled snail, *Hygromia cinctella*, (see also Harfield and Brokenshire, 2009 and Brokenshire, 2010). These two new sites are opposite ends of the island to my previously reported site at the Pennsylvania Castle area.

The first of the two sites is at Tout Quarry, a nature reserve and sculpture park (found on 16th October 2012). Live specimens with that lovely, rich, red/brown colour were found under traveller's joy (*Clematis vitalba*) at the trackside leading to the old car park area for the quarry, now closed due to vandalism and dumping of household and garden waste. I suspect that the latter is the reason why these introduced snails are here. Another interesting find here worth a mention is a large colony of the silky snail, *Ashfordia granulata*.

The second site is alongside the footpath from New Ground down to New Road at Fortuneswell (found on 25th October 2012). Fresh dead shells were found here in mixed grasses, leaf litter and nettles, the nettles having recently been cut back

allowing a less painful access! There was no sign of the dumping of garden waste at this site, as it is far from an easy access by foot or car from any local housing. There are several cottages on a lane that crosses the footpath higher up near New Ground, probably the source for this new site, although I suspect it has been there for many years, undiscovered!

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A shell grotto, ‘The Shrine of the Sacred Heart’, Guernsey, Channel Islands

John Llewellyn-Jones

On 1st July 1940 the Germans completed their occupation of the Channel Islands (Anon¹, 2012). Many islanders had been evacuated to England before the Germans took over. Hitler considered the islands to be part of his Atlantic Wall which was intended to withstand any invasion by Allied forces. So he fortified the islands with reinforced concrete bunkers for light and heavy guns and with search lights, bringing in Jewish slaves and forced labour workers to do the building (figure 1). Many of these workers were treated so badly that they died of hunger and mistreatment. Any English-born residents who had stayed behind were deported to German concentration camps. An interesting note was that the Germans placed the beaches out of bounds to islanders except for ‘ormering’ (figure 2) which could still be done in specified areas.



figure 1: Fort Hommet, Vazon, Guernsey.

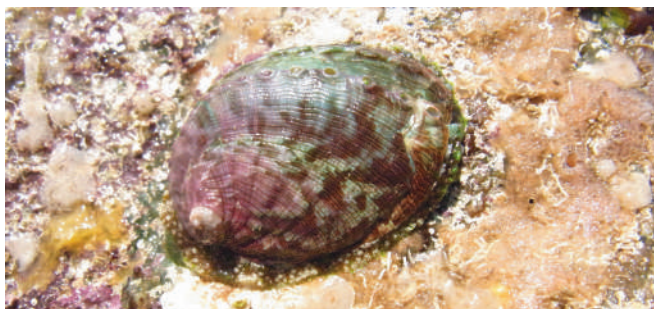


figure 2: Ormer, *Haliotis tuberculata*.

On May 9th 1945 Germany signed surrender documents on a British warship off the coast of Guernsey and British troops landed, freeing the islands from the German rule.

In 1960, Hubert Le Galloudec (or Bert to his friends), got permission from the States of Guernsey to clear out the searchlight bunker at Fort Hommet, Vazon, as he wanted to create a shrine to remember those who died on the islands under the German occupation during the war. He wanted to turn a place of war into a place of peace. He decided to create the shrine out of seashells found around the coasts of Guernsey. He first cleared out two lorry loads of rubbish from the bunker, then painted three walls with whitewash, before he began drawing out biblical pictures in preparation for the shells. His wife collected the shells on the local beaches (figure 3) for him while he worked inside the bunker. By the mid 1960s the shrine was well on its way to being completed. Unfortunately vandals kept on damaging parts of the shell work (figure 4) and by the early 1970s the States decided to close the bunker. A wall was constructed to block off the shrine and a door closed for the last time. Sadly Hubert never managed to complete his dream before he died in 26th October 1991 (Anon²).



figure 3: *Fucus serratus* hiding large numbers of dead flat periwinkles.



figure 4: Damage done by vandals.

In 2005 a group of islanders, Ian Blanchard, Chrissie Robert, Mike Garrett and Andy Le Galloudec (nephew of Bert) got together and formed ‘The Shrine Committee’ and got permission to reopen and restore the shrine so that it could be opened to the public.

Cobwebs were swept away, walls, ceilings and gates repaired. The roof was sealed making the shrine watertight and the cross outside restored (figure 5). Areas of shells which had come away from the walls inside were replaced. Lights were installed, statues put back in their rightful places and generally the place was brought back to how Hubert would have wanted it (Humphry, 2012).

The Shrine was officially consecrated, blessed and opened to the public by Father Anthony from St. Joseph’s Church, Guernsey on 15th June 2008.



figure 5: The wall closing the shrine and the replaced cross.

As one enters the shrine the first thing one sees is the main altar at the far end of the room (figure 6). The walls are completely covered in coloured periwinkles arranged into different shell pictures. Each image in the shrine either has some religious significance, the cross (figure 7) or illustrates a biblical story; for example the tablets symbolise the 10 commandments (figure 8) while the boat (figure 9) is obviously representing the story of Noah and the Ark.

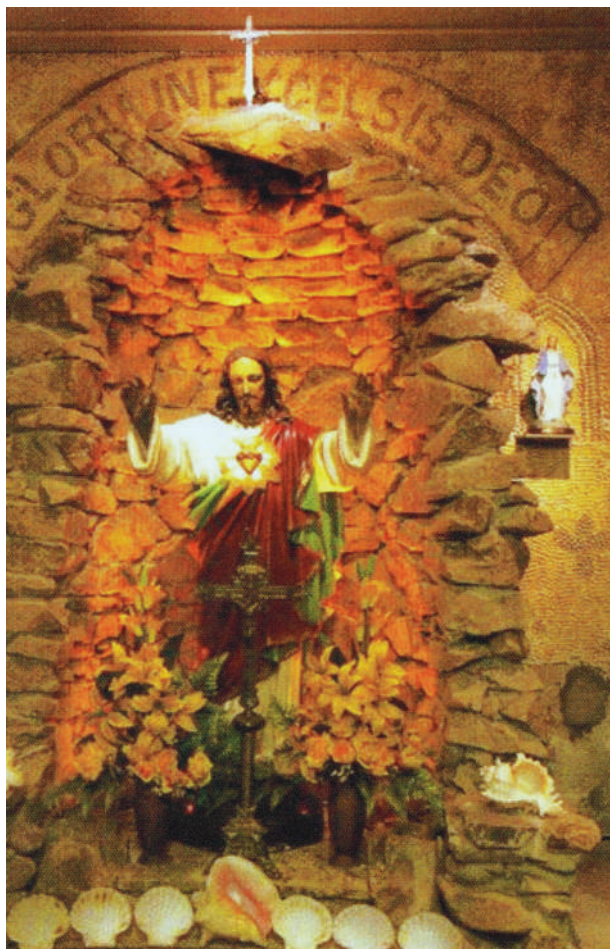


figure 6: Altar inside the shrine.

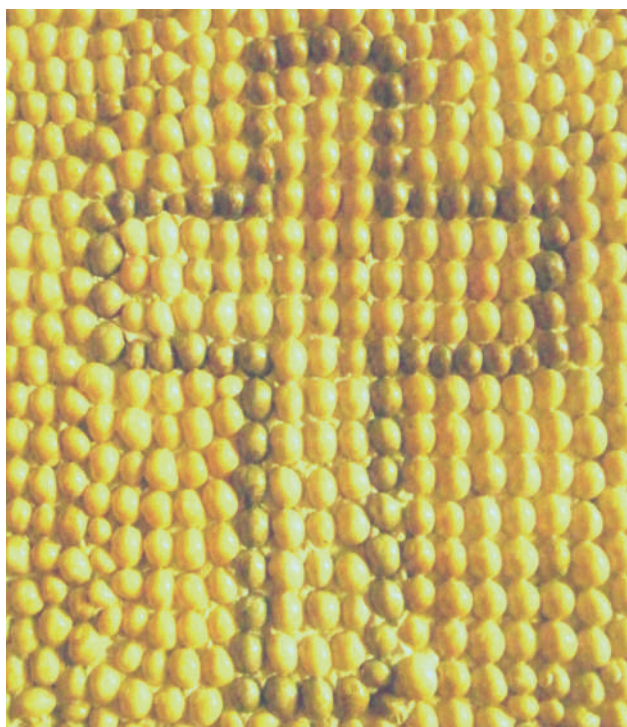


figure 7: A cross in shells.



figure 8: The Ten Commandments and names of Jesus' disciples etc in shells.



figure 9: Noah's Ark in shells.

Work is still on going and in the Guernsey Times of 10th April 2012 a plea went out from the committee to anyone, adults and children, who would like to help by bringing in loads of yellow and brown periwinkles and to bring them in during the open days which are on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month from 2pm to 4pm from Easter until October. So if you are visiting Guernsey anytime in the future, a visit to 'The Shrine of the Sacred Heart' is a real must.

Thanks must go to Ian Blanchard of the 'The Shrine committee' who opened up the Shrine especially, showed us around and told us about its history.

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‘On the spot’ questionnaire: Adrian Norris

Where do you live? Leeds, Yorkshire.

What do you do for a living? Retired museum curator (former Senior Curator, Natural Sciences, Leeds City Museums).

What areas of conchology particularly interest you? The zoogeography of land snails and slugs.

How did your interest in molluscs begin? As a result of a summer challenge to collect marine shells on the Yorkshire coast at Bridlington.

When and how did you become a member of the Conchological Society? I joined in 1965 after starting work at the Leeds City Museum. John Armitage was my boss at the museum and he had a lifetime interest in the subject.

In what ways have you been involved in the Society and its activities? I have been an active member of the Conchological Society. I have life membership, I am an ex-president; council member and I have also been involved with the publication committee in the past. I am now the National Recorder for non-marine mollusca.

Do you have a memorable ‘conchological moment’? I have so many ‘conchological moments’, it is difficult to select one in any particular. The discovery of a new species is always a highlight and perhaps the first discovery of *Lauria sempronii* in Britain is a highlight. This species was first noted within the Leeds collections, a misidentification, and it was many years before it was re-found in the wild.

