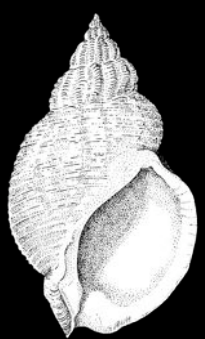
PALLIDULA



The Magazine of the British Shell Collectors' Club

Vol. 42 No.2 October 2012

In this Issue

Editorial

Happy 40th Anniversary!

Since the last issue, I have had my first Editorial social in my home. We had 18 visitors in my home: sharing shell art ideas using different materials and methods of art; purchasing from Rob Law; referencing shell information on the internet; talking about shells; eating sweets from scallop shell display by John Llewellyn-Jones. See photos on p24. My thanks to those who came, even from long distance—do consider coming next year, in April 2013.

In this issue, we have a delicious feast of shelling memories and tales of collecting. There is a theme on Family Conidae with an interview with Mike Filmer p4, a tale from Harlan Wittkopf p19, about his latest Alphabet cone find, a cone word-search p24 and the splendid back cover of Alphabet cones. Maybe there is a future issue with a theme of *Cypraea*? Could you write something about your favourite shell or family?

Are you planning your next trips at home or away? Consider collecting in the UK like Carl Ruscoe p8 and after carefully looking at your specimens, find something to puzzle over. Or perhaps you would like to venture forth on a fisherman's boat, like David McKay p20, to find molluscs in fish guts, also known as *ex pisce.*

I am thrilled with the poetry selection in this issue. Peter Dance has written a poem to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee p9 and there is a selection of Jim Fray's clever limericks from a previous exhibit p13, for everyone to enjoy.

The centre-fold is a collage of Pallidula front covers created by Paul Wilkins, as a celebration of the club's 40th Anniversary, our own Jubilee. Take a magnifying glass to spot delights, such as, first committee, first subscriptions due. We hope you enjoy this compilation of the changing face of Pallidula, in recognition of all the hard work of the previous editors.

There is also an article on visiting other Shell Shows, such as La Garde and Gent by David and Naomi, p22. Do you have a strangely shaped shell, like Bunny Ears to share with the rest of us? Send in your photos, as well as those of British beaches.

Photos of our socials are on p24 & p26. Remember to check our club website, for further details on events, both past and future.

www.britishshellclub.org

If you wish to submit lots for any forthcoming Auctions, please contact Carl Ruscoe by phone 0779 2870 965 or email

carlruscoe@yahoo.co.uk

So now as the winter months are settling in, it is time to sort out your collection. Consider what you might exhibit at the October Show; see our separate page insert. Would you like to sell some specimens at our next Auction? What shelling tips of trips, memories, tales or poems would you like share with the rest of club through Pallidula?

Front Cover: *Trivia monacha* (da Costa, 1778) at Castle Cove, Weymouth, by Colin Goss
Back Cover: *Conus spurius* Gmelin, 1791 Alphabet Cones on Kice Island, nr Marco Island, Florida, by Tom Walker

Photo left: The sand flats at Holkham Pines near Wells-next-to-sea, Norfolk with a mass stranding of *Ensis directus*, by Theo Tamblyn

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An interview with Mike Filmer

By Selina Wilkins

In early March 2012, on a bright spring day, I met with Mike Filmer to talk about his interest in cones and marvel at his extensive collection. He is 85 years old and lives with his lovely wife Hilda, in Chobham, Surrey. I found Mike charming, easy to talk to as we meandered around many aspects of shell collecting and taxonomy. So when did it all start?

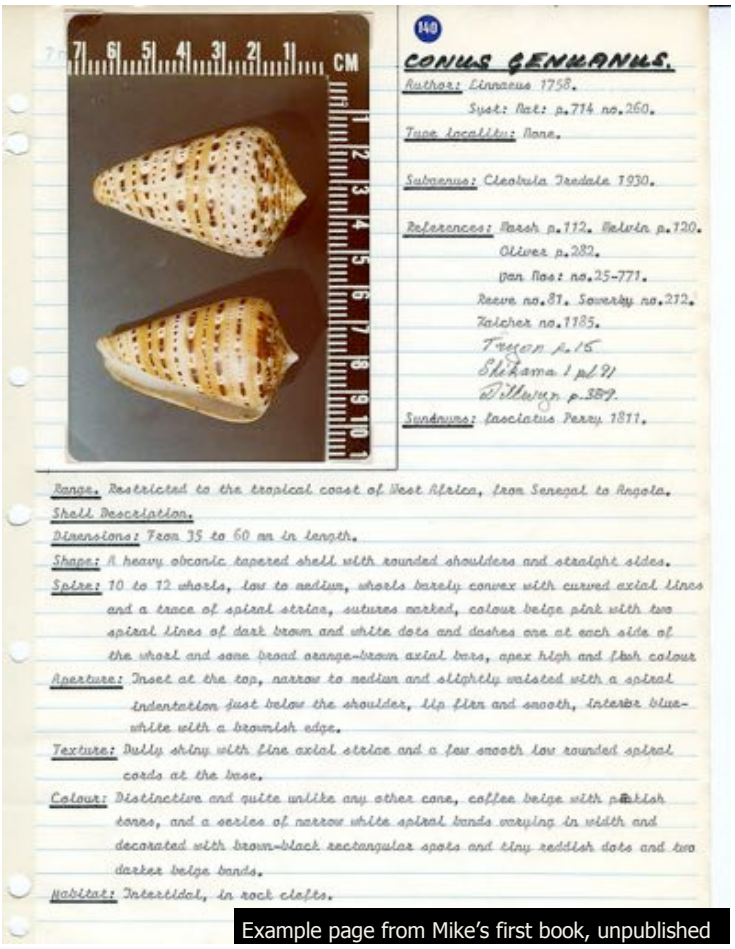
"As a boy in Africa, I collected many things, including birds' eggs and butterflies. Before the war in Kenya I collected shells but didn't keep them. I started again in 1968, when I lived with my family in Hong Kong. On Saturdays, I would take the train journey to the Royal Hong Kong Golf Club, near the China Border. Sundays I would spend on the beach with my family, the children digging in the sand, Hilda reading a book and I started to pick up and collect shells. Hilda then gave me my first shell book for Christmas, but this book led to frustration as it did not help me identify the shells that I had collected." (Sadly Mike couldn't remember the name of this book, but I'm sure we can all remember our first shell reference book or encyclopaedia which revealed the wealth of seashells yet to be collected, referenced or recognised.)

The beach at Lantao Island

This very book triggered Mike to recall that, "In 1971, when I had moved offices to Bangkok, I took my leave and with the family toured the islands in the South Pacific. During this tour we had one week on an island, called Ouvea, off New Caledonia, as the flights were only once a week. We stayed in some very basic accommodation; in a thatched hut with just 4 iron bed frames with mattresses 4 inches deep, a cement floor, cold water shower, toilet and basin. Every day we spent time out on the reef, and it caused Hilda to comment, 'If I'd known there would be no air conditioning, no restaurants, no shops I would not have bought you that shell book – which I bought to stop you playing golf on Saturdays, to try to keep you with the family on the beach!'"

During 1975-1980, whilst living in Melbourne, Australia, Mike started writing a book on cones, although he had a collection of many different gastropods and bivalves. "I started the book because I was so frustrated with other books having insufficient information and lack of detail to enable me to identify unusual specimens. There were to be 3 volumes; Indo Pacific, Americas and Australia."

This was in the pre-digital days; typed with inserted



140

CONUS GENUANUS.

Author: Linnaeus 1758.
Syst: Nat: p.714 no.260.
Type locality: None.
Subgenus: Cleobula Iredale 1930.
References: Marsh p.112. Melvin p.120.
Oliver p.282.
Van Mos: no.35-771.
Reeve no.81. Sowerby no.212.
Kalcher no.1185.
Tucker p.15
Shikama I pl 21
Dillwyn p.387.
Synonyms: fasciatus Perry 1811.

Range. Restricted to the tropical coast of West Africa, from Senegal to Angola.
Shell Description.
Dimensions: From 35 to 60 mm in length.
Shape: A heavy obconic tapered shell with rounded shoulders and straight sides.
Spire: 10 to 12 whorls, low to medium, whorls barely convex with curved axial lines and a trace of spiral striae, sutures marked, colour beige pink with two spiral lines of dark brown and white dots and dashes one at each side of the whorl and some broad orange-brown axial bars, apex high and flesh colour
Aperture: Inset at the top, narrow to median and slightly waisted with a spiral indentation just below the shoulder, lip flat and smooth, interior blue-white with a brownish edge.
Texture: Dully shiny with fine axial striae and a few smooth low rounded spiral cords at the base.
Colour: Distinctive and quite unlike any other cone, coffee beige with pinkish tones, and a series of narrow white spiral bands varying in width and decorated with brown-black rectangular spots and tiny reddish dots and two darker beige bands.
Habitat: Intertidal, in rock clefts.

Example page from Mike's first book, unpublished

photographs of holotypes or Mike's own specimens. Seeing Mike's early volumes, it became apparent to me that Mike isn't just interested in a shell, but its history, location and taxonomy. He enjoys the investigation of the taxonomy of the cones, whether names are available or not, revelling in the debate, to agree or disagree on a shell's nomenclature. In 1980, Mike returned to England and stopped writing the book, instead embarking on a quest to photograph holotypes in museums around the world, which started by just "walking into the Natural History Museum)." He has accumulated 5000+ slides of the holotypes, with his Nikon F3 camera. This work in museums investigating the holotypes has led Mike to work with many conchologists across the world: Hank Chaney in Santa Barbara, Kathie at the Natural History Museum, and Robert Moolenbeek in Amsterdam.

Mike talks of how sad it is that many donated collections sit in closed boxes, buried deep in storage vaults of museums, until someone is interested in that particular shell family or location. We reminisced that collectors are those who hate throwing away.

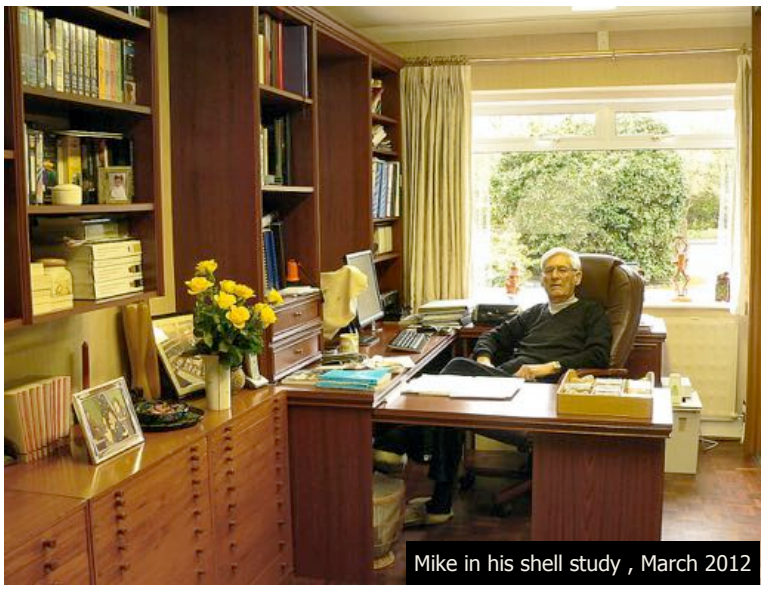

Photo used in Shell Co. Magazine

In 1982 Mike, working for the Shell Oil company, was interviewed for their magazine with his shell collection. Soon after this he swapped his murex collection for cones with Noel Gregory and in the 1990's he gave his bivalve collection to the museum in Amsterdam and the remaining shells were sold to Don Javier Conde, at that time the Spanish ambassador to the EU in Brussels. Mike spent this money immediately with a Belgium shell dealer on more cones. I asked what was the appeal of cones? Mike explained that the attraction was that the family has so many varieties, which are sometimes difficult to separate. Mike enjoys the challenge of sorting the discrepancies, the acquiring of the specimens and the classification of this family.

Mike has self-collected many of his specimens due to living in Hong Kong, Thailand and Australia, and had work which has taken him to the States and to many parts of Africa, and the Far East. He has snorkelled in the Solomon Islands, and the lagoons of Bora Bora and dived to a depth of 12-15ft, but he doesn't SCUBA dive, often travelling to places where in the past there was neither the equipment, nor local expertise to offer diving buddies. "I would look for *Conus* under rocks, stones (always carefully turning them back), and find them often half buried in the sand during the day. Some coral reef dwellers were only easy to find at really low tide." Mike has bartered and dealt with many local fishermen whilst on his travels. In the past he has exchanged shells (from other families), but also acquires now from friends, dealers, and others over the internet.

By now we had moved away from the comfy sofas and were sitting in his office, with the pc turned on, email being received continuously, database loaded and the collection in cupboards lining 2 walls. I asked Mike how he identifies a cone. He demonstrated that he looks at it closely and considers what springs from his memory, referencing his own collection around him, then he might check his slide collection, and reference books such as Röckel, Korn & Kohn and also Guido Poppe Philippine Molluscs Vol II.

Discovering his collection to be over 10,000 cones, I was intrigued and very interested to find how Mike organises his cones. The shells are organised initially by groups from similar locations; Americas, Australia, Indo-Pacific, West Africa and South Africa. All small species are kept in one set of drawers and oversized


Mike in his shell study , March 2012

cones are kept in another area. Then rather by family or alphabetically, Mike organises his collection by similarities; how does the cone look, its colour, its pattern. Each cone is labelled and has a unique number. Each drawer is also numbered, e.g. juveniles are grouped in drawer 31. Using the database called "Filemaker Pro", all these details are put into separate fields, so that Mike can search by name, location, drawer.

Impressively Mike will say, "that cone is in drawer 29" and only uses the database to confirm his statement or to refresh his memory on when, where and how the specimen was added to his collection.

Collection of RM Filmer

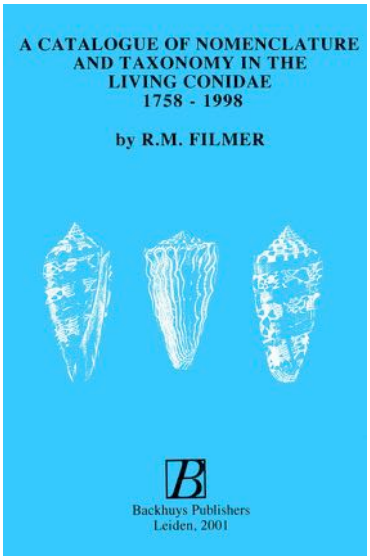
Family	Conidae	Drawer	104
Genus	Conus	Price	15
Subgenus	Cylinder Montfort 1810	Total	12
Species	***abbas* Hwass, 1792**	Value	$180
Subspecies		WR	
Forma			
Habitat	on coral reefs, under boulders, subtidal to 50 meters.		

Number	Size	Location	Date
00001	34.84 x 17.08	Rawai Beach Phuket, South West Thailand, (RMF)	08/72
00002	53.33 x 25.75	Karachi Pakistan (Ex Dealer)	11/76
00003	42.84 x 22.89	Karachi Pakistan (Ex Dealer)	11/76
00004	62.08 x 30.45	Trincomalee Sri Lanka (Ex Dealer)	07/84
00005	40.63 x 20.35	Trincomalee Sri Lanka (Ex Dealer)	07/84
00006	51.40 x 27.65	Cilacap Java Indonesia (Ex B. Dharma)	06/90
00007	43.68 x 22.84	Cilacap Java Indonesia (Ex B. Dharma)	06/90
00453	64.28 x 35.31	Rawai Beach Phuket South West Thailand(Dealer	08/97
09475	43.80 x 23.85	Mount Lavinia, Sri Lanka (Ex J. Batt)	12/04
09476	35.27 x 18.42	Mount Lavinia, Sri Lanka (Ex J. Batt)	12/04
09535	59.56 x 30.16	Pangandaran West Java Indonesia (Ex Dealer)	04/05
09536	56.12 x 28.42	Pangandaran West Java Indonesia (Ex Dealer)	04/05

His collection of the genus includes more than 10,700 specimens. The collection is stored in 4 large cabinets (see photo above) which Mike had built in 1968 whilst living in Hong Kong. He also acquired 4 shelf cabinets of shirt drawers (very useful for larger specimens, as shown in photo below) for £10 each, i.e. £40 in total which he later converted.

Conus litteratus Linaeus 1758

As we talked about the collection, drawers were opened, shells peered at, examined and exclaimed over. All were carefully handled and put back in the same position. Mike says that for him, most pleasure comes from acquiring the cones which are rare as opposed to those that have been previously self collected. Mike stated with a big beam of a smile, "If I could, I'd buy a specimen of all of them; all that are available." Words of a true collector!



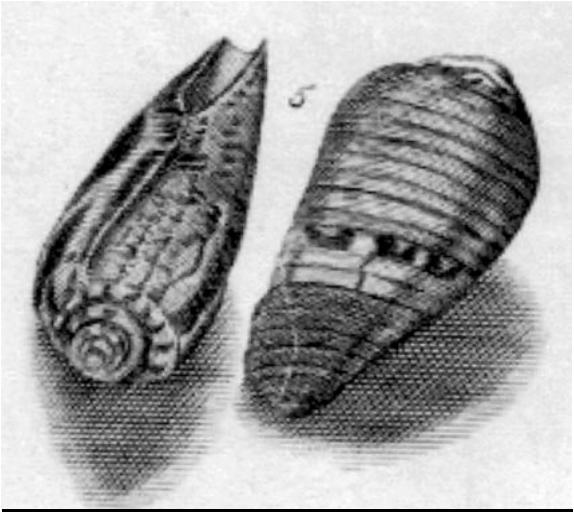
In 2001, Mike released his book, "A Catalogue of Nomenclature and Taxonomy in the Living Conidae 1758-1998" in conjunction with Backhuys Publishers, Leiden, The Netherlands. This information is now updated and held on-line at http://www.theconecollector.com/lib/docs/filmer

In case you are in any doubt, Mike's knowledge on cones is extensive. I had looked online at his work and chosen a few cones to ask him some taxonomy questions. My first was about *Conus lachrymosus* which Mike explained that although the holotype can be found in the NHMUK and the photograph is of the actual holotype, Reeve didn't know where

Conus lachrymosus Reeve 1849 BMNH holotype 1 *Conus lachrymosus* Reeve 1849 BMNH holotype 2

his holotype specimen had actually come from. His on-line collection gives the taxonomic status as a synonym (form) of *C. boeticus* Reeve, 1844. Mike said it was extraordinary that I had chosen this particular shell, as he had just had published an article reviewing *Conus boeticus.* (Read it for yourself in Visaya Vol 2, no.6 Jan 2010, ISSN 1656-4650, Pages 21-51, additional plates P52-72.)

I also asked about *Conus laetus* Gmelin and *Conus lacteus* Lamarck as I was fascinated by the very similar naming and as I love white shells but am lactose intolerant and



Conus laetus Gmelin Fig in Lister 01

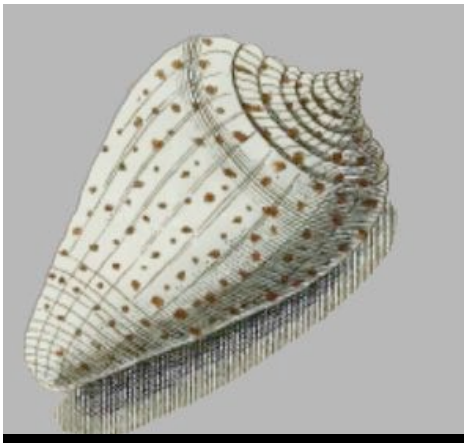
had spotted the name. Mike explained that the *Conus laetus* has no known holotype, so Dr. Alan Koln had chosen a lectotype, designating the figure from Lister, 1688, Pl. 760, fig.5. I was intrigued to find that the actual figure was available online in Mike's website. Mike explained that as long as you can find the original figure, copyright due expires after 75 years. Mike then expounded saying that *Conus lacteus* had originally been described by Röding using a group of 5 shells of which he had not selected a holotype. These shells had then been sold in the 1800's and their whereabouts is unknown, hence the figure in Martini. Lamarck also used this name for a different species but as it is a homonym he has renamed it *Conus purissimus.*

Conus lacteus Lamarck 1810 MNHG lectotype 1 MF

Conus lacteus Lamarck 1810 MNHG lectotype 2 MF

(You can read Mike's work in a "Taxonomic Review of the Conus spectrum, Conus stramineus and Conus collisus complexes", in Visaya. Part I was published in July 2011, Pages 23-56, plates on p57-85, (The *Conus lacteus* was on plate 8.) "Part II, The Conus stramineus Complex" was published in Nov 2011 P4-41, Plates on P42-66 and Part III should be published sometime this summer 2012.) (Visaya is published by www.conchology.be when sufficient material has been submitted.)

I found it amazing that out of such as large family, I had chosen to discuss with Mike two cones that he had just been working on and had just published about. I was able to see the published material and the shells themselves!



Conus lacteus Roding 1798 in Martini

My thanks go to Mike, for answering my numerous and at times strange questions, sharing his collection and for the wonderful warm hospitality of himself and Hilda.

Summary Table of Mike's Collection Facts and Statistics	
Size	10,700 specimens in 580+ species.
Species of *Conus* with the largest number of specimens	*Conus magus*, just under 300 specimens *Conus coronatus*, 236 specimens from 27 countries.
First cone collected	*Conus coronatus* in Hong Kong.
Favourite cone	*Conus zonatus*, in drawer 29.
Longest time to find a cone	*Conus ciderryi* was a 12 year search. Mike has a paratype, from the South China Sea, size 33 mm. *Conus gabelishi* took 8 years to find a specimen. It is only found in deep water off Australia and was named by a dear friend, sadly now dead.
Cheapest	Self collected
Most expensive	£600 for a single cone
Smallest	*Conus superstes* Hedley. 8.00 mm.
Largest	*Conus pulcher* Lightfoot 200 mm
Rarest	*Conus emersoni* Hanna Eastern Pacific
Wish list	Extensive, but includes *Conus athenae* Filmer 2011, of which there are only 3 known shells in the world, from Hawaiian waters found at 200-300 fathoms deep. He also would like *Conus dispar* Sowerby, 1833 from the West Coast of America, Mexico.

Valvata piscinalis 'sinistrorsum'

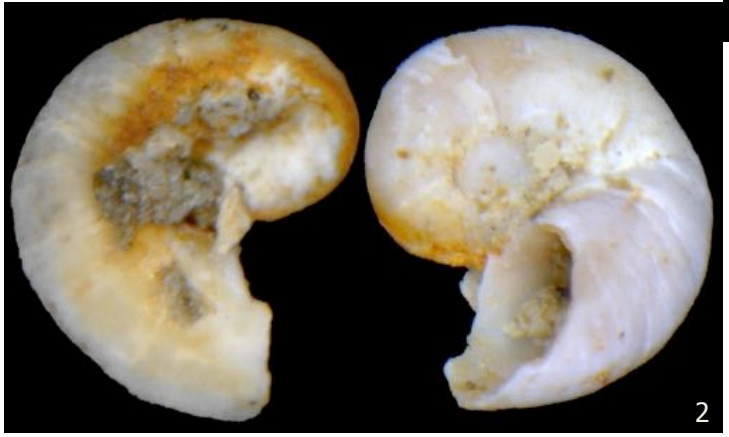
By Carl Ruscoe

In early January 2012 some large samples of dead freshwater shells were taken from drift material on the muddy shore of Draycote Water, a reservoir which is to be found a few miles South of Rugby in Warwickshire. The material was collected by myself and club member Jane Stafford. The material contained many thousands of shells, mostly consisting of about 8 species of common British freshwater snails. A large percentage of the shells in the sample were that of the Common European Valve Snail; *Valvata piscinalis* Müller 1774. (see photo 1)

1

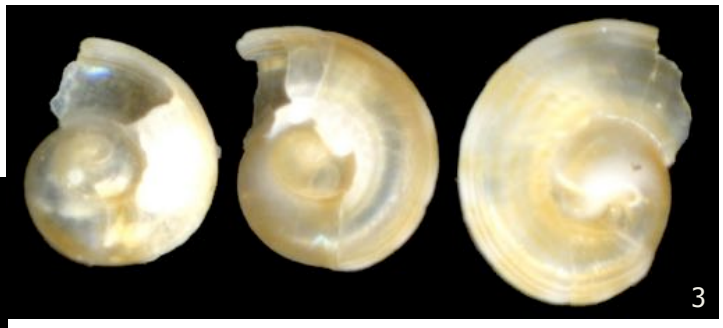
After examining all of the material under magnification, with help from my brother, Craig, several specimens of *Valvata piscinalis* were found which appeared to be sinistral (left-handed). Subsequently, Dave Hutchinson made a second visit to the reservoir to obtain more samples and one more of these apparently sinistral specimens of *Valvata piscinalis* was found.

These specimens range in size and maturity, from juvenile to adult. After close inspection of these shells, I have concluded that they do not appear to be sinistral as a result of a genetic mutation. They appear to be sinistral because of something that has happened to the animal during the early stages of its life cycle. This is because I was fortunate enough to find one very juvenile 'sinistral' specimen in the debris. It can be seen in this specimen that the protoconch is clearly dextral (right-handed) and is pointing downwards when the shell is viewed with the thickest part of the early teleconch whorl also pointing downwards and to the left hand side of the shell. (see photo 2 closeup of juvenile protoconch)



2

This type of coiling is known as 'heterostrophic' and the phenomenon is known as 'heterostrophy' which occurs naturally in several large families of marine gastropods, e.g. family Architectonicidae, commonly known as sundials. (See photo 4 of the protoconch of an Architectonicid species).



3

In the majority of shelled gastropods, coiling occurs in a downward spiral and the shell continues to grow in this direction to form a smoothly coiled and regular spiral. In the case of an Architectonicid gastropod the shell starts coiling in an anticlockwise direction and in a downward spiral but after the protoconch is formed the coiling changes direction. The first teleconch whorl then coils in an upward spiral so that the whole shell is gradually inverted by almost 180 degrees. This results in the protoconch being inverted so that it faces towards the base of the adult shell and the teleconch then continues growing in a clockwise direction, therefore in the adult shell, the whole shell appears to be dextral. Such a shell should be correctly termed 'sinistral heterostrophic' or 'pseudodextral'.

4

It appears that in the case of a few of these specimens of *Valvata piscinalis* the reverse type of heterostrophy has occurred as a result of an accident or injury to the young snails. These snails can be termed 'dextral heterostrophic' or 'pseudosinistral', (see photo 4 & 5) It is not known for sure what has caused these *Valvata* snails to become heterostrophic but I would say the cause is probably a parasite.

Many parasites have evolved to thrive on a limited number of host species and my theory is that *Valvata piscinalis* is one of the most suitable host species for a particular parasite in this habitat. It is well known that *Valvata piscinalis* is a common intermediate host to some species

of trematodes (flukes), particularly *Echinoparyphium recurvatum*.

It is also known that *Valvata piscinalis* has a sensory organ which can detect the nearby presence of leeches, which commonly attack snails. If a leech is detected the snail can seal the shell shut with it's operculum to prevent parasitisation. At some stage the snail must withdraw from the shell to breathe, feed and excrete waste products and a persistent attacker could then penetrate the shell and become established within the mantle cavity of the snail. This could inhibit regular growth of the animal and the shell, resulting in abnormal coiling of the animal and the shell secreted. This theory could explain why only a small percentage of specimens in the samples showed abnormal coiling of the shell, with heterostrophy occurring only in the most extreme cases.

I know that pseudosinistral freaks have been found in this species at two more sites. The first is at Hunstanton in Norfolk. Unfortunately I do not have any information as to the type of habitat in this case and this record might refer to finds of fossil shells. The second site is at Rockland Broad, Rockland St. Mary, Norfolk. Derek Howlett has found 3 such specimens in drift material at the broad margin here, over a number of years.

I have given the specimens described in this article the name *Valvata piscinalis 'sinistrorsum'*. I have used this name to conform with the name used by the Conchological Society in a previous journal article. I must state however that in my view, this name should have no taxonomic value as it refers merely to such abnormally coiled specimens of the species in question and not to a recognized form or sub-species.

I do not believe that such 'pseudosinistral' freaks of this species are rare in the UK. Such freaks in this species may be restricted to the Midlands and East Anglia and although *Valvata piscinalis* can live in a wide variety of habitats, such abnormally coiled specimens may be restricted to lakes and reservoirs, possibly depending on the suitability of the habitat for the parasite, e.g. leeches prefer still or slowly moving water. I firmly believe that there is a strong possibility of more 'pseudosinistral' freaks of *Valvata piscinalis* being found at new sites in the UK, providing a good quantity of specimens are examined.

All photos : Eddie Hardy

A DIADEM FOR OUR QUEEN

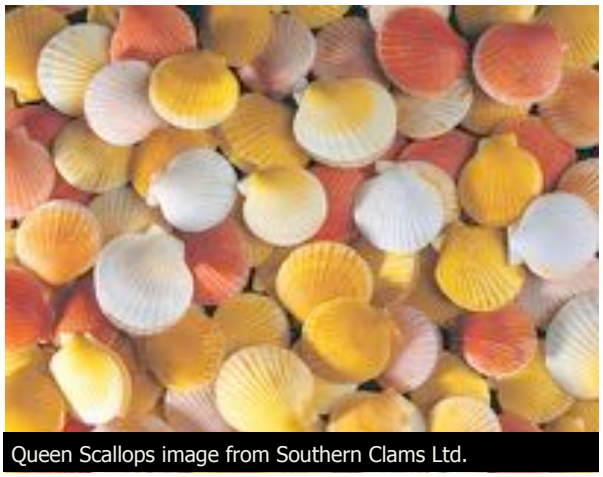
Our Queen often volunteers
to put on a heavy crown
and after sixty busy years
it must surely weigh her down.

So we should do something now
for we have the time to spare
to take some weight off her brow
and show her how much we care.

We could make a diadem
of Queen scallops pink and red
for we know where to find them
and they'd suit her royal head.

So to the sea we shall go
To look for shells bright and clean
and they shall help us to show
how much we admire our Queen.

By S.P.Dance *June 2012*
Artwork: Alison Hartley



Queen Scallops image from Southern Clams Ltd.

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Shell collecting – a bird lister's perspective

By Paul Mostyn

This article could just as easily have been titled "What is a Species?" or "What Shall I Collect?" or "Help – I can't keep up" and has its origin in my reactions, both emotional and intellectual, to the riches on display at the April Shell Convention this year, 2012. A short autobiographical introduction will be necessary to make my personal perspective clear, so please bear with me.

In 1969, shortly after graduating, I took up a teaching post in Western Samoa in the heart of the South Pacific, and was soon introduced to snorkelling and shell collecting by a colleague of my wife. After two years I had the nucleus of a useful collection, strong in cones, cowries and mitres, and with plenty of exchange material. I returned to the UK in 1971 and early in 1972 a colleague showed me one of Mike Dixon's first flyers. I became member number 12 and began to exchange with fellow members and dealers in a small way. Further teaching contracts in the Gilbert & Ellice Islands (as was) and Peninsular Malaysia (in the North within striking distance of Phuket) helped to augment my collection, my exchange material, and my contacts. By the mid-eighties I was running out of exchange material and the gaps in my collection were becoming too expensive to fill, e.g. *Cypraea exusta* approx. £80 in 1982. I had always been interested in the rest of the natural World, especially birds, and bird watching took over.

Cypraea artuffeli
www.conchology.eu

Cypraea exusta
www.conchology.eu

I have spent the last 30 years increasingly immersed in the world of birds, progressing from bird watcher through UK lister to UK twitcher culminating in 1999 with a UK year list of 312 species. The bench mark is 300 species in a year and this involved birding every weekend, many pre-dawn and late evening forays and driving 22,000 miles! Even in those days the list police were active and the issue of what was or was not a species and therefore "tickable" generated heated, not to say acrimonious discussion. Feeling that enough was enough and having a desire to remain married, meant that I progressed from twitching to World listing. I have currently seen 4504 of the World's bird species. I would like to see half the bird species in the World. The trouble is that there is no agreement on how many there are. Authorities differ, and in the meantime the splitters are having a field day. It is very much a moving target!

An idle Google search for "BSCC" three years ago resulted in my renewing my club membership and attending events at Theydon Bois, where I was unable to resist some modest purchases (e.g. *Cypraea artuffeli* @£10) and dip my toes back into the world of shell collecting. It struck me at the convention this year that there are similarities and differences in the two pursuits, on several levels; scientific, practical and emotional. I engaged Peter Dance, Mike Dixon and several other club members in conversation as a result of which I felt encouraged to write this article. I am very grateful to all of them for their time, but must make it clear that the ideas and opinions expressed are entirely my own, though I did agree with Mike's remark that the older we get the less we can embarrass ourselves by asking questions to which we should know the answer.

I would like to examine that nature of listing and collecting shells as emotionally satisfying activities; so similar in some ways yet so different in others. The concept of a species is central to both pursuits but is it the same for professionals, collectors, listers, bird guides or shell dealers? Finally I will look at the role of guides and dealers in our activities.

The obvious difference between birders and shell collectors is that birders have to rely on views of the bird, often fleeting and in poor light, while a collector has the specimen in the hand for review or re-assessment whenever they need to. Much of the skill of birders, and especially bird guides, is the ability based on experience and homework to make an ID from minimal evidence. It was not always so. In the heyday of Victorian ornithology the shotgun and taxidermist were much in evidence, and this was an essential stage on the road to the very high standards of field-craft that exist today.

Nowadays the birder has access to high quality recordings of songs and calls, superb field guides, binoculars and telescopes that are still improving. Putting aside their carbon footprint, birders probably have a positive effect on the natural environment by encouraging conservation and habitat protection. At least some of the money spent on trips filters down to the local grass roots. Is the same true for shell collecting?

The evidence available to the shell collector, or museum taxonomist, is the specimen and the data linked to it, which can be little more than date, locality, and perhaps habitat and depth, while the birder can use song and call, behaviour such as wing or tail flicking, food and feeding habits, nesting and breeding observations on top of visual appearance. These days DNA techniques are settling some, but not all, contentious issues. A single feather from a moulting or mist-netted bird is all that is needed (1).

Birds and molluscs are clearly very different animals, diverging around 520 million years ago (2). For example, Collins bird guide (3) gives the size range of blue tit, *Cyanistes caeruleus* as 10.5 to 12 cm while *Cypraea mappa* , ranges from 4.0 to 11.0 cm (4). Anyone who has collected cones or cowries from a single locality cannot help noticing the range of size, shape and colouration shown by many species. This is perhaps a significant difference between the groups. Collectors, I suspect, delight in the range of specimens available to them while birders are uncomfortable with variation because it is important to them to be able to make a positive ID so that the species can be ticked and listed. Of course birds vary; for example individual Bewick's swan, *Cygnus columbianus* can be identified by researchers from their bill patterns but given good views can all be separated from the similar Whooper swan, *Cygnus cygnus*. Many birds have several different races or subspecies while clinal variation is not uncommon. The trend is to regard geographically separated populations as distinct, right up to species level. Often the differences are visually subtle, almost to the point of invisibility, and based on song, behaviour or increasingