



# HAWAIIAN SHELL NEWS



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NEW SERIES NO. 197

## EIGHT YEARS OF DEEP-WATER SHELLING

by DIANE DONNER

For the past eight years my husband George and I, both HMS members, have been engaged in deep-water trapping off several of the Hawaiian islands. Our objective is to make a living but in the process we have brought to light some remarkable shells.

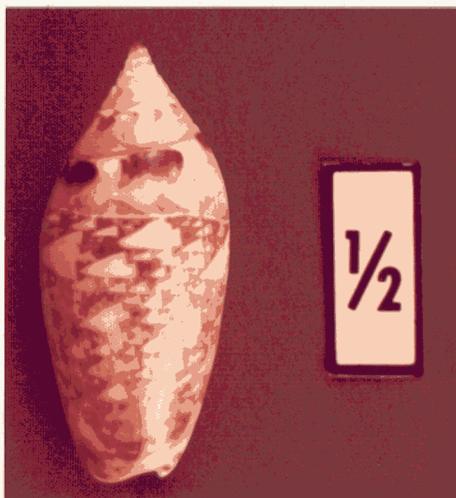
At least two of these shells (one shown to the right) appear to be new species. We have shown them to Dr. E. Alison Kay, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, University of Hawaii, who we hope will include and describe them in her forthcoming monograph on Hawaiian mollusks.

The story of our deep-sea trapping may suggest to other members a useful shelling technique. An earlier report (HSN June 1972) inspired a Bermuda resident to start a similar operation. Shellwise, his results were encouraging, but I don't know whether the operation was continued.

When our family came to windward Oahu from San Diego, we intended to fish for lobster for a year or two, then return to the Mainland. As you see, we are still here! George was born in Hawaii and his family is still here, so the move was something like coming home.

The first year, we fished for lobsters with nets on the reef. We were fairly successful, but when the season ended for the summer we were left with nothing to tide us over until it opened again in the fall. So we began experimenting with traps for crabs, and by the time the next lobster season ended we were in a better position.

At that time we had a helper from Puget



*Apparently unnamed, this *Oliva* sp. was brought up in a crab trap from more than 400 feet of water off Kahuku, Oahu, Hawaii. The only previous known whole specimen was dredged by the Research Vessel *Pele* off Honolulu in the mid-1960s.*

*Photo: Kemp*

Sound with experience at catching Dungeness crabs. He and George put their heads together, did a lot of studying and talking, and built their first traps of chicken wire and steel rods. As they learned the business, one type of trap led to another. Soon we were almost completely out of the lobster-netting business.

In time we got bigger boats, added hydraulic winches, and learned to use the fathometer.

Results were consistently good — when the ocean permitted. But Windward Oahu is well named; it is exposed to the often-boisterous northeast trades and for weeks on end work offshore is chancy. We seemed to be kept ashore as often as we could go out. Early in 1975 we moved to Maui.

In time, George developed a reputation as a concerned conservationist. He felt that his effort to find new sources of cheap and fresh seafood was taking some of the pressure off the inshore reefs.

In the beginning, we didn't know anything about shells. In fact, we were rather surprised when these beauties came up in our traps. Most of them were "crabbed," but at first we didn't recognize the difference between them and the

"live" shells. We would wash them, get the smell out by the straight-bleach method, and then leave them around the house in baskets as decoration or give them to visitors.

One day George brought home a beautiful round bluish shell with spots, different from any previous find. I took it to Roy Watanabe, a longtime HMS member and neighbor. He gasped when I held it out to show him. That was our introduction to *Phalium umbilicatum* (Pease, 1860) — still a prize in our collection. That was the shell that really got us started.

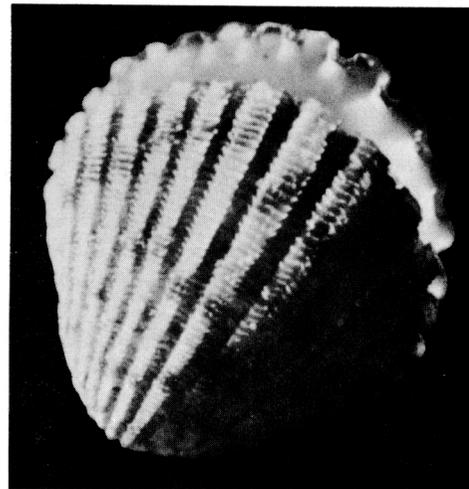
After that we went around our garden, digging up the old shells from under the bushes and asking questions in earnest.

We dislike killing the animals in the shells unless they can be used for food. George would try to remove the hermit crabs unharmed and turn them loose with instructions "Go find another shell and come back tomorrow." I recall one crab that held out in "his" shell for several days until he built up enough nerve to go house hunting.

Some hermit crabs are large with powerful pincers. The safest thing to do with them is to wait!

We had a great deal of help in those early days from Roy Watanabe and E. R. Cross. Roy took many photos for us, and Ellis was always ready with reference material. Our interest in shells was stimulated also by Charlie Wolfe,

(Cont'd on Page 5)



## Hawaiian Shell News

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are offered for six and twelve insertions.

Write to the Corresponding Secretary for

information.

## HMS MAY MEETING

"A Samoan Holiday — Shelling All the Way" was the title of a light-hearted presentation by HMS members Wes Thorsson, Ray McKinsey and Bob Purtymun at the May membership meeting of the Society. The turnout was substantially over 100.

To hear them tell it, Thorsson and McKinsey really planned to visit Australia last year, but were persuaded to stop in American Samoa, to which Purtymun recently had been transferred. The three apparently snorkelled, scubaed and reefcrawled every likely spot on and around Tutuila island and Upolu in Western Samoa. They didn't find much, according to Thorsson, and they showed slides of something like forty different species to prove it!

For the skeptics, there were several display cases full of Samoan shells. also.

## REEFCOMBINGS

First, the good news. Last year's action by the HMS Board of Directors, substantially increasing the annual dues, has succeeded in stabilizing the Society's finances. The drop in membership that was so gloomily predicted failed to materialize. In fact, the 1390 total reported at the May Board meeting was ahead of this time last year.

The bad news? It isn't really bad. It is a plea to members to understand the economics of publishing *Hawaiian Shell News*. Two important costs are printing and photo processing which change little whether we send out 1,500 copies of HSN or 5,000. If each current member of the Society would sign up just one new member, the per copy cost of HSN would drop dramatically. Think about it.

(HMS Office Manager Nancy Parker will send sample copies of HSN and membership blanks to you or to people you designate. Write her.)

The highly respected quarterly, *Of Sea and Shore*, recently published a reader's lament about the treatment he (or she) had received from shell dealers. Tom Rice, the editor, may have been foolhardy to run it, but the widespread reaction suggests that dealer ethics is an extremely sensitive issue.

Elmer Leehman is one of several HMS members who have spoken out in defense of dealers.

"We are well aware that there are all kinds of dealers but, by and large, they are conscientious, going out of their way to do a good job, often under most difficult conditions," he declared. "The letter writer, who signed himself merely 'Tulip Cone,' erred in criticizing all dealers indiscriminately.

"Perhaps, though, this would be a good time for shell dealers to organize themselves for mutual benefit. Such a group might work out a code that would establish the basic rights of the individual buyer-collector, and at the same time protect the dealer against bad credit risks and unreliable suppliers. There is no reason why it should not be worldwide in the long run.

"I suggest that subscribing dealers adopt a seal or some other easy identification, which might be used in advertising and on price lists. Such a seal would assure the potential buyer he is dealing with a man with substantial knowledge of shells, who adheres to established rules in conducting his business, and whose shells are what they are represented to be.

"Obviously, no such organization can be a success unless it has the support of a substantial number of dealers already trusted by the shell-buying public. It would have to avoid scrupulously any suggestion it was trying to 'rig' prices or eliminate competition. A lot of time and manpower — plus a fair amount of money — would have to go into the project. But, I suspect, it

would be an important milestone in the favorite hobby of all of us."

The Malacological Society of Australia has installed Thomas A. Darragh as its president, succeeding J. Hope Black who had held the office three years. Mrs. Black has been elected to the MSA Council.

Darragh is curator of fossils at the National Museum of Victoria, in Melbourne. One of his particular interests is said to be the volutes of the Southern Australian area.

On behalf of all members of the Hawaiian Malacological Society, HSN conveys its best wishes to Tom Darragh for his coming term of office.

The recent "profile" of Dr. Dieter Rockel, the German collector and writer (HSN April 1976) contained a couple of factual errors, for which HSN apologizes. "Club Conchilia" actually was formed at the initiative of Mr. Stein of Wilmsdorf, although Rockel was one of the early members. And the Dieters live in Darmstadt, not Duisberg.

A few months ago HSN printed a report on the amazing distribution of the Society's membership and noted the relative paucity of members in the Caribbean.

"You forgot about your member in Curacao," writes D.L.N. Vink of Curacao, in the Netherlands Antilles. "Please note the range extension."

If anything is wrong with your June, July or August issues of *Hawaiian Shell News*, please be tolerant.

The editor, the associate editor and several of the mainstays of the staff expect to be away from Honolulu during those months.

All three issues are being written, edited and printed in advance, and several shortcuts and speedups have been put into effect. The results should differ in no way from the ordinary unless something goes wrong. In that case, it will be terrible!

Perhaps this is a good place to voice the editor's appreciation for the long-term assistance given to HSN by two Honolulu members who are about to move to the Mainland. Charles Wolfe (see page 10) for the past two years has handled the thankless and onerous job of mailing, as well as reading proof, compiling the monthly shell-identification-photo pages, and writing numerous articles on Hawaiian species. His departure will leave a serious gap in HSN's ranks.

Equally distressing is the departure of Fran Wright for Florida to which her husband Russ has been transferred. Decorative as well as useful, Fran has filled a variety of offices in the Society during her eight years in Honolulu. In particular, for the past three years she has hustled volunteers each month to collate the pages of HSN and stuff copies in envelopes for mailing. If your June issue arrives late it probably will mean that we had trouble getting volunteer "stuffers" without her.

## THE COMPLETE SHELLER by Elmer Leehman

You don't have to be in shell collecting very long before you become acquainted with the name of Dr. R. Tucker Abbott. It appears in species names, in magazine articles, on monographs, in lecture programs, among shell show judges, on editorial boards, as curator of mollusks for a famous museum. You soon get the feeling that no malacological question is really settled until it has been submitted to R. Tucker Abbott.

And that feeling is substantially correct. Abbott is unquestionably the outstanding authority today in his field. Fortunately, his vast knowledge is tempered with good humor, youthful enthusiasm (although he is in his mid-50s), eagerness to help others, an incredible amount of energy, and a degree of humility that is not inevitable among successful scientists.

The Hawaiian Malacological Society is deeply honored to have had Abbott as a member for most of the past twenty years. He is a sporadic contributor to *Hawaiian Shell News* (we wish he would write more often), and an occasional visitor to our islands.

As I compiled this brief profile of Dr. Abbott, whom I know primarily through correspondence, I was again impressed with the extraordinary brilliance and diversity of his career. And yet, from his earliest days, he has remained fixed in his interest in shells.

When Robert Tucker Abbott was a youngster he spent his summer vacations in Bermuda where an uncle, Col. Richard Abbott, was director of the Bermuda biological station. There young Tucker — already bitten by the shell bug — established a lasting friendship with Dr. William Beebe, the famed marine biologist of a generation ago. Beebe had taken a deep liking to the young man and spent many hours teaching him about the ocean and its treasures. With this start, is it any surprise that Dr. R. Tucker Abbott has developed into undoubtedly the best known, most active and most productive of today's giants of malacology?

Abbott was born in Watertown, Massachusetts, near Boston, in 1919. Soon afterward, his family moved to Canada, and Tucker spent his early years in Montreal and Toronto. In 1938 he graduated from Humber-side Collegiate in Toronto, and returned to the United States to enter Harvard.

It certainly was no mere coincidence that, while an undergraduate at Harvard, Abbott attracted the attention of another famous malacologist, Dr. William Clench, who taught him much of the purely scientific side of working with mollusks. Their contacts were not limited to the classroom; much was done in laboratory sessions, field trips and informal discussions after class. Abbott finished his work on his bachelor's degree in 1942 — just in time to enter the U.S. Navy as a flier.



While still a student, Abbott had taken part in the Archbold Harvard expedition to Polynesia — a two-year project. Interisland travel was aboard the junk *Cheng Ho*. Solidly built of teak with the traditional eyes painted in the bow, *Cheng Ho* was well known in Honolulu before World War II. During his travels in the South Pacific, young Abbott lived for a while in a Samoan community, into which he eventually was adopted as a tribal son.

Service during the war included nearly two years as a dive-bomber pilot in the Pacific. The best testimony that he was an unusually able pilot is the fact that he is here today. That was a period when the Japanese dominated the air over the Western Pacific.

The Navy eventually became aware that Abbott was an accomplished malacologist and transferred him, as a lieutenant, to the medical department, where he worked as a specialist on snail-borne diseases. When, during the Philippine campaign, intestinal fever immobilized thousands of American and Filipino combat troops, Abbott was flown in to determine the cause. After many days and nights of tedious work, he was able to pinpoint a fresh-water snail, *Oncomelania*, as the carrier. He kept at the problem until he had determined the snail's life cycle and could develop effective counter-measures.

After his war service, for which he received U.S. Navy decorations, Abbott returned to Washington where he was appointed an assistant curator of mollusks at the Smithsonian Institution. At night he attended nearby George Washington University, from which he received his master's degree in 1949. That year he became associate curator of mollusks at Smithsonian. Continuing his studies, he was awarded his Ph.D. from George Washington in 1955.

Already recognized as an accomplished malacologist, Abbott in 1954 went to Philadelphia as

chairman of the department of malacology and holder of the Pilsbry chair at the Academy of Natural Science. During the following fifteen years his reputation grew, both for his scientific ability and for his success with the ANSP's prestige publications, *The Nautilus* and *Indo-Pacific Mollusca*. In 1969 Abbott joined John duPont at the then-new Delaware Museum of Natural History as assistant director, chairman of the department of malacology, and holder of the duPont Chair of malacology.

In agreement with the Philadelphia institution he had served so well, Abbott brought with him to Delaware *The Nautilus* and *Indo-Pacific Mollusca*. As if that weren't enough work, in 1973 he was appointed an adjunct professor at the University of Delaware, where he now teaches malacology and evolutionary biology.

In the past thirty-five years he has authored or co-authored twenty-one notable shell books, and at least 150 scientific papers. With all that, he still has time to assist shellers with identification problems, to take field trips, and to judge at shell shows all over the country. And, I must add, he carries on a brisk correspondence.

What else does he do? He finds time to enjoy several other hobbies. He admits getting pleasure from salt-water fishing, raising vegetables and collecting paper clips, the latter bringing him fame of sorts through the television programs, "What's My Line?" and "To Tell the Truth."

Among close friends, Abbott is recognized as a gourmet cook.

Since he started in 1941, Dr. Abbott has described more than ninety new species and genera. Can any of his contemporaries match that? I can think of no one.

To balance things at bit, a number of species have been named in his honor. *Conus abbotti* Clench, 1942, is one that comes to mind.

Abbott denies that he is a "species grabber." Neither is he a "splitter." It is simply that shells are his life.

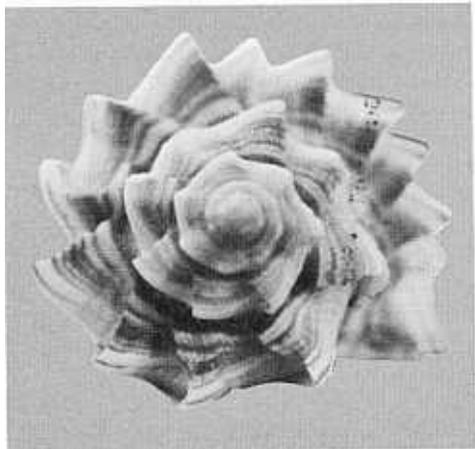
### Speaking of Books

**THE BEST OF THE NAUTILUS.** Edited by R. Tucker Abbott. Greenville, Del. American Malacologists. 280 pp. \$13.95.

Frankly, one doesn't usually turn to *The Nautilus* for light reading. The periodical, published for nearly three-quarters of a century by the Academy of Natural Science in Philadelphia and presently by the Delaware Museum of Natural History, is a treasurehouse of weighted data, scientific observations, and taxonomic disagreements. Nevertheless, the indefatigable Dr. R. Tucker Abbott has produced a delightful

(Cont'd on Page 4)

# LITTLE STRANGER



Photos: J. R. Germer

"For the past two years," writes Bob Wagner, Editor of *The Standard Catalog of Shells*, "I have been trying to get this 'critter' named. No luck, as yet.

"One expert feels it might be a freak *Melongena hispinosa*. Another says it is a *Buccinum*, and still another thinks it's a *Neptunea* from off Korea.

"Can any HMS members help me get the name? I would appreciate any data you can supply. Maybe, eventually, I can add it all together and come up with a name and probable locality."

Wagner's address is Route 1, Box 21, Marathon, Fla. 33050.

Color is tan on a white base.



## SPEAKING OF BOOKS

(Cont'd from Page 3)

volume of gleanings from *The Nautilus*.

The journal had its beginnings in July 1886 as *The Conchologist's Exchange*. Three years later it was succeeded by *The Nautilus*, which issued an appeal for "the cooperation of all friends of science" to get behind one publication on malacology. The response obviously was positive. Contributors in the years between 1889 and 1927 (the cut-off date for this anthology) include virtually all the great names of American biology.

Dr. Abbott has done an excellent job of winnowing and editing the material. I suspect, moreover, that he had a good time doing it. As a consequence, the whole thing has an aura of good humor, nostalgia, and appreciation of the hard work done by the pioneers of malacology.

From another part of the world, Charles Hedley, "the father of Australian malacology," reports on hard-hat diving in Sydney harbor in 1894. He was filled with wonder at his first experience at such depths.

"On reflection," wrote Hedley, "I found the reward of my underwater foray to be, not a hoard of specimens, but a better appreciation of the circumstances under which marine life exists . . . A rich harvest probably awaits a conchologist who should seriously practice diving."

Hedley was a good friend of Henry A. Pilsbry, editor of *The Nautilus* for many years, and contributed fascinating notes on early collecting on the Great Barrier Reef and a look at a beach on Lake Tanganyika, in Central Africa.

Whatever page you turn to, you find yourself reading something old but new — about William Clench and Sheldon Remington on a 1925 safari through Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee, looking for fresh-water shells; about a long trek through Navajo country in 1919 (a wonderful melange of conchology, botany, anthropology and political commentary, by James H. Ferriss), about Midshipman Remington's efforts to get liberty to go shelling while on a training cruise through the Panama Canal. Each item is different, and each is a gem.

*The Best of the Nautilus* has many pleasant touches. And Dr. Abbott has added some pithy narrative notes regarding the writers.

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**DEEP-WATER SHELLING**

(Cont'd from Page 1)

with physical help, moral support and common-sense advice.

For some time now we have concentrated our traps at depths ranging from 200 to 1000 feet, seeking both crabs and lobsters. In addition, George is doing research on depths as great as 5,000 feet or more.

Occasionally he is requested to be on the lookout for specific types, sizes or sexes of crabs and shrimp, or to bring back bottom samples (coral, rock, mud or algae) for the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology on Coconut Island in Kaneohe Bay, as well as for Dr. Kay at the University. This part has been fascinating. There is a tendency to get so involved with bringing up traps and resetting them that you forget to look at the wonderful things right in front of you.

We began really to study the ocean bottom, trying to compare colors, temperatures, food supplies, breeding habits and movements of all the creatures in the traps. Even the tiniest "wiggly thing" was carefully examined before we returned it to the ocean.

The principal exception to the generalization that we bring up crabbed shells is *Fusinus sandvichensis* Sowerby, 1880, which come right into the traps after the meat bait. We try to keep them alive in our aquarium, feeding them bits of fish and shrimp. We have a good collection of *F. sandvichensis* now and don't usually keep them anymore unless they are somehow unusual.

The tiny *Peristernia sp.* (not yet identified and apparently new to science) also have been taken alive and have lived a long time in our tank. (Photo on right.)

Other exceptions to the crabbed-shell rule have included two *Phalium umbilicatum* that only survived overnight in the aquarium, a *Tonna melanostoma* Jay, 1839, that lived barely long enough for the photographer to do his work, and a *Harpa major* Roding, 1798 that lasted four weeks.

We believe the short lives were the result of changes in environment, rather than rough handling or lack of food. Differences in pressure and temperature must have been extreme.

Working with the type of traps and at the depths that we do, we frequently come upon species that were previously unknown in Hawaii or that were known only from specimens dredged by the *Pele* expedition in the 1960s. (Most of the latter are now in the Bishop Museum at Honolulu.) These have included *Eudolium pyriforme* (Sowerby, 1914), *Phalium coronadoi wyvillei* (Watson, 1886), the unidentified *Oliva sp.*, shown on page one and the unnamed *Peristernia*.

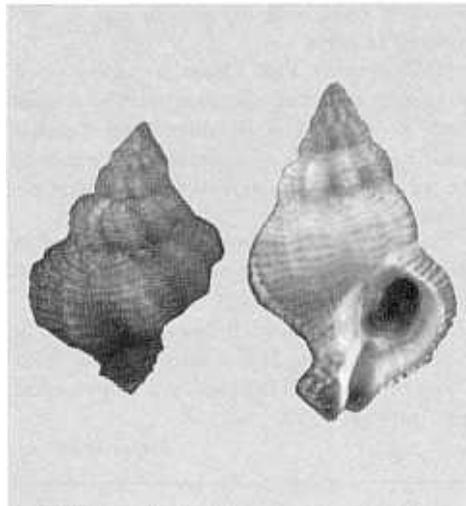
Several times we have brought up specimens of a *Bursa* that Charlie Wolfe believes is *B. finlayi* McGinty, 1962, known previously from Florida.

We also have found the second known live specimen of *Mirapecten thaunumi* Dall, Bartsch & Rehder, 1938, and such very uncommon jewels as *Conus suturatus* Reeve, 1844, *C. cumingii* Reeve, 1848, *C. eugrammatus* Bartsch & Rehder, 1943, *C. acutangulus* Lamarck, 1810, and *C. circumactus* Iredale, 1929.

*Cymatium parthenopeum* (Von Salis, 1793) and *Glycymeris diomedea* D, B & R, 1938 (page one) are in that category.

We have tried to keep accurate records on each shell and will gladly share this information. Write us at Pukalani, HI 96788.

Although we have not been working off the Maui coast long, and are still uncertain about what we will find there, we already have



brought up many Maui spindles and a very good *Bursa lissostoma* E. A. Smith, 1914. In addition, we have a basket full of the common *Tonna perdx* Linne, 1758.

The hermit crabs are obviously carnivorous as are the *Fusinus* and the *Peristernia* which are attracted by the bait in the traps. Some mollusks, however, seem not to be in the traps by their own choice, but were scooped up as the traps were dragged along the bottom.

The sizes we collect are limited by two factors — the circumference of the trap's mouth and the size of the wire mesh that encloses it all. Most very small shells fall through the screen. Those we got to the surface were clinging to the wires of the screen or to the rope. That's real luck!

It is worth noting that some of the shells we bring up from deep water are also found on shallow reefs. We wonder if their depth range is much greater than previously supposed, or if they live principally in shallow water and are swept out by wave action and currents when the animal dies.

Despite our relative success in finding unusual shells, trap fishing is at a serious disadvantage in that we are to a considerable extent "shooting blind." Diver-collectors, on the other hand, can be somewhat selective. They

can return again and again to search a productive (or a promising) area. If the species is there, they probably can find it, sooner or later.

Another consideration is that shells are strictly a byproduct with us. We must give primary attention to the lobsters and crabs.

Nevertheless, despite the catch-as-catch-can system, we have been fortunate in our finds. Our display of self-collected shells won a first-place ribbon and the Virginia Dennis award at the 1975 HMS Shell Show in Honolulu. (The background for our display, incidentally, was drawn for us by Dean Lingwall, a neighbor at Laie, Oahu.)

Understandably, I think, we are pleased at such recognition. The long-term reward, however, is in the beauty of the shells we find, and the sea anemones and starfish and coral bits and the bottom growth that comes to the surface with them. Each day brings something new. Each day we are reminded that there is a great unexplored region just beneath us. That's what keeps us going.

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## CONUS QUESTIONS:

**C. FLORIDULUS vs.  
C. MURICULATUS**

by DR. DIETER ROCKEL

DARMSTADT — In his recent "Conus Question" column (HSN April 1976), Dr. Carl Lewis presented two separate questions, each of which is a challenge to all cone fanciers.

First, are *Conus floridulus* and *C. muriculatus* different species?

Second, what is the scientific designation of the cone which Lewis figured?

It is revealing to refer to Reeve's original description of *C. floridulus* in his *Conchologica Iconica* (Supp. Pl. IV, Spec. 245). It shows a specimen identical to that figured in Hinton's *Shells of New Guinea and the Central Indo-Pacific* (Pl. 40, Nos. 17 and 18) without pustules and with the following description:

"Shell oblong turbinated, rather solid, somewhat swollen at the base with a few rather distant ridges, spire striated, obsoletely obliquely coronated, apex sharp, violet white, brightly tinged at the base with rosy violet. On the center of the body there is an unspotted band, stained above and below with orange brown, apex pale red."

In his *Thesaurus Conchyliorum* (1866), Sowerby described *C. muriculatus* as follows:

"With a spotted obtuse spire, granulated surface, light distinct broad bands on the middle (of the body) and blue at the base."

If you look hard at the figures by Weinkauff, Tryon and others, you will recognize the most significant features are:

1. *C. floridulus* measures about 40mm, and *C. muriculatus* about 25mm, as Hinton lists.

2. The spire of *C. floridulus* is elevated; *C. muriculatus* is more depressed.

3. *C. muriculatus* has two interrupted brown bands above and below a white center area, while the bands of *C. floridulus* are not constant. Rather, the latter are broken into areas of different intensities of color. *C. floridulus* is more distinctly violet-red, while *C.*



Photo: Chapman

**Delicate but Sturdy**

*Typhus tosaensis* Azuma, 1960, is a small Japanese member of the Muricidae. It is extremely rare, being trawled in one to two hundred fathoms.

HMS member Phil Clover, reporting on a previously collected specimen (HSN August 1969), commented on the unlikelihood of such a small fragile shell's withstanding the rigors of the trawl net. The observation is certainly accurate.

The species is also figured and described in Habe's *Shells of the Western Pacific*, Vol. 2 (page 83 and plate 27).

The figured specimen is 24mm long and is in excellent condition. It was trawled in the East China Sea from 120 fathoms by a Taiwan coral boat, early in 1975.

Elmer Leelman

*muriculatus* contrarily is yellow-brown.

4. *C. muriculatus* is always pustulated, while *C. floridulus* is generally smooth, although at times it has some granulated rows at the base.

There are resemblances among *C. floridulus*, *C. muriculatus* and *C. sugillatus* that would tempt a "lumper." But, in my opinion, they are different, valid species.

Dr. Lewis' question number two, concerning the identity of the cone that he figured, is difficult to answer on the basis of a black-and-white photo. Nevertheless, the size — 40mm — and the high spire clearly indicate to me it is a pustulated *C. floridulus*. At least, that is my vote.

**Identification Page**

*Vexillum (Vexillum) lyratum* (Lamarck, 1822). This miter and the following species were involved in a name mixup for years. *V. lyratum* was identified as *V. subdivisum* (Gmelin, 1791) in several publications. The slender wide-spaced axial ribs and the rounded shoulders are distinctive.

*Vexillum (Vexillum) subdivisum* (Gmelin, 1791) was erroneously identified for years as *V. costellaris* (Lamarck, 1811). The rather heavy, curved, wide-spaced axial ribs and tabled shoulders help identify this species.

*Harpa articularis* Lamarck, 1822 has been identified as *H. davidis* Roding, 1798 in several publications. The large dark blotch on the ventral side, with the slender ribs showing through, is characteristic.

*Bursa spinosa* (Dillwyn, 1817) is an uncommon species apparently restricted to the Indian Ocean. No other bursid has the long spines on the outer lip.

*Gyrineum (Gyrineum) natator* (Roding, 1798) ranges from Polynesia to the Indian Ocean. It is sculptured with spiral rows of nodules, those on the two rows at the periphery being larger than the rest. It is light brown with darker bands.

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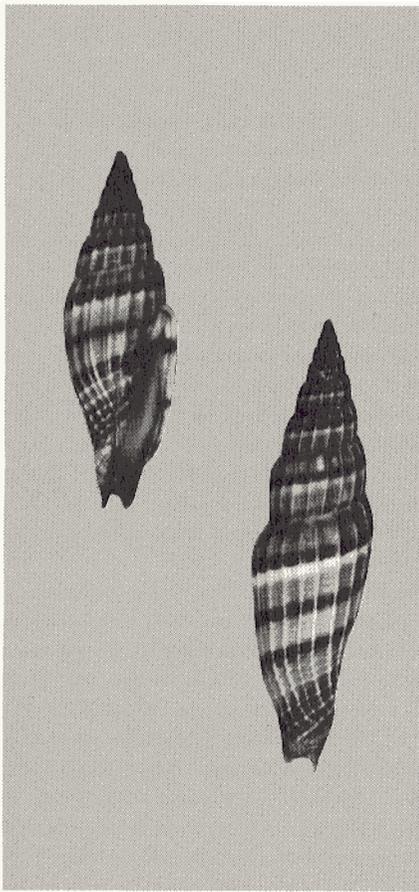


Photo: L. Hill

Vexillum (Vexillum) cyrtolum (Lamarck, 1822)

Philippines

*Harpa articularis* Lamarck, 1822

Philippines

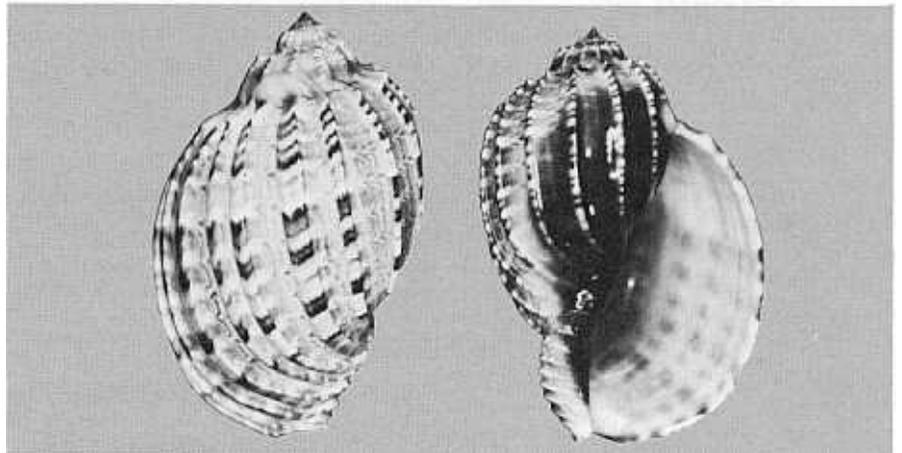


Photo: L. Hill

*Bursa spinosa* (Dillwyn, 1817)

India

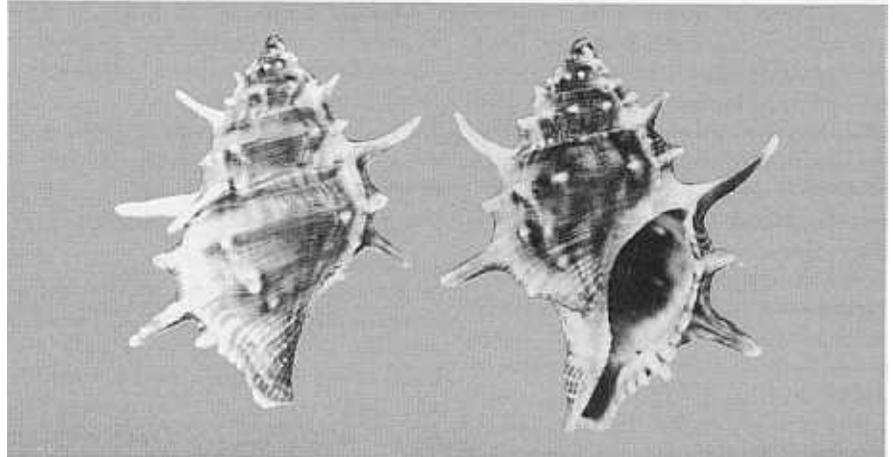


Photo: L. Hill

Vexillum (Vexillum) subdivisum (Gmelin, 1791)

Fiji

*Gyrineum (Gyrineum) natator* (Roding, 1798)

Indonesia

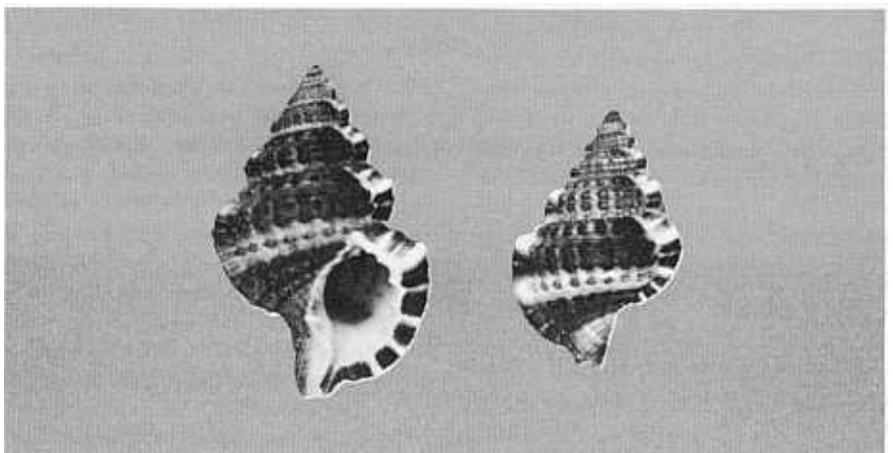


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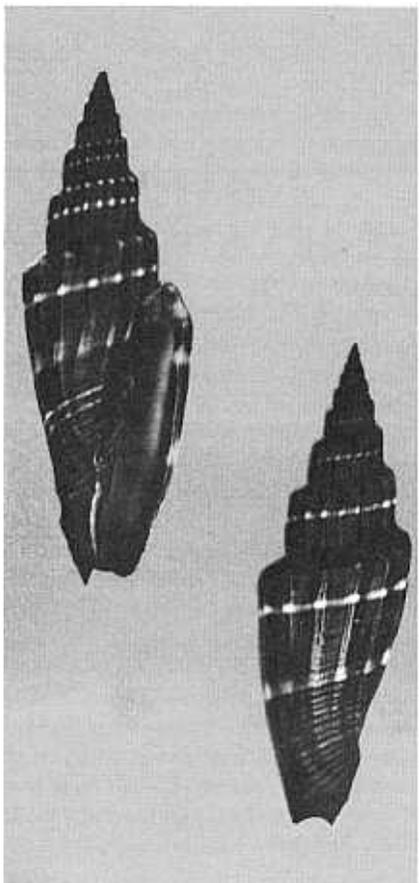


Photo: L. Hill

To use these illustrations, cut carefully along the dashed lines. Perhaps a bit of extra trimming may be necessary. Then carefully mount the illustration on a standard 3 x 5 inch file card. Additional data about shells of this species in your collection, sizes, etc., may be entered on the back of the file card. (See page 6 for more about these shells.)

## A SHELL FOR THE EMPEROR

by W. W. SUTOW, M.D.

HOUSTON — Ernie Libby was a most unusual man. He had an uncanny ability to sense one's interest. One can recall many, many instances when Ernie unselfishly expended his busy time, his energies and even his money to help others. Here is a story about a chain of events that only Ernie could have set in motion.

As the result of many trips to the Rongelap atoll in the Marshall Islands, Ernie built up a stock of *Strombus taurus* specimens for trading purposes. He also made trips to Japan and he knew of the malacological activities of the Emperor of Japan. The Emperor has an incomparable collection of rare seashell specimens, but it was highly probable that he did not have a specimen of *Strombus taurus*. Ernie decided to present the Emperor with three specimens.

How does one go about presenting something to the Emperor of Japan? Ingenious Ernie thought that he had found a way. One of his trading buddies was Taizo Ninomiya (HSN Dec. 1975) who had one of the best shell collections in Japan. Surely, Ninomiya would be able to find a way to deliver the shells safely to the Emperor. So Ernie sent his three best specimens to Tokyo. That was more than three years before Ernie's final illness.

Ninomiya in a letter recounts the sequence of events that followed. He states "but this matter was not so simple." At first he was unable to find a way that "plain foreign people" could give anything to the Emperor. It seemed best to route the shells through someone who was a member of the Japan Malacological Society. So Ninomiya tried this method, turning over one specimen to a friend who was a conchologist and who served as an assistant of the biological laboratory of the Imperial Household.

There was no subsequent word, even after more than a year. So Ninomiya asked another gentlemen who was a shell collector and who apparently knew the Grand Chamberlain well. Again nothing happened. After three times, Ninomiya felt that he could not urge his friend any more lest he be suspected of "self-advertisement."

Finally, Ninomiya sought out the chief priest of the government shrine who had frequent contacts with the Emperor. The priest himself was a most serious shell collector. This time, the *Strombus taurus* safely reached the Emperor. Along with the *Strombus taurus* there went from Ninomiya's collection specimens of *Voluta lyraeformis*, *V. exoptanda* and *V. wisemani*.

Ernie's wishes were realized on August 25, 1975. The Emperor and the Empress listened to the story and "were very pleased with the shells." The receipt of the *Strombus taurus*

## RECENT FINDS

April seems to have been rare *Epitonium* month in Hawaii. Karen Williams, diving in seventy feet of water in Maalaea Bay, Maui, found what has been identified tentatively as *Epitonium floccatus*. It was on a *pinna* shell in sand.

And Chris Takahashi got an *E. aceito* while snorkelling off Ala Moana, Honolulu. Although Hawaii has a number of *Epitonium* species, none are common and identities are usually obscure. I wish someone would do an article on the genus.

While he was paddling around Ala Moana, Chris picked up an *Oliva sandwicensis*, a 3½-inch *Cymatium nicobaricum* and a few *Cypraea moneta*. (The latter shell, incidentally, is rarer in Hawaii than our much-touted *C. tessellata*.)

Chris spent some time on Maui, where he got a good *Cypraea schilderorum*, a six-inch *Conus leopardus* and a big octopus for the family dinner table.

Phil Kwiatkowski, diving at eighty feet off Ala Moana, found a crabbed *Distorsio burgesi*.

The recent action along the Ewa Beach-Campbell Park sector of Honolulu has been productive. Ray McKinsey brought up a dead *Cypraea labrolineata* (extremely rare in Hawaii) and on the same day Bob Purtymun got a dead *Conus cumingii*. Not far away, Steve Carr found a *Strombus hawaiiensis* promenading the top of the reef in forty feet of water (unheard of!) and a *Murex elongatus* at eighty feet.

Lyman Higa

was acknowledged. Tragically, in the meantime, Ernie had died.

It is well known that the Emperor of Japan has a deep interest in malacology. It is not surprising, therefore, that even during his recent carefully controlled state visit to the United States, the Emperor was human enough to remember his hobby. During his stay in San Francisco, one of his few personal appointments was given to Dr. Myra Keen, who was invited to chat about mollusks common to the countries on the opposite sides of the Pacific Ocean. Dr. Keen had written on this subject and the Emperor was well aware of the publications.

Dr. Keen presented the Emperor with two boxes of shell exhibits, including some rare specimens. The Emperor gave to Dr. Keen five volumes on invertebrate groups he had collected from Sagami Bay, including reproductions of paintings by the Empress, and two personal gifts.

from *The Texas Conchologist*

## MIDTOWN SHELLING

MANILA — On a Christmas holiday visit to Iloilo, on the island of Panay in the Central Philippines, I noticed in the window of a small clothing shop a shell labelled "Cypraea Guttata." I had never seen one before, but this struck me as being unusual and in perfect condition. The shopkeeper was asking 2,000 pesos (about \$260). We haggled a bit, and the price eventually was cut in half.

In our conversation, the owner said he had bought the shell from a Panay fisherman who, he believed, had found it in the belly of a fish. The colors were bright, however, with excellent gloss, so if it had been in the fish it could not have been there long.

Not being sure of the shell's identity (I am no expert at rare shells), I asked the proprietor to hold it until I wrote to him. The next day I returned home.

In Manila, I asked my friends, Carlos and Fely Leobrera, about my find. Fely showed me her *C. guttata*, of which she said there were only five in the islands. It looked just like "mine."

Fortunately, a friend was visiting Iloilo a few days later. I commissioned him to close the deal. The shell was still in the shop, waiting for me. Now I own it. I have displayed it twice, and there is general agreement that it is one of the better specimens. Dale Whiteis

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## A Change of Name for *Conus piperatus*

by JERRY G. WALLS

HIGHTSTOWN, N.J. — Of the several cones which collectors normally see only from the Sri Lanka-India area, the most familiar is probably the rather nondescript *Conus piperatus* Dillwyn. Although moderately common, this species is quite variable in color pattern and is often confused with *Conus hyaena* Hwass and the Philippines populations of *Conus parvulus* Link. Now it seems that it must also change names.

One of the earliest illustrations of this species is in volume 10 of Chemnitz's *Neues Systematisches Conchylien-Cabinet*, a rare iconography published in 1788. Chemnitz did not follow the system of binomial nomenclature recently proposed by Linnaeus and, for this reason, the many names proposed by him are not currently considered valid (except for *Conus gloriamaris* Chemnitz, a special case).

In 1792 Hwass (in Bruguiere's *Encyclopedie Methodique*) first validly described the species, using the name *Conus punctatus*. Unfortunately, Gmelin one year earlier had described a different cone under the same name, so Hwass's name was preoccupied and cannot be used. In 1817 Dillwyn seemingly remedied the situation by renaming Chemnitz and Hwass's species *Conus piperatus*, the name now commonly in use.

Dr. Alan Kohn recently reviewed the cones described by Roding in 1798. Roding (spelled Roeding if the umlaut is not used) was one of the worst of the early workers in cones. Almost all his new names are either synonyms of earlier species or unrecognizable. However, it now appears that the species Roding described in 1798 as *Cucullus biliosus* was the same species illustrated by Chemnitz in 1788 and named *Conus punctatus* by Hwass. Since Dillwyn's name, *Conus piperatus*, was not proposed until 1817, nineteen years later, the proper name for the species must now stand as *Conus biliosus* (Roding).

Roding's name is placed in parentheses be-



A NEW AUSTRALIAN SHELL — Members of the Brisbane branch of the Malacological Society of Australia display a shell hitherto unknown to science — *Voluta hunteri brisbanensis*. Specimens are found only on the jazzy new shirts of branch members. Displaying their prizes (left to right) are HSN Corresponding Editor Thora Whitehead, and MSA members George Walker and Sue Grice. At left is Patricia Whitehead, who didn't find a shell all day!

cause, for some reason, he did not recognize the genus name *Conus* and instead used *Cucullus*, a name of his own invention.

The following is a simple synonymy of *Conus biliosus*. Several other names proposed after 1817 may belong here, but are ignored for the moment.

### *Conus biliosus* (Roding)

1792. *Conus punctatus* Hwass, in Bruguiere. *Conus*, in *Encyclopedie Methodique. Histoire Naturelle des Vers*, 1:628. Not *Conus punctatus* Gmelin, 1791. See Kohn, 1968, *J. Linn. Soc. (Zool.)*, 47:431-503.

1798. *Cucullus biliosus* Roding. *Museum Boltenianum*: 39. See Kohn, 1975, *Zool. J. Linn. Soc.*, 57:185-227.

1817. *Conus piperatus* Dillwyn. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Recent Shells*, 1:401. Dillwyn allocates this name to Chemnitz, but under our present rules this is the first valid description and Dillwyn is the author.

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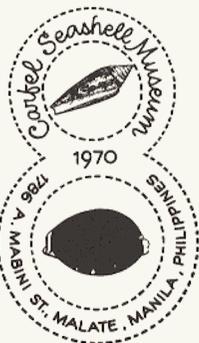
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## A COLOR FORM?

by ELMER G. LEEHMAN

For the past two years, volute fanciers have been aware of the figured odd species. There was considerable controversy whether this was new to science. The first person to publicize these shells was T. C. Lan of Taiwan, who felt sure they represented a new species.

When pictures and specimens were sent to Dr. Barry Wilson in Australia, however, he advised Lan that the shell was a color variation of *Voluta (Amoria) grayi* Ludbrooke, 1953. Wilson's opinion was upheld by the Australian volute authority, Frank Abbottsmith, in his *Multiform Australian Volutes*.

Recently, however, Dr. R. Tucker Abbott has informed me that this shell now has been named as a separate species in Japan (HSN March 1976). It is called *Voluta (Amoria) ryosukei* Habe, 1975, in honor of Japanese malacologist Ryosuke Kawamura. Abbott refers to it, nevertheless, as "a color form of *Voluta grayi*," which agrees with the original opinions of Wilson and Abbottsmith.

So, I will mark my specimens *Voluta (Amoria) ryosukei* Habe, 1975, but will add the note, "a color form of *Voluta grayi*." Other similarly confused volute collectors may wish to do the same.

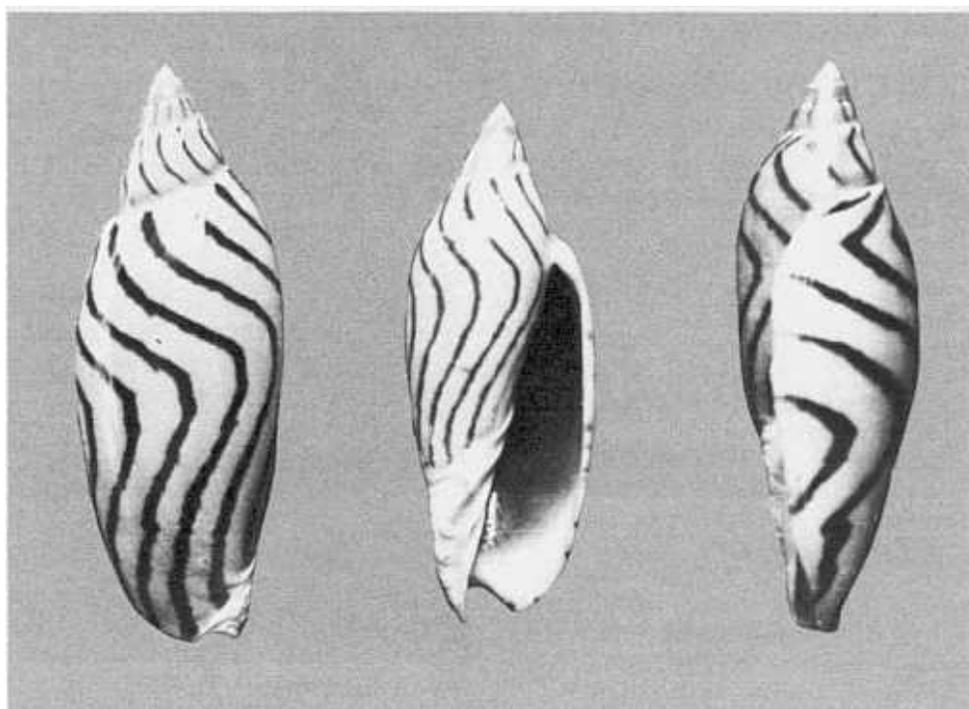


Photo: T. C. Lan

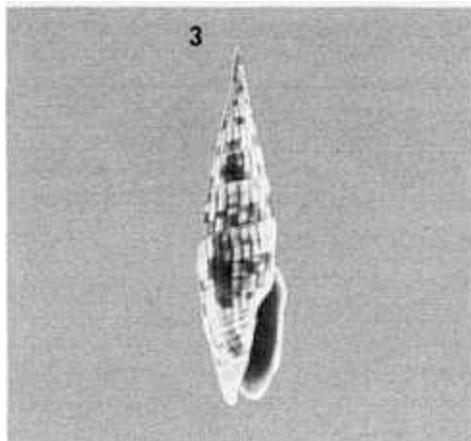
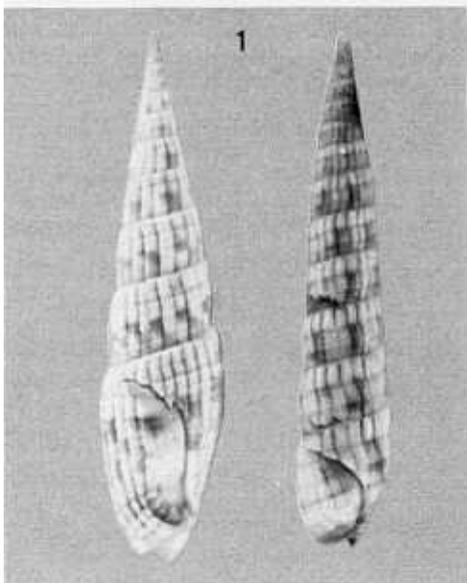
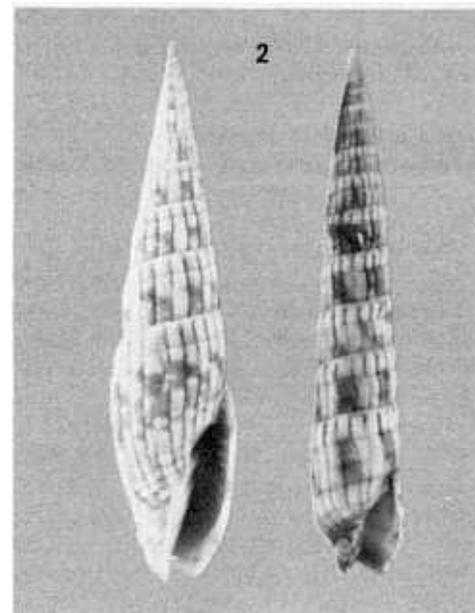
## A Terebra-like Miter

All you *terebra* collectors, I may have a bit of a surprise for you. See Fig. 1? It looks like a pair of *Terebra affinis* Gray, 1834, doesn't it? But turning them over (Fig. 2) reveals a startling contrast.

The left-hand specimen is *Vexillum (Costellaria) costatum* (Gmelin, 1791), a moderately rare Indo-Pacific miter. Although it is easily recognized when you know what to look for, this shell is easily missed while you are picking hurriedly through a bunch of common *T. affinis*.

Fig. 3 is the Australian version of *V. costatum*. You are not likely to overlook this shell as it is nearly three inches long and a very dark orange. This miter probably will not show up in your next batch of *terebra*, but you never know!

Richard Salisbury



Photos: Len Hill

## EXCHANGES

Dr. Norman D. Paschall, 930 Oakland Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66616, writes to ask: "What have you in the Epitonidae? I have been working in the family for thirteen years and have tried many times to acquire specimens from Hawaii, to very little avail. I hope to publish a monograph on worldwide epitonids, but I need material from Hawaii.

"I offer the following issues of *Hawaiian Shell News* in exchange for any epitoniums collected in Hawaii with good data: 1959, Sept. & Dec. only; 1960-1962, complete sets; 1967-1974, complete sets. In excellent shape, in ring binders and all in order."

## Wolfe, Grace to Resign

HMS President Charles Wolfe and Vice President Don Grace both informed the Society's Board in May that they will be leaving Hawaii within the next few months and will find it necessary to resign from office.

Wolfe will be moving with his family to Fort Worth. He came to Hawaii in 1970 while on duty with the U.S. Air Force, and retired here three years later. He is in his second term as HMS president.

Dr. Grace is leaving the University of Hawaii and transferring his flag to the Georgia Institute of Technology ("Georgia Tech") in Atlanta. He also came to Honolulu with his family in 1970.

The HMS bylaws provide for the selection of successors by the Board of Directors.