If you were marooned on a desert island and could take only one book with you what would it be and why? It would have to be a local flora and fauna, without which survival would be difficult.

If your house was burning down what shell (or shell-related item) would you rescue first? My library, but the fire would have to burn slowly to allow me the time to remove all of the books. Without a good library I could not function properly.

Is there a shell or mollusc that eludes you and why? I am always looking for the common place in different locations; rare and unusual species are just a bonus.

Where is your favourite location for mollusc/shell hunting? Forge Valley, Yorkshire. I have located nearly 100 species within the valley complex over the years, but still have not found any of the so-called rarer species. The valley is just rich in common species.

Do you draw any particular inspiration from historical figures in natural history and why? I have always been interested in collectors from all time periods but perhaps the two I most admire are Fred Taylor of Oldham whose ability to collect and immaculately clean specimens of all sizes is just extraordinary. The second is perhaps A.W. Stelfox who had the ability and knowledge to become outstanding not just in the molluscan field but in many other subject areas also.

Can you give us an interesting mollusc-related fact? Snails are slow so even the less-nimble can overtake and record molluscs, although sometimes they can out-climb even the best.

What words of advice would you give to a budding conchologist? Do not worry about others, natural history and its study, in particular groups like the molluscs, will bring you years of pleasure. Have a good sense of humour and persist in observing and recording, do not hesitate to contact others if you feel you are out of your depth, most people interested in Conchology are very helpful and are willing to guide you over the pitfalls. Find out which museums in your area have shell collections and make appointments to see them, ask if they need help cataloguing the collection or just cleaning and tidying up the collection, you may be able to help and you will learn a lot.

Anything else? Join in; even the complete novice can add information. So join your local society, listen and learn.



Adrian searching limestone crags for molluscs, near Malham, Yorkshire, April 2012. (photo: Peter Topley)

British Shell Collectors' Club

27th April 2013
Shell Convention

26th October 2013
Shell Show

Both the above events will be held at Theydon Bois Community Centre, Coppice Row, Theydon Bois, CM16 7ER

7th September 2013

Chatsworth Shell Fayre

Cavendish Hall, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire DE45 1PJ

All events will be open from 9am to 4pm, admission free.

For further information and other events see:

www.britishshellclub.org.uk/



Early in 2010, a search I did in Google Books for old publications about the snails of Turkey yielded two obscure papers (Bliss, 1899a and 1900). The papers were not in the twenty six page literature compilation in Schütt's book on the land snails of Turkey (Schütt, 2001), nor had I seen them cited in any other relevant work. Equally obscure was the author who was identified only as 'J. Bliss' with his residence given as The Tarlah, Smyrna. Subsequent searches revealed in the April 1897 issue of the *Journal of Conchology* the full name Joseph Bliss of Smyrna, Asia Minor as a new member of the Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland¹. Smyrna is the present day Izmir on the Aegean coast of Turkey. Until the early decades of the twentieth century, the city had, besides the ordinary subjects of the Ottoman Empire, a sizeable population of settled residents of European descent, the Levantines. The Bliss family had indeed been living in and around Smyrna for many decades. The Tarlah, it turned out, was the name of the family's mansion in the Buca (phonetically, Boudja) district of Smyrna².

The earliest mentions of the name J. Bliss in the literature are in several horticulture publications from 1891 where he was stated to be a missionary in Lokia near Smyrna who had sent fig samples to California³. The name 'Bliss, J., Smyrna' is also among the subscribers to the first volume of Taylor's *Monograph of the Land and Freshwater Mollusca of the British Isles* (1894-1900). In the second volume (1907), one of the subscribers is 'Bliss, J., Boarbank Hall, Grange'. Finally, Taylor in part 24 of his *Monograph* (December 1921), mentions that some of the specimens of *Xerophila virgata* at his disposal had been 'collected by Mr. J. Bliss, M.P., in December, 1920, at San Stefano [now Yeşilköy], near Constantinople...'. I have found a very brief published obituary for a Joseph Bliss (1853-1939) who was stated to have been an M.P. during 1916-1918 (Anon, 1967). Otherwise, the obituary makes no mention of Bliss's residence in Smyrna or of his activities as a naturalist. However, I have also found a biographical note for a Barbara E.M.S. Bliss, who was born in The Tarlah near Smyrna in 1897 and whose father Joseph Bliss was a 'merchant, scientist and explorer, M.P., J.P.'⁴. It is safe to assume that these bits of information all refer to the same person. In addition, a couple of notes in the *Journal of Conchology* indicate that J. Bliss exhibited snail specimens from Turkey at the March and May 1900 meetings of the Conchological Society (Anon., 1900). So, it appears that Bliss left Turkey in the late 1890s, but returned later and continued collecting snails.

My searches have so far unearthed only three malacological publications by Bliss, the two papers in *Science Gossip* and a brief account of a presentation Bliss gave at a Conchological Society meeting (Bliss, 1899b). All of them concerned the snails of Turkey. He also published a note titled 'Immunity from Snake-bites' in *Nature* (Bliss, 1897). Despite its title, the note was actually about the possible connection of mosquitoes with malaria in Turkey. Bliss sent specimens of a clausiliid from Konya, Turkey to the German malacologist Boettger who used them to describe *Clausilia blissi* (now *Sprattia blissi*) in 1899 (Anon. 1900, Boettger 1899) (figure 1).



figure 1: *Sprattia blissi* from Konya, Turkey. Oskar Boettger named this species after Joseph Bliss who had collected shells of it at Konya and sent them to Boettger. This specimen is 21.4 mm long.

In his 1899 *Science-Gossip* paper (Bliss, 1899), Bliss wrote about his collecting trips with a friend to the ruins of the ancient cities Prienne and Magnesia. In antiquity, there were two cities named Magnesia in Asia Minor. One, the present day Manisa, was located north of Smyrna, while the one Bliss visited was south of Smyrna. Because of its proximity to the Meander (Maeander) River, the latter is often referred to as Magnesia on the Maeander. Its ruins were excavated extensively by the German archaeologist Carl Humann during 1891-1893 (Humann, 1904). Bliss mentions Humann's excavations, which means his trip to the site was sometime after 1893. The following description of the activities of Bliss and his friend at Magnesia shows their dedication to snail collecting:

'The object of our visit, however, was neither to study the ancient remains nor to admire the scenery, and whilst appreciating both, we were too eager to learn what molluscs dwelt there to devote much time to either. Stones were therefore turned over industriously, bushes searched, moss carefully picked, and walls scanned, until the declining sun, with the rising miasma, and the knowledge that a band of brigands were in the neighbourhood, warned us that we must not linger longer. Mounting our horses, we quickly traversed the twelve miles separating us from home.'

The last sentence also reveals that Bliss had traveled not from Smyrna, but from Söke, which is about 12 miles from Magnesia. Bliss listed these land snail species from Magnesia (with their currently accepted synonyms, if different, in brackets): *Helix lens* [*Lindholmiola lens*], *H. virgata* and *H. variabilis* [both are now *Ceruella virgata*], *H. aspersa* [*Cornu aspersum*], *H. lucorum*, *Buliminus pupa* [*Mastus pupa*], *B. quadridens* [*Jaminia quadridens*], *Pupa doliolum* [*Sphyradium doliolum*], *Vitrea spratti* [*Oxychilus spratti*], *V. koutaisiana* [*O. koutaisianus*], *Zonite[s] smyrnensis* and *Clausilia semidenticulata* [*Bulgarica denticulata*]. A reconsideration of some of these species is necessary. There are no recent records of *H. lucorum* from the vicinity of Magnesia where the most common *Helix* species at locations away from human occupations is the slightly smaller *H. cincta*. The latter may indeed be what Bliss found. *Mastus pupa* does not live in Turkey. The old records of that species from Turkey may refer to *Mastus etuberculatus* (Schütt, 2001). The *Jaminia* species of western Turkey is *J. loewii*, not *J. quadridens*. Although there are a few records of *S. doliolum* from the area, what Bliss found was probably the superficially similar and much more common *Orculella ignorata*. *Oxychilus koutaisianus* is a species of northern Turkey (Schütt, 2001). Bliss probably found the western *O. cypricus*,

whose shell is similar to that of the former. Likewise, *O. spratti* is endemic to Crete and is unlikely to have been in Turkey. Bliss probably found the similar looking *O. samius* of western Turkey. The total number of species Bliss found, counting *H. virgata* and *H. variabilis* as one, was 11.

After reading Bliss's account of his trip, I decided to repeat his survey. I visited Magnesia once in June 2010 and on two occasions in June 2011. The present day ruins (37.853 N, 27.527 E) cover an area of about 13.5 hectares (33 acres) (figure 2). A two-lane road and a set of railroad tracks, existing for at least a century, cut through the ruins. The Gümüş Creek (ancient Lethaeus), a tributary of the Meander, flows between the ruins and the nearby village of Tekin. I collected the following 12 species: *L. lens*, *C. virgata*, *C. aspersum*, *H. cincta*, *B. denticulata*, *O. ignorata*, *O. cyprius*, *O. hydatinus*, *Albinaria puella*, *Monacha syriaca*, *Rumina decollata* and *Cochlicella barbara* (figure 3).



figure 2: A general view of the ruins of Magnesia in June 2010.

Bliss's lists of snails may be the only published ones from nineteenth century surveys done at well-defined locations in Turkey (his other collection site was the ruins of Prienne). Despite the uncertainties in some of Bliss's identifications, his list allows us to compare the snail faunas of Magnesia about

110 years apart. Interestingly, the total number of species of the site has remained about the same, although the species composition has changed. I could not find *M. etuberculatus*, *J. loewii*, *O. samius* and *Z. smyrnensis* Bliss had collected, but added the last five species in my list. The British archaeologist and explorer George Bean, whose first visit to Magnesia was in 1939, wrote: '...most of what was unearthed [by Humann] is now buried again. There is indeed little to be seen apart from the ruins of the temple of Artemis...' (Bean, 1979). The floodings of the Gümüş Creek and the high groundwater were apparently responsible for the reburial of the earlier excavations. The site has been dug again recently, but parts of it appear to be permanently flooded (figure 4). We can speculate that the floods may have influenced the composition of the land snail fauna over the years. Some of the species I found, but Bliss didn't, for example, *M. syriaca*, which is often an abundant species that is hard to miss, is likely to have colonized the site after the 1890s. On the other hand, the species both of us found, especially the copious *L. lens*, *C. virgata*, *C. aspersum* and *B. denticulata*, are either very resilient once they colonize a location, or good at recolonizing a site repeatedly and quickly following exterminating events.



figure 4: The flooded agora of Magnesia in June 2011.

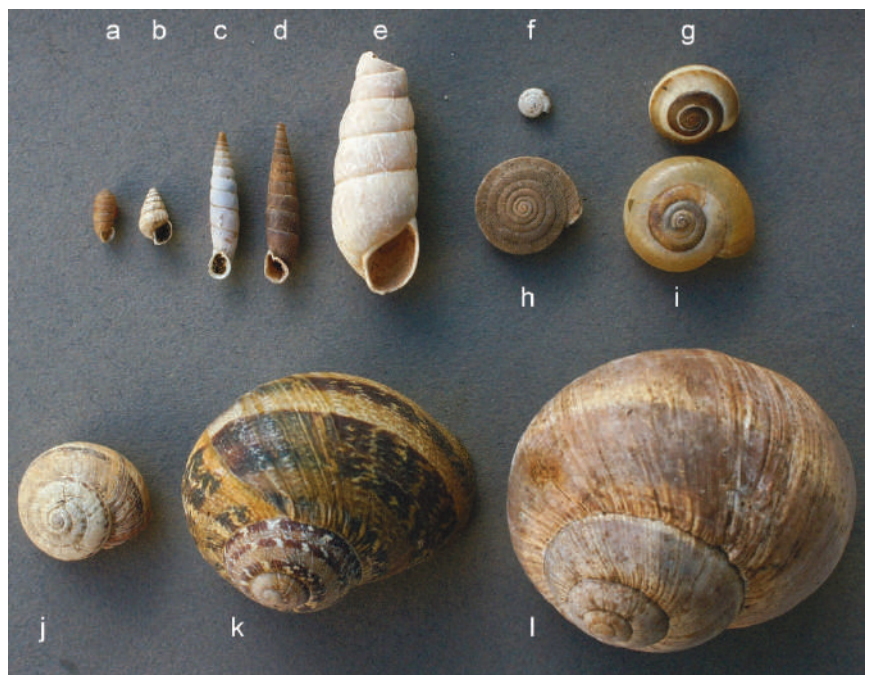


figure 3: Snails of Magnesia: *O. ignorata* (a), juvenile *C. barbara* (b), *A. puella* (c), *B. denticulata* (d), *R. decollata* (e), *O. hydatinus* (f), *M. syriaca* (g), *L. lens* (h), *O. cyprius* (i), *C. virgata* (j), *C. aspersum* (k), *H. cincta* (l).

Bliss also collected four species of freshwater snails. Although he didn't specify their habitat, they were undoubtedly from the Gümüş Creek. During one of my trips in 2011, I attempted to search for shells along the creek. But its banks were extremely muddy and lacking proper footwear, I dared not approach the water. I did stroll along the upper margins of the muddy zone hoping to encounter flood-deposited shells, but found none. I also scrutinized the pools of water within the ruins, but saw no freshwater shells in them either. My failures give me a good excuse to revisit the site in the future.

Acknowledgements

Robert A.D. Cameron and Richard Greene helped with the gathering of biographical information about Bliss, Eike Neubert and Francisco Welter-Schultes helped with the species nomenclature and my wife Beysun accompanied me patiently during the collecting trips.

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Notes

¹*J. Conch.* 8:377, 1897.

²More information on the history of the Bliss Family in Smyrna: <http://www.levantineheritage.com/bliss.htm>.

³For example: Eisen, G. (1891). The introduction of *Blastophaga peneus* into California. *Zoe* 2:114–115. *Lokia* was probably a misspelling of *Sokia*, itself a dated spelling of *Söke*, a town south of Smyrna where the Bliss family had also resided (see note 2).

⁴Girton College Register, 1869–1946. A snippet view of Barbara Bliss's biography on p. 281 is available in Google Books at <http://books.google.com/books?id=mlfAAAAMAAJ>.

*Section of Mollusks, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 4400 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213–4080, U.S.A. pulmonate@earthlink.net

Charles Robert Senhouse Pitman manuscript

I am currently cataloguing the historical library collection of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, acquired by King's College London in 2007.

I recently came across an unpublished history of Uganda, compiled in the 1950's, by the army officer, game warden and collector Charles Robert Senhouse Pitman. I understand from reading an article on your website by the late Bernard Verdcourt, extracted from the *Conchologist's Newsletter*, no. 131, Dec. 1994, p. 417–424, that the whereabouts of this manuscript was unknown (at least, in 1994). I am pleased to be able to tell you that we do indeed have a copy here in the Special Collections Library at King's, available for consultation. So far, the volume of maps and illustrations thought to accompany the volume of text has not yet turned up, but it is hoped it may do so, as the collection is gradually catalogued.

Details of the FCO Collection, and of the Foyle Special Collections Library can be found on the college website, at www.kcl.ac.uk/specialcollections, and details of this item, and others in the collection can be found in the library catalogue at <http://library.kcl.ac.uk/>

Virginia Hennessy

Special Collections Project Cataloguer
King's College London
Foyle Special Collections Library
Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1LR

'Cowrie Bay'



Many years ago A. E. Ellis published a list of mollusc-inspired place names in the *Conchologist's Newsletter*. Here is another example in the naming of a fishing boat 'Cowrie Bay'. The boat was seen in Analong Harbour, Co Down, Northern Ireland, and photographed by Ray Ogborn.

June Chatfield

Having just read an article by Aydin Örstan, who surveyed the Bodrum Peninsula for terrestrial molluscs in August 2005 with Francisco Welter-Schultes and two Turkish colleagues (Örstan *et al.* 2005), I was encouraged to look around this area myself while on holiday in May 2009. The following is a brief account of findings made using Aydin's account as a guide to the local fauna and some of the best sites for molluscs.

Bodrum lies on the site of ancient Halicarnassus, one of the Ionian cities overrun by Darius the Persian after the defeat of the legendary King Croesus of Lydia around 500 BC. During the time of his successor Xerxes, the satrap of Halicarnassus was a woman called Queen Artemisia who fought in the great sea battle off Salamis when a fledgling Greek democracy triumphed over Persian aggression. Things were not going well in the straits of Salamis when she famously escaped by ramming and destroying one of her own ships which was unhelpfully blocking the exit. All of course was watched by Xerxes astride his throne on a nearby hilltop. Little remains of ancient Halicarnassus today and most identifiable remains are Roman or post-Roman. The most conspicuous historic building still standing is the Castle of the Knights in Bodrum harbour, built from earlier remains by the Knights Hospitallers and completed in 1407. An interesting story attaches to the Castle and its molluscan associates. Örstan *et al.* relate that the door snail *Albinaria brevicollis*, found nowhere else on the Bodrum Peninsula, is common on the Castle walls (figure 1). But how did it get there? They speculate that it was carried there with scavenged stone from the Halicarnassus Mausoleum a little way inland. The Mausoleum was constructed around 353 BC, 25 years after the end of the Persian Wars, and the marble used in its construction probably came from Iasos well to the north of Bodrum where *Albinaria brevicollis* lives commonly as a native. So, this may be an early example of anthropochorous spread in snails. The Castle also numbers *Caracollina lenticula*, *Microxeromagna lowei*, *Cerneuella virgata*, *Trochoidea pyramidata*, *Eobania vermiculata* and *Cornu aspersum* among its adventive fauna. The native range of all these is west Mediterranean. Which raises the question, why have so many west Mediterranean molluscs developed an 'invasive tendency', while so very few east Mediterranean species, subject to the same early and intrusive effects of man, behave in this way?



figure 1: *Albinaria brevicollis* (Height (H) = 17 mm), Bodrum castle.



figure 2: *Albinaria munda*, (H = 18 mm), rock face on hill summit south of Dağbelen.



figure 3: *Albinaria lerosiensis* (H = 16 – 17 mm), under boulder; coastal maquis, İçmeler, Bodrum.

The door snails are richly represented in the Turkish fauna, which has a total of 101 species (Schütt, 2005). However, Aegean coasts are relatively impoverished apart from a selection of *Albinaria* species. There are three on the Bodrum Peninsula: *A. brevicollis* already mentioned; *A. munda* which is localised in mountainous rocky terrain in the central area (figure 2); and *A. lerosiensis* which is common in the east and southeast (figure 3). In areas to the north and east of Bodrum town the sun-scorched maquis hosts *A. lerosiensis*. I observed it under large boulders in the vicinity of our hotel about a mile east of Bodrum. An initial attempt to find snails after dark using a torch fell foul of over-zealous hotel security guards who escorted the offender (myself) off the hillside after some argument! Several large aggregations or 'daisy-chains' of conjoined aestivating individuals were located next day under large boulders in and around outcropping bedrock. Whether these sites are occupied throughout the heat of summer is difficult to say but there was certainly the option of retreating much deeper into crevices of the underlying rock. The survival strategies of other residents of the maquis are probably similar. Large shelled *Helix* species such as *H. figulina* were fairly common as dead shells but crow bars and boulder-heaving notwithstanding, I was unable to find a single live example during my visit. Are they dying out or just exceptionally elusive? Smaller gastropods were quite common under large stones in the spring weather: *Lindholmiola lens* with its partly hairy, peculiarly flat-topped shell, was found in most places (figure 4); *Metafruticola proclivis* was widespread but sparse and mostly in or under dead wood (figure 5); *Monacha syriaca* also widespread but more abundant near the shore. Under rock overhangs, a mixture of the tiny rock snails *Granopupa granum*, *Rupestrella rhodia* and *R. philippii* could often be



figure 4: *Lindholmiola lens* (Width (W) = 17 mm), near Bodrum.



figure 5: *Metafruticiola proclivis*, (W = 17 mm), Dağbelen.

found. A form of *Pyramidula* is reported from the Bodrum area but I saw none. Nor could I find the elusive rock-dwelling *Orculella ignorata*. Under stones at Bodrum Castle, perhaps one of the few eastern landsnails to occur in disturbed places, was the very large *Oxychilus cyprius*.

On high rocky summits in the centre of the Bodrum Peninsula the fauna is subtly different. The large helicid *Levantina spiriplana spiriplana* (figure 6) was found at a couple of sites, mainly as juveniles, but I took one perfect adult by levering a large boulder split from a rock face by a carob root. In one or two high, rocky places near the village of Dağbelen *Albinaria munda*, with its very tall, elegantly narrow shell was common in rock crevices or under boulders. On lower, more vegetated slopes in the same area old terraced pastures demarcated by oak scrub yielded a few woodland species. This was the only habitat where I was able to find slugs. Several *Limacus flavus* were located under large stones in deep shade plus two small individuals of a *Deroceras* under a stone heap in flushed pasture (figure 7). One of the latter survived the trip home but six weeks later had not grown at all, so its identity is uncertain. It was very active and a beautiful blue-grey colour. In the same area several colonies of the door snail *Bulgarica erberi* were located under large stones beneath oak (figure 8). There is some dispute as to whether this species is distinct from the south-east European *Bulgarica denticulata* but this is another elegant, awl-shaped shell with fine ribbing and with a beautifully ornamented and fluted mouth.

The flower-rich meadows and pastures were a delight and full of butterflies including numerous swallowtails. On a carob tree near Bodrum *Capnodis cariosa*, the largest European jewel beetle was seen clinging to dead branches. This species becomes active only when the air temperature

exceeds 30°C! Garish flat-backed millipedes with bright yellow spots on the paranota were found sparingly, huge greenish centipedes occurred frequently under stones and many isopods, including the beautifully patterned white on brown pillbug *Armadillidium ameglioii*, were common. Then there was a great variety of crickets, spiders, and scorpions; plenty of fodder for the dedicated photographer, but mind-numbing with all the other calls on a visitor's attention.

Of the molluscs a total of 23 live species plus two dead were found in about three days, a lot less than Örstan's team total of fifty species. Only one mollusc, the un-named *Deroceras*, was added to their list. Nevertheless I enjoyed the sights, and particularly of the door snails: the daisy chains of aestivating *Albinaria lerosiensis* in the Bodrum maquis; and the colonies of delicate bluish-purple hued *Albinaria brevicollis* adorning the castle walls in Bodrum town.



figure 6: *Levantina spiriplana* (W = 38 mm), rock face, Torba Hill, Ortakent.



figure 7: *Deroceras* species (Length = 20 mm), Dağbelen.



figure 8: *Bulgarica erberi*, (H = 17 – 18 mm) wet scrub near Dağbelen.

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figure 1: Morgat Bay at half tide.

September 2006

At spring low tide there are many square miles of intertidal sand flat between granite headlands (figure 1). I imagine the sea had retreated well over half a mile. Bait diggers were barely visible in the far distance. Without time to actually measure anything properly I gained the impression that the beach shelved gently in five stages and the exposed flats form five zones of which the third and fifth are almost level. Why five zones? My best guess is that zone one is the area between neap high and spring high, zone two gets most of the intertidal wave action on the average day. Zone three is sub-littoral during neap tides and is very flat with little direct wave action in normal weather. Zone four is gently sloping and will have some wave action at phases of spring low tides. Zone five is very flat and exposed only on the biggest spring lows but it remains waterlogged. It will have little wave disturbance as high-pressure anticyclones, which make the low tides even lower, usually bring calm weather. A low-pressure area would suppress the lower half of the tidal movement. The zone five sands would be below most of the wave action during the worst weather.

While there were no major concentrations of shells, and no visible shell sand deposits, there were astronomical numbers overall. There was a vestigial strand line, two distinct drift lines, marked mainly by dead urchin shells, and a third vestigial drift line. The common otter shell, *Lutraria lutraria* (figure 2) was the most visible species near high water with trough shells, *Maetra*, more numerous but with two distinct forms. There was a scattering of the banded wedge shell, *Donax vittatus* everywhere though few were alive.



figure 2: An example of *Lutraria lutraria* (length 122mm) from Giltar Point, Penally, South Wales. This fresh dead example has an intact periostracum which flakes off rapidly in stored shells.

(photo: Peter Topley)

I worked my way out trying not to miss anything in passing. Zone 3 had numerous sand trails. These slowed my progress though I believe that on my first excursion, I reached the water before the tide turned. The sand trails had been made by urchins, hermit crabs, *Hinia reticulata* (netted dog whelk), juvenile *Spisula*, sub-adult *Acteon tornatilis*. I also found three *Dosinia lupinus* (smooth artemis), a large *Mysia undata* as well as a scattering of *Tellina tenuis* (thin tellin), *Ensis arcuatus*, *Pharus*, *Tapes* and *Cerastoderma edule* (common cockle).

Also in zone 3 I found several specimens of what I assume to be juvenile *L. lutraria* although these look disconcertingly like *Abra prismatica* in shape size and colour. Small *Spisula subtruncata* moved in vertical positions leaving 'v' shaped grooves and periodic chevron marks. (I have seen one of the *Abra* species move this way in Portland Harbour mud.) Hermit crab favourites were *Hinia* and black and white banded *Nucella lapillus* (dog whelk). There was also a single live *Lunatia catena* (spotted necklace shell). Remarkably, although this looked ideal Naticid habitat, I saw only one drilled dead shell in the entire area.

At the water's edge there were several bait diggers. *L. lutraria* had produced giant 'worm casts' of muddy sand and these were the most common victims though there were also *E. arcuatus* and a few *Ensis siliqua* (pod razor shell). Other things were even more desired but I have no idea what they were. Cigar-shaped organisms about 14 cm long, with an iridescent metallic looking surface, hard and with snake skin texture (figure 3) and an agile, slightly smaller, rubbery brown 'flat-worm' were being collected. There were also geometrically perfect, flat-topped, vertical casts about 3 cm in diameter and up to 4.5 cm tall. I could not dig them out by hand and so have no idea what lived below. Fortunately the bait diggers were not interested in cockles and the gulls were so satiated that they did no damage to live shells.



figure 3: Marine worm.

Paired mustard-coloured siphons indicated *Acanthocardia* just below the surface. These siphons were duller and less complex than those of the Dorset shells which I have always, in compliance with Tebble (1966), assumed to be *Acanthocardia tuberculata* (rough cockle); however, as the type locality for this species is Mediterranean and the shells from there look consistently different, I am no longer 100% confident of the identity of two distinct forms from Atlantic waters (maybe three distinct *A. tuberculata* forms exist now!). I will refer to these Atlantic forms as 'B' and 'C' and 'D' for the purposes of these notes to distinguish them from the Mediterranean type form 'A' (figure 5). I scooped out a series of *Acanthocardia* with my hands. The largest specimen conformed in every respect with *A. aculeata* (spiny cockle) (figure 8). Another specimen conformed in every respect with *A. echinata* (prickly cockle) (figure 4) but quite a few shells shared characteristics with other species.

There was a small number of form B, *A. tuberculata* (figure 6) and a larger number of form C (figure 7) but there was an additional form D which I had never seen anywhere before. This is very solid and heavy with broad scales the full width of the ribs. Could it be possible that there is free hybridisation of three or four species within this population?

All adult *Acanthocardia* seen had the orange foot, which we are assured is particular to *A. tuberculata*. One juvenile had this (typical?) orange foot in geometric proportion to the adults. All other juveniles examined, had a translucent yellowy brown foot, which could extend in length to five times the diameter of their respective shell and were very active.

I picked up all the fragments and dead juveniles I could find. The study of these is incomplete but it appears that only two species may be represented. This will resolve nothing, as only a couple of the juvenile animals reliably resembled any of the adults.

There is evidence that an adult *Acanthocardia* can repair a major holing of the shell by gulls. Just to make my uncertainties complete, there were also *Cerastoderma*. One started life quite normally but after reaching normal adult size, transformed, changing colour sculpture and shape and then continued growing!



figure 6: *A. tuberculata* type B (70–90mm).



figure 7: *A. tuberculata* type C (70–90mm).



figure 8: *Acanthocardia aculeata* (70–90 mm).



figure 4: *Acanthocardia echinata* (70–90 mm).



figure 5: *Acanthocardia tuberculata* type A (70–90 mm).

May 2012

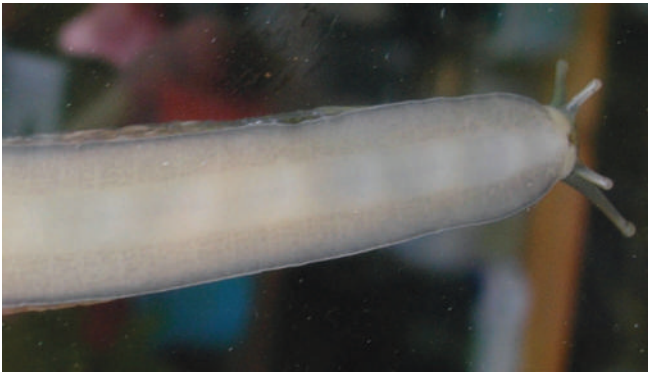
As Morgat had exciting memories I revisited the huge beaches last spring. There were major changes to the molluscan fauna. There were no recent traces of *Acanthocardia*. There were still *L. lutraria* but not in their former numbers. They were the only species worth the attention of bait diggers. The echinoderm population has exploded. These might be *Echinocardium cordatum*. Huge numbers were on or under the sand down to at least 20cm so it seems possible that they eat juvenile bivalves and have eliminated the formerly spectacular *Acanthocardia* populations. There seemed to be only one kind of marine worm. I hoped to photograph the other interesting things I had seen on the earlier trip but they were no longer there. The only living gastropods detected were *Acteon tornatilis* found by following sand trails at low water. There were still a few *Donax* and two varieties of *Cerastoderma*, one of which was the smallish, dark-brown form which I had always assumed was confined to a few 'pocket' populations living in extreme habitats to the north of Cardigan Bay.

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Limax cinereoniger: some observations on egg laying and development

Tony Wardhaugh



figures 1 and 2: *Limax cinereoniger*. Adult found in Oakrigg Wood, northeast Yorks., 16th August 2011.

In my home area of north-east Yorkshire (vice-county 62) the ash-black slug, *Limax cinereoniger*, occurs chiefly in old woodland and is not uncommon (Kerney, 1999). The majority of adults encountered have a uniformly black body and a black edged tripartite sole. On 16th August 2011, in Oakrigg Wood near Staithes (NZ784171), I found an adult *L. cinereoniger* of unusual appearance for this area. Over 150 mm in length when fully extended, it was a pale grey-brown in colour with a long, pale keel, pale lateral bands and a tripartite sole having the edges only a little darker than the centre. The tentacles were spotted. It was found beneath a large log on sloping, fairly dry ground amid mature beech trees. The animal was photographed on 18th August 2011 (figures 1 and 2) the intention being to then release it at the place where it was found. However, later on that date it proceeded to lay a batch of about 100 eggs. In view of this it was retained in order to observe whether more eggs were laid. Two more batches of eggs (approximately 100 eggs in each) were laid on about 25th August and 15th September. No more eggs were laid after this date. Oldham (1942) reported on egg laying by three *L. cinereoniger* from Pembrokeshire described as var. *luctuosa*, i.e. black bodied with the caudal quarter of the keel yellow (Ellis, 1969). Interestingly, these animals had been reared in isolation and each laid eggs as a result of self-fertilisation, these in batches of about 50, during the months of August to October.

Following egg laying the Oakrigg Wood animal survived and over-wintered in captivity in an unheated but frost-free environment. By February 2012 its body colour had darkened a little to a slightly more red-brown colour. It was feeding well and was released where found, in April 2012.

The eggs were kept in moist, unheated surroundings. They were approximately spherical, 4.5 mm in diameter and initially quite transparent with a very slight yellowish tint. (figure 3). Quick (1960) quotes a slightly larger size of 5.0 × 5.5 mm, describing eggs as soft, translucent and amber coloured. Developing slugs were quite visible inside the eggs and during early stages pulsating of the hepatic lobe could be seen; a process which serves to circulate haemolymph around the body. This is described by Runham and Hunter (1970) for other slug species. Shortly before hatching, the contracted, pinkish slugs almost filled the eggs (figure 4). The three batches hatched on 16th to 17th September, 25th to 29th September and 10th to 12th October. Virtually all eggs hatched (305 hatchlings in total), the time between laying and hatching thus being about four to five weeks which concurs with Quick (1960) who states that eggs hatch in about a month. Oldham (1942) did not indicate the time period between egg laying and hatching. In a European context individuals are said to lay a total of 400 to 800 eggs in batches (every few weeks) of 40 to 250 eggs between July and October, juveniles hatching after 20 to 30 days (Schultes, 2012). The Oakrigg Wood animal laid about 310 eggs whilst under observation but could have laid more before being found. In other respects the current observations are consistent with this description.



figure 3: *Limax cinereoniger*. New laid eggs.

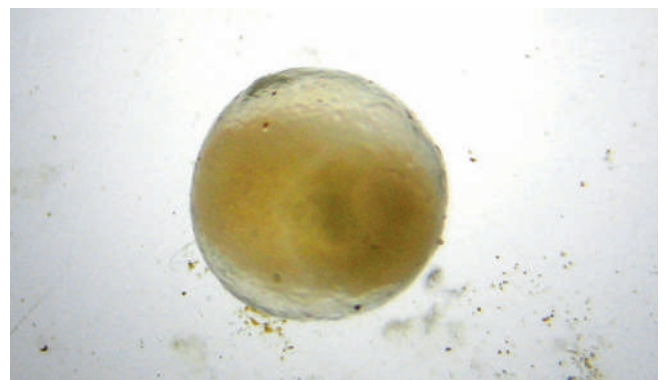


figure 4: *Limax cinereoniger*. Egg just before hatching. Dorsal view of the slug inside with the mantle to the right.

Newly hatched young in the present study were immediately quite active and up to 12 mm long when fully extended, Schultes (2012) giving a length of 8 to 9 mm. The keel and the grooves on the mantle were both clearly visible and the tentacles were fully retractile. The newly hatched slugs were

a very pale pink (figure 5). In contrast, Oldham (1942) described his as translucent white, becoming milk white in a few hours, darkening to buff after a few days. By 30th September, at six weeks old, the first batch of young were about 18 mm long, pale brownish pink with a dark lateral band on each side but without darker pigmentation along the edges of the sole (figures 6 and 7). At this stage their appearance was very similar to that of juveniles of the black adults encountered more frequently in this area. All but 15 of the offspring were released in Oakrigg Wood on 19th October 2011. Those retained were of a very uniform appearance as they developed. By the end of February 2012 they were a deeper pinkish colour with a slightly darker lateral band on each side, a paler keel and now about 50 mm in length. From 26th March 2012 just eight of these offspring were retained. By the end of April the largest was about 70 mm long, they were a pinkish-grey colour and some pigmentation was just beginning to develop along the margins to the sole. Subsequently one individual died; the only mortality at any time. By 13th August 2012 the extended length of the largest individual was about 100 mm; appearance continued to be very uniform among the seven remaining individuals (figures 8 and 9) and very similar to that of the parent.



figure 8: *Limax cinereoniger*. One year old.



figure 5: *Limax cinereoniger*. Newly hatched slug.



figure 6: *Limax cinereoniger*. Six weeks old.



figure 7: *Limax cinereoniger*. Six weeks old.



figure 9: *Limax cinereoniger*. One year old.

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figure 1: BNSS headquarters, Bournemouth. (photo: Peter Topley)

A very successful joint meeting was held with the Bournemouth Natural Science Society at their impressive headquarters of 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth (figures 1 and 10) on Saturday 17th November 2012. It was attended by members of both societies, the associated biological recording group 'Bournemouth Naturally' and members of the general public resulting from local publicity. The event was a varied day of exhibits, a snail trail in the grounds, identification of shells brought in, four talks and valuable networking amongst those present over the tea, coffee and biscuits available in the entrance hall throughout the day. Summing up at the end, the President of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society, Steve Limburn, described it as 'a gem of a day' while our own President Mike Allen (figure 2) also endorsed the success of this collaboration that has much to offer in future activities.



figure 2: June Chatfield and Mike Allen in the Museum Room at Bournemouth Natural Science Society. (photo John Glasgow)



figure 3: Cabinets of exotic marine shells in the entrance hall.

The programme started with tours of the building including museum displays, cases of exotic shells in the hall (figure 3), various reference cabinets of British and foreign shells of land, freshwater and marine molluscs and in the geology room a superb collection of fossils from the Barton Beds of the Eocene to the east of Bournemouth. There was a snail trail in the garden (figure 4) that produced 15 species which, with a list made on a reconnaissance visit in April, brought the total garden list to 22. This included freshwater molluscs from the garden pond. The acidic nature of the sandy soil was here modified by shell sand off the shore and by the results of building works and human influences on the garden over the last century. The highlight on the snail trail was perhaps the Girdled Snail (*Hygromia cinctella*) an earlier introduction that has spread rapidly from its original stronghold in Devon during the last 20 years (figure 5).



figure 4: members and visitors on the BNSS garden 'snail trail'. (photo: Peter Topley)



figure 5: *Hygromia cinctella* from the garden of BNSS.

Some specimens of interest were brought in for identification by the public and interested children. On his 6th birthday Oscar Matthews of Bournemouth brought in a slug that turned out to be the Irish Slug, *Limacus maculatus*, a species originally found in Ireland that is now spreading to the southeast of England (figures 6 and 7). It was first recorded from Hampshire in 2011 in the New Forest (Norris, 2012) and this appears to be a first record for the modern administrative county of Dorset, although in the same Hants south Watsonian vice-county, but still an exciting record. Oscar also brought in a carpet shell, some exotic marine shells and *Hygromia cinctella* from his garden. A conchologist for the future! Another family from Southbourne brought in some slugs that had been found crawling across the carpets in their living room. On closer examination these turned out to be the Yellow Slug (*Limacus flavus*) a typically urban species. From a second floor balcony of a flat in Bournemouth came some living Common Garden Snails (*Cornu aspersum*) that had extraordinarily long and slender tentacles (figure 8). Maybe they came to this location on pot plants.

Another visitor brought in two tropical marine shells, a Scorpion Shell and a Helmet Shell. One of the children looking at the display recognised what he had been seeing on the local beach in the photograph of the egg cases of the Edible Whelk (*Buccinum undatum*) – a moment of discovery.



figure 6: Oscar Matthews with his specimen of *Limacus maculatus*. (photo: Peter Topley)

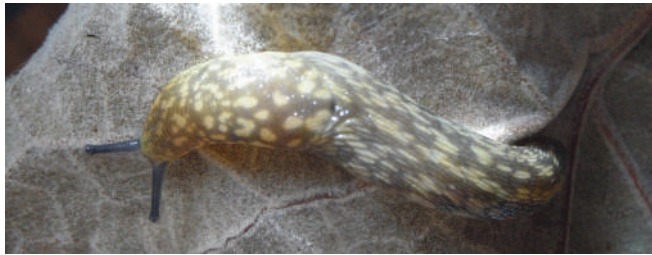


figure 7: *L. maculatus* from Bournemouth.



figure 8: *Cornu aspersum* from a balcony in Bournemouth.

Exhibits on display in the museum room included land snails with interpretive material prepared for Graham Long's talk (figure 9), mounted photographs of molluscs, books on the subject and a paper of work in progress on the Fan Angle in scallops by Geoffrey Grayer. In the lecture room were displays of British marine shells by Graham Saunders to illustrate his talk, some historic mollusc books and species associated with them brought by Peter Topley as well as display panels on the work of 'Bournemouth Naturally'. On sale in the hall were various BNSS produced cards, calendar and copies of *The Natural History of Bournemouth and surrounding area* produced and published by the Bournemouth Natural Science Society in 2000. The marine chapter includes some molluscs.

After lunch John Cresswell, Historian of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society, gave an introduction to the society that was founded in 1901, the development of its collection, the acquisition of the late Victorian premises in 1920 and its



figure 9: Graham Long by his display of land snails with Mike Downing, BNSS botany leader (left) and Adrian Brokenshire, Conch. Soc. (right).

current sections and activities. In spite of the shell collections there is little current expertise on conchology, hence their interest in working with the Conch Soc. The leader of the Zoology section Jonathan McGowan was present and he has taken an interest in shells of the local beaches so perhaps we might join up with him for a future joint marine field meeting in Bournemouth.

I then gave a brief history of the Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland from its origins in Yorkshire in 1876, the various achievements over the years, membership trends and its current interests. In contrast with the Bournemouth society that is concentrated on the town and New Forest, we are a national society with membership spread thinly over a wide area in Britain and overseas.

The two main lectures were by Graham Long, who lives at the edge of the New Forest in Fordingbridge, introducing the land snails to be found in the Bournemouth area that extends out across the acid New Forest to chalk grassland of Martin Down. Graham Saunders then gave an introduction to the study of British marine shells and his experiences in collecting.

Details of the future Bournemouth programme of talks, workshops and visits is given on the website of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society www.bnss.org.uk and there are certain special open days, usually in September. It is an inspiring place and well worth a visit if you are in the area and can be combined with shell collecting on the beach nearby with a chance of finding the Conch Soc motif, the Pelican's Foot (*Aporrhais pespelecani*).

Reference

Norris, A. (2012) Non-marine Recording – Activity and Highlights. *Mollusc World* **29**: 18-19.



figure 10: BNSS headquarters from the garden.

Monacha cantiana pleads guilty

June Chatfield

I was interested to read Graham Long's note in *Mollusc World* 29 asking about possible predation of Duke of Burgundy butterfly eggs by snails. In the 1980s Matthew Oates (now ecologist at the National Trust) was studying the Duke of Burgundy, a rare species, at Noar Hill, Selborne, a piece of chalk grassland in old chalk pits, where he was marking cowslip plants that had eggs of the butterfly on them in order to follow their development into the next stage. One day he came into my office at The Gilbert White Museum with a tube of snails for identification. They were in disgrace for eating about 20% of the Duke of Burgundy eggs. The culprit was *Monacha cantiana* the Kentish Snail, the most abundant snail in the chalk pits that seemed to favour the same places as the butterfly. Both the snail and the caterpillar eat leaves of cowslips, but the snail is less food specific and will also eat a range of other herbs according to availability.

On one occasion that summer I accompanied Matthew to Noar Hill at dusk to photograph the Duke of Burgundy caterpillars feeding at night and whilst doing this also caught on film a pair of *M. cantiana* mating. That July night, having finished with the photography, we walked back through the chalk pits in the dark had an amazing sight of glow-worms, over a hundred of them, shining their yellow-green glow like constellations in the sky on the grassy banks. These beetles (*Lampyrus noctiluca*) are predators of snails and I have seen one crawl out of a shell of *M. cantiana*. Noar Hill is a reliable site for glow-worms but I have never seen as many since, usually 10–20. Although the snail was eating the butterfly eggs, in turn the snail was being eaten by glow-worms. What eats glow-worms?



Monacha cantiana, the Kentish Snail.



M. cantiana crawling.

(photo: Peter Topley)

More of Molluscs on coins...

Patrick Mackenzie

Dear Sir,

Recently in my local pub your contributor and highly enthusiastic member, Ms Briony Eastabrook, showed me your short querying article concerning a particular coin (Topley, 2012). It was the 2011 WWF commemorative 50 pence, designed by Matthew Dent. You asked if any mollusc had previously featured on a British coin.

Counting the Island of Jersey as British, if not actually in the United Kingdom, the answer is yes. A set of gold and silver coins was issued in Jersey in 1972 to commemorate the silver wedding of Queen Elizabeth I and Prince Philip.

The coin concerned is the gold £20. It features the ormer, described as an edible abalone, *Haliotis tuberculata*, used as food in the Channel Islands.

Yours faithfully

Patrick Mackenzie

Part-time adviser to the Royal Mint,
(user of the Queen's Head Inn, Stow-on-the-Wold).



Reverse of 1972 Jersey gold twenty pound silver wedding coin (courtesy of <http://www.taxfreegold.co.uk/1972jerseysets.html>).

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Oyster dredges at Le Vivier sur Mer, France

Graham Saunders

In May 2012 we took a hotel room opposite an oyster processing complex at Le Vivier sur Mer, France. Mont San Michel itself was just out of sight to the east. The shore was high facing with grey mudflats scoured by tidal channels in Baie de Mont San Michel. This is a major oyster production area with huge grey warehouses but few signs of

on the water were piles of rubber mesh frames and limited amounts of refuse from dredging, mainly *Glycymeris glycymeris* (dog cockle) (below left), a *Buccinum undatum* (common whelk) and some *Ostrea* (oysters) (below right) on the rubber mesh. The attached bases of the *Ostrea* were altered to match the mesh. Although there was no sign of recent activity, there was a whole series of different designs of amphibious oyster dredges. I think every one was a different size and shape. I photographed a few for the record (it).



The 'Shell King of Southsea'

Colin Mcleod

I was interested in the oyster mousetrap shown in *Mollusc World*, issue 29 (July 2012). Stella Turk and Jan Light are not the only Conchological Society members who collect cards with a molluscan theme: I have a collection of around 1000 postcards featuring molluscs. I don't think I have anything quite so bizarre as Stella's oyster mousetrap card, but there are some oddities amongst them. My collection includes many modern cards still subject to copyright, but this card (right) can be dated to before 1918, so it's unlikely that any publisher or photographer is going to object to it being reproduced.

It shows the Shell King of Southsea as Father Neptune, his gown festooned with seaweed and scallop shells. Other photos exist, showing different Southsea Shell Kings with different costumes in different years, so I presume the role related to some annual event, but I have not been able to find out anything more about it.

Reference

Light, J. (2012) Oyster mousetrap. *Mollusc World* 29: 29.

Perhaps one of our members on the south coast might be able to shed more light on this tradition? [Ed.]



Shell King of Southsea, as Father Neptune.

10th October 2012

Dear Editor,

I would like to reply, rather belatedly, to the article 'Oysters and Horseshoes – a reply' (Light, 2006) which was posted [on your web site] on 3rd July 2012. I came across this recently when Googling 'perforated oyster shells' though I have not been able to find the article to which the author was responding [Menez A. (2006), now available online. Ed.].

My sister Pamela Platt and I are daughters of Eric Holden, quoted in the article – (Holden, 1963). We were very young when our father was excavating the deserted medieval village of Hangleton, now embraced by Hove, East Sussex, in the early 1950s, though I do remember it vividly.

The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum (WDOAM), Singleton, West Sussex (see www.wealddown.co.uk) has a 'Hangleton House' on display – this is a 'replica' of a 13th-century peasant's house, taken from our father's plans and excavations. We were asked by WDOAM to steward one of the sessions of the Hangleton House exhibition for British Archaeology Week in July, and indeed we did this in 2011 too. The exhibition was not actually in the house itself, but elsewhere on the site, and comprised many of the finds from the Hangleton excavation, including the perforated oyster shells. I attach a photograph of these (figure1).

I had been intrigued last year to see these five oyster shells with deliberately made holes in them, and many visitors put forward ideas for their use, i.e. crow-scarers, a football rattle (this from a child), threaded on a stick for some sort of game, threaded on a cord for neck decoration, house decoration, good luck charms etc.

I had intended to try to follow this up, but it wasn't until recently, having seen the five oyster shells on display again this July, that I did some internet searching and discovered your site. I knew that other perforated shells had been found in medieval and Roman excavations, as the article mentions, at Bristol and Bath.

I would just like to correct the statement made in the article that Holden 'described perforated oyster shells as a persistent feature of finds assemblages...he figured some perforated oyster shells and a typical nail in his paper (Fig. 39, page 175)' as this is not accurate.

While *oyster shells* were a persistent feature of this medieval site, only five shells with perforations were found, one being in the cellar of a much later building. The 'nail' that the article refers to, illustrated on the same page as the shells and other objects, is not a nail, but, and I quote from the description on p.176: 'A marine fish-spine probably used as a pin. Found under the buttress wall in Building 3.' This was nothing to do so with the shells. So I would be glad if this correction could be noted in a future edition of *Mollusc World*.

However, the article has raised a most interesting question – just what were these perforated shells used for? I have written to several archaeologists and house historians to gain some ideas – and I am certainly not knowledgeable in this field. Though I do feel the idea that the shells could be used as a repair medium for roofs in a 'patching' capacity does not hold water (if you will excuse the pun), though I know it

has been mooted elsewhere, but perhaps the idea has just been 'picked up' and passed on and has become a 'factoid'.

One of my correspondents cannot work out how oyster shells could, practically, be used for the purpose of patching roofs. If a shell was placed over roof coverings, the water would simply run under it and through the defective tile. If placed underneath, it would not do anything at all. And it would be easier to put in pieces of new thatching material into a thatched roof, than try to patch them with oyster shells.

Another correspondent envisages them perhaps as some form of external embellishment to houses or structures of medieval or post-medieval date and thinks this could be an interesting area of research, especially in places with a coastal connection.

With best wishes, and hopes for some further discussion on an intriguing subject,

Yours sincerely,

Janet Pennington (Dr)

5 Swallowmead, College Hill, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3HE



figure 1: Perforated oyster shells from the Hangleton excavation.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Sussex archaeologists and historians Luke Barber, David Dunkin, David Martin, David Rudling and Liz Somerville who replied promptly to my requests for advice.

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- Light, J. (2006) Oysters and horseshoes - a reply. *Mollusc World* **11**, 18. <http://www.conchsoc.org/MolluscWorld11/17>.
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Don Pickrell joined the Conchological Society in the early 1960s when he lived at Charlton in southeast London and during that decade he was an active member, regularly attending indoor and field meetings but with some other Conch. Soc. members at that time he was also in the Geologists' Association and this may have been the source of his introduction to our society. Don's particular interests were non-marine

molluscs and the mapping scheme, fossils and geology. In land snails he took a special interest in the Door Snails (Clausiliidae) including species from Europe collected during field excursions of European Malacological Congresses and the German Malacological Society. Don was an enthusiast with a great sense of humour and particularly keen on field work. Being tall and slim with dark hair, a stylish moustache and pointed beard he earned the nickname of 'Castro' after some resemblance to the Cuban dictator; a name coined by Tom Pain. In the field he would go forth with a huge array of equipment from geological hammer to collecting nets on long poles and all of this carried initially by public transport before most members acquired cars.

His reports of field meetings were published in *The Conchologists' Newsletter* (Pickrell, 1964, 1965a, 1965b and 1970) and he was co-author of one paper with Adrian Norris in the *Journal of Conchology* (1972). He provided the identifications of fossils for two field meetings that I reported on (Chatfield 1964 and 1965) and would point out features of geological interest on field meetings. At that time the new 10 km mapping scheme (1961) had added a sense of purpose to the field meeting programme and we needed to visit places that were not particularly good for molluscs as well as the productive classic sites. It appealed to Don's sense of humour to lead one to Leith Hill in Surrey, a very acid site on Lower Greensand. Snails need lime, but not so slugs (Pickrell, 1964). This meeting produced a very interesting old woodland slug, *Limax cinereoniger*, that none of us had then seen before. We all passed it round from finger to finger to admire in the railway carriage on our journey back from Dorking rather to the dismay of other passengers in the carriage who did not share our enthusiasm! The slug was then sent to Dr H. E. Quick, the national slug expert at the time, for confirmation. Leith Hill had proved an inspired choice as a field meeting location.

By training and profession Don was a chemist in industry, firstly in London in forensic work, thence to the water industry in Bristol in 1965. Work there gave him access to reservoirs, lakes and canals in the Avon area that he was able to survey for molluscs too. His next job as a chemist was in sewage, taking him to Derbyshire, later returning to the West Country at Shepton Mallet in Somerset as a chemist at Avalon Chemicals, makers of materials for Clark's shoes whose headquarters were at Street nearby.

Whilst in Shepton Mallet he furthered his interest in geology by taking an Open University degree in the subject. He also served as Town Mayor in the 1980s and as Secretary of the Quakers.

After relocating from London to Bristol he married Dr Angela Harris in 1968 who was a school doctor and they had a large family of six children, three daughters and three sons, who followed the family interest in science, went to university and obtained degrees. On top of Don's keen interest in molluscs he had other hobbies including genealogy, kite flying and being a prison visitor through his contacts in the Quakers. He was delighted to discover, in view of his interest in geology, that some of his ancestors were limestone miners in Derbyshire. Angela sadly died of cancer in 1992 and some years later Don remarried and eventually moved to Lampeter, Dyfed in Wales where he died. His second wife predeceased him but they were divorced in 2003. The study of geology and industrial archaeology was strong in Wales and naturally Don followed this interest, becoming a guide in the gold mines at Dolaucothi until the onset of Parkinson's disease. He died suddenly at home in Lampeter and is survived by his six adult children and eight grandchildren, the latest being born to his youngest daughter Susan in New York just six weeks before he died. I was notified of the death by his eldest daughter Mrs Valerie Fish. The funeral service was held on 7th November 2012 at St Cynwyl church, Caio, Dyfed.

When the death was announced at the Conchological Society meeting on 8th December 2012, several members contributed recollections: Martin Willing of his field equipment, Janet Sawyer and Christine Street of use of his geological hammer for breaking a particularly hard flapjack on a Pembrokeshire marine field week. As the French would say *c'etait un original*.

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Publications by Don Pickrell

- Pickrell, D. G. (1964) Field meeting at Leith Hill, Saturday 20th June, 1964. *The Conchologists' Newsletter* **11**: 66-67 (the fly-eating dog was mine).
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- Chatfield, J. (1964) Field meeting at Albury, Surrey. *The Conchologists' Newsletter* **11**: 67-68. Fossils identified by D. G. Pickrell.
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Photo above left: Don Pickrell on field work in Austria in 1966. (supplied by his daughter Valerie Fish)

Parakeet and Snail window

June Chatfield

On display in the service wing museum at the Mansion House in Nonsuch Park, Ewell in Surrey is a piece of enamelled glass depicting an Alexandrian Parakeet with a crawling snail in the foreground (figures 1 and 2). The explanatory label gives the details: 'Enamelled glass by E Margaret Pearson, dated 1776. Probably one of four parrot roundels displayed at the Society of Arts Salon in 1776'. It is curiously appropriate since Ring-necked Parakeets have been established breeding in Nonsuch Park for over 20 years while the Common Garden Snail (*Cornu aspersum*), is itself a Roman introduction.

Both species live in the park today and shells of the snail were among the finds during the excavation of Nonsuch Palace in 1959 (Biddle, 2005). A scale model of Henry VIII's long lost palace of Nonsuch is on display in this excellent museum which, as well as telling the story of the palace, demonstrates the service wing of an early nineteenth century mansion that was built on to the original farmhouse in 1802. For further details and opening times visit the website www.friendsofnonsuch.org.uk. Adjacent to the service wing is the cafe, the Nonsuch Pantry and the attractive historic landscaped gardens of the Mansion House open to the public as well as about 400 acres of Nonsuch Park being the remains of the Little Park surrounding the former palace which was situated across the avenue near the Ewell gate. Nonsuch Watch, the conservation society concerned with the natural environment of the park, keeps records of plants and animals should members like to do some recording on a visit. Their e-mail address is nonsuchwatch@gmail.com.

Reference

Biddle, M. (2005) *Nonsuch Palace The Material Culture of a Noble Restoration Household*, Oxbow Books, Oxford.



figure 1: Parakeet and snail window, Mansion House, Nonsuch Park, Ewell (detail).



figure 2: Parakeet and snail window, Mansion House, Nonsuch Park, Ewell.

Conchological Society – Publication Sales Officer Wanted

For a number of years Celia Pain has efficiently looked after the sales of our special publication and back numbers. She has decided to relinquish this responsibility, and we thank her for the excellent job she has done.

We are, therefore, looking for someone to take on this task. The stock includes The Conchologists' Newsletter, Mollusc World, Journal of Conchology and a few copies of our special publications. We have compiled a full list of the stock and their prices which will also soon be available on our web site.

Please contact Mike Allen (see p. 31) who has the current stock and can supply the details.

Mike has taken the stock (1 set of shelves worth) and is dealing with sales until June 2013 at the latest.

Terebra maculata in Cambridgeshire!

Julian Evan-Hart

I must admit that the study of shells is not something I am particularly well versed in. It is true that I have always admired them from when searching along Britain's south coast rock pools to the shores of the Pacific, and even taken home the odd specimen. However my real passion lies in being a metal detectorist, and one never quite knows just what your next discovery will be, or indeed where it will take you as regards associated research. As a detectorist, shells for me are one of the many important 'detective tools' one can use inland to assess where sites of human habitation have been, and consequently increase the chances of finding metallic artefacts and coins.

The key shell archaeologically is, of course, the oyster. It has been consumed in Britain for thousands of years and imported inland on a huge scale. With the passage of time and being inland buried in varying soils the oyster shell normally becomes whiter and also desiccated and somewhat flaky in texture. Such an oyster shell in this condition would be interpreted as being from a site of Roman occupation or perhaps even mediaeval. In such situations it is part of a series of clues. Pottery and coins, along with artefacts, would all be used to determine the site's origins and then in most cases the ages too of the located shells.

I primarily metal detect in Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire and have seen Marine Mussel, Freshwater Mussel, Periwinkle, Oyster and Cowrie shells on ancient inland sites. Some weeks ago I was searching a Roman site in Cambridgeshire when, amongst the flaking oysters, I spotted something rather different: an unusual spiral cone shaped shell. Upon examining it I noticed that the thick shell had become calcined and now had the crystalline sparkling texture of marble visible on areas of fracture. I carefully placed the unidentified mollusc shell in my pocket for cleaning later on. Once it was cleaned I could see it bore purple and brown blotched markings and was indeed a most curious specimen. I decided to pursue the matter, thinking this was quite interesting and contacted Simon Taylor, Chairman of The British Shell Collectors Club and acting Marine Recorder of the Conchological Society. I thought if anyone can help with identifying this strange find he could. I was correct....Simon got back in contact very shortly explaining that the shell was known as a type of Augur and its most likely species was *Terebra maculata* (figures 1 and 2). How very intriguing; but yet more was to come. The native zone for this species is the Indo-Pacific region. One

of the possible ways that this wonderful shell might have made such a journey to Cambridgeshire is by trade links



figure 1: *Terebra maculata* from a Roman site in Cambridgeshire.



figure 1: *T. maculata* from a Roman site; detail.

during the Roman Empire, which indeed, as we know, were truly extensive. There is of course the possibility that this ancient shell may have been deposited here in more recent times such as another finder's loss, or even soil moving operations. But this Roman site is extremely remote and no soil moving has taken place here. So we are really left with the Roman trade theory, if only such finds could talk. But away from such wishful thoughts I just wanted to share with members and readers this unusual discovery which is a world away from my normal finds...and also to highlight the pleasure that such an intriguing find has brought me. When I had completed my search I had located sixteen Roman coins and over 30 oyster shells from amongst a deposit of broken tiles, flints and pottery shards. All of this adds up to additional further evidence that in this instance it most certainly does seem this specimen is at least 1700 years old, and helps to confirm that somehow it has indeed travelled a great distance. The shell now rests in what I call my 'main collection', right next to a selection of Roman silver coins, some of which it may well have experienced being close to this shell many many years before....some 1700 years ago when it made its very lengthy journey to finally end up in a remote and dark soiled field in southern Cambridgeshire.

In April 2012 I collected some empty shells of land snails from my garden on chalk in Alton, Hampshire for demonstration purposes. Those of the Round-mouthed Snail or Land Winkle (*Pomatias elegans*) are thick and can be handled by children without breaking as this species is a calcicole requiring calcareous soil. In the sample that I had taken I was intrigued to see that the thick shell was not a deterrent to a predator. Of the 164 adult shells collected 56, about a third of them, had a large window taken out of the body whorl 3–5mm away from the aperture leaving the lip intact in all except 11 that had been broken into the lip. These were found on a mossy garden lawn surrounded by a traditional hawthorn/blackthorn hedge. Who was the culprit? There is an abundance of Wood Mice (*Apodemis sylvatica*) in my garden and also the Yellow-necked Mouse (*A. flavicollis*) as well as an occasional Hedgehog that visited in 2012, but I put my bet on the mice.



figure 1: Predated shells of *Pomatias elegans* from an Alton garden.

Heart shaped *Scrobicularia plana*

Jim Logan

Dear Peter,

This unusual shaped *Scrobicularia plana* was found by Dr Margaret Brown on a beach near Broadford in Skye sadly not on 14th February! I thought that you might like to include it in Mollusc World.

Best wishes

Jim Logan

[This shape, caused by earlier shell damage, may have been caused by a predator: any comments or suggestions will be gratefully received. Ed.]



About the Conchological Society

The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland is one of the oldest societies devoted to the study of molluscs. It was founded in 1876 and has around 300 members worldwide. Members receive two publications: *Journal of Conchology* which specialises in Molluscan Biogeography, Taxonomy and Conservation and *Mollusc World*, our magazine for members. New members are always welcome to attend field meetings and indoor meetings before joining.

Some useful Contacts (*see web site for further contact details*)

HON. PRESIDENT: Mike Allen
Redroof, Green Road,
Codford, Warminster,
Wiltshire, BA12 ONW
Email: president@conchsoc.org

HON. GENERAL SECRETARY: Rosemary Hill
447b Wokingham Road,
Earley, Reading, RG6 7EL
Email: secretary@conchsoc.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS and MEMBERSHIP

Please send subscriptions or directly related enquiries to
Carolyn Postgate,
CIRCA subscriptions,
13-17 Sturton Street,
Cambridge, CB1 2SN

For other enquiries about membership please contact:-

HON. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Caren Topley
E mail: membership@conchsoc.org
Caren will also forward any e mails intended for Carolyn.

HON. PROGRAMME SECRETARY
Sebastian Payne (*See back cover*)

HON. EDITOR (*Mollusc World*): Peter Topley
c/o The Hon. General Secretary (address above),
(or alternatively Peter's address may be found in the
member's guide)
E mail: magazine@conchsoc.org

HON. CONSERVATION OFFICER: Martin Willing
14 Goodwood Close, Midhurst,
Sussex, GU29 9JG
Email: conservation@conchsoc.org

ACTING HON. MARINE CENSUS RECORDER:
Simon Taylor
Fiddlesticks, 44 Strawberry Lane,
Tolleshunt Knights, Essex, C05 0RX
Email: marine@conchsoc.org

HON. NON-MARINE CENSUS RECORDER:
Adrian Norris
17 West Park Drive, Leeds, LS16 5BL
Email: nonmarine@conchsoc.org

How to become a member

Subscriptions are payable in January each year, and run for the period 1st January to 31st December.

Ordinary membership £33.00

Family/Joint membership £35.00

Student membership £15.00

Under 18 (receiving *Mollusc World* only) £5.00 Institutional subscriptions £47.00.

In view of the high cost of overseas postage, members living in Europe will be asked to pay an additional postage charge of £8, and members living in the Rest of the World an additional postage charge of £17. See website for further details.

Payments in sterling only, to Carolyn Postgate (contact details above). For UK residents we suggest payment by standing order, and if a UK tax payer, please sign a short statement indicating that you wish the subscription to be treated as Gift Aid. Another simple and secure way of paying for both UK and overseas members is by credit card online via PayPal from <http://www.conchsoc.org/join>. Overseas members may also pay using Western Union, but a named person has to be nominated, so please use the Hon Treasurer's name, Nick Light.

How to submit articles to *Mollusc World*

Copy (via e mail, typed or handwritten) should be sent to the Hon. Magazine Editor (contact details above). If sending electronic copy using e-mail please include a subject line "Mollusc World submission". When emailing several large file attachments, such as photos, please divide your submission up into separate emails referencing the original article to ensure receipt. Electronic submission is preferred in Microsoft Word, but if other programmes (e.g. Works) are used, please indicate the programme used with the accompanying e-mail. Images and Artwork may be digitised, but we recommend that a digital image size 200Kb- 1.5Mb (JPEG preferred) be sent with your submission. For line art we recommend that you send hard copy, all originals will be treated with care and returned by post. Authors should note that issues of the magazine may be posted retrospectively on the Conchological Society's web site. The copy deadline for the July 2013 issue is 30th May 2013; inclusion in that issue is dependant upon space available but contributions are always welcome at any time.

Advertisements in *Mollusc World*

We are pleased to invite advertisements, provided they are in line with the Conchological Society's charitable objectives and responsibilities. Typical examples might include books and other publications, equipment, services and collections of (or individual) shells. The latter will be vetted on a case by case basis and only accepted if there are no ethical problems. Advertisements of shells for sale from commercial shell dealers will generally not be accepted. A nominal charge will usually be made for advertisements and will be required from commercial advertisers. Charges per issue are currently £20 per 100 cm² space for a boxed advertisement or £1.00 per line for a text only advertisement. Any requests for advertisements should be sent to the Editor by the normal route; information on preferred methods of payment will be given at the time.

Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Diary of Meetings



[YCS Saturday 13th April 2013: FIELD MEETING (non-marine) Forest of Bowland, Yorks.]

Saturday 20th April 2013 - AGM, PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS and exhibits.

Guest speaker: Jennifer Robinson - *Shells from Roman Pompeii*.

14.00 –17:00: Angela Marmont Centre, Natural History Museum, London, SW7 5BD.

(Council members please note that there will be a Council meeting before this meeting.)

[YCS Saturday 11th May 2013: FIELD MEETING (non-marine) Low Bradley, Yorks.]

Saturday 19th May 2013: FIELD MEETING (non-marine) Little Matlock Wood, Sheffield area.

Joint with Sorby Natural History Society. Records from the meeting will contribute to the Sheffield Bioblitz.

Organiser: Robert Cameron (0114 268 6675, radc@blueyonder.co.uk).

Meet 10:30 at the car park of the Robin Hood Inn, Greaves Lane, Stanington, S6 6BG; SK309895. Please park as far away from the Inn as possible. **Slopes in Little Matlock Wood are steep.** Bring good footwear, and warm and waterproof clothing. Food available at the Inn; bring a packed lunch if preferred. Fragment of ancient woodland and richest mollusc habitat within the city area.

Saturday 8th June 2013: FIELD MEETING (non-marine) and President's Open House: Codford, Wilts.

Organiser: Mike Allen (01985 850713 / 07828 103454, aea.escargots@gmail.com).

From 11:30 at Redroof, Green Road, Codford, Warminster, Wilts BA12 0NW.

Includes a laboratory visit and local snail hunt. Food and drink provided, so pre-booking by Monday 27th May is essential.

Sunday 23rd June 2013: FIELD MEETING (marine, fossil and non-marine): Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex.

Organiser: June Chatfield (01420 82214 – home, no e-mail).

Meet 11:00 at the car park at SZ 804963 at the end of Bracklesham Lane. Land snails and strandline in the morning; shore (likely to include *Pandora albida*) and fossils (likely to include *Venericor*) in the afternoon (LT about 17:00, 0.6m).

Saturday 10th August 2013: FIELD MEETING (marine): Chimney Rocks, Penzance, Cornwall.

Organiser: David Fenwick (01736 448392, davidfenwick@nrm.gov.uk).

Meet 12:00 at top of slipway on W side of Jubilee Pool, SW 475299. Piddocks, small gastropods and *Doris ocelligera* (LT 14:00, 0.9m).

Tuesday 20th - Monday 26th August 2013: FIELD MEETING (marine): Strangford Lough, County Down (organised by Centre for Environmental Data and Recording and Seasearch NI, with CS support).

Organiser: Julia Nunn (julia.nunn@nmni.com).

A week of shore work and diving in this rich Marine Nature Reserve, based in Portaferry where laboratory facilities will be available. More information from the organiser and from <http://www.nmni.com/CEDaR/MarineBlitz>. (see also the article relating to this meeting on pages 3–4).

Later 2013 meetings: Please note the following dates in your diary

Field meetings:

[YCS Sunday 1st September 2013 FIELD MEETING (non-marine) North York Moors near Robin Hoods Bay.]

Saturday 7th September 2013 FIELD MEETING (marine): Woolacombe, Devon.

[YCS Saturday 21st September 2013: FIELD MEETING (marine) Scarborough, Yorks.]

Sunday 22nd September 2013 FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Edmundsham House, Dorset.

Saturday 12th October 2013 FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Wyre Forest, Worcestershire / Shropshire.

Sunday 10th November 2013 FIELD MEETING (marine and non-marine): East Lothian coast (if weather permits).

[YCS Saturday 5th October 2013 FIELD MEETING (non-marine) Fridaythorpe, Yorks.]

Indoor meetings (Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings are at the Angela Marmont Centre, NHM, London):

Saturday 5th October 2013 INDOOR MEETING: Demonstrations, exhibits, and lecture (no Council meeting).

(Saturday 19th October COUNCIL meeting.)

Saturday 9th November 2013 REGIONAL INDOOR MEETING – Edinburgh (no Council meeting).

Saturday 30th November 2013 WORKSHOP - Woking.

Saturday 14th Dec 2013 INDOOR MEETING (and Council meeting).

More details and any updates will be available on the website (www.conchsoc.org).

Indoor meetings at the Natural History Museum take place in the Angela Marmont Centre for UK Biodiversity, Darwin Building. From the main entrance hall, turn left at the tail of the *Diplodocus*, go past the dinosaur exhibition, then down the stairs, and then turn left. The door of the Centre will be locked; please ring the bell and someone will come to open it. **Please bring plenty of exhibits and demonstration material.** If you intend to attend a **field meeting**, please remember to inform the leader beforehand, and if, on the day, you are held up in traffic or your public transport is delayed, please try to contact the meeting leader if possible.

We are always happy to receive any suggestions for speakers for indoor meetings, or offers to lead field meetings, and also any suggestions about Society participation in the meetings of local and other societies. Programme Secretary: Bas Payne, The Mill House, Clifford Bridge, Drewsteignton, Exeter EX6 6QE; 01647 24515, programme@conchsoc.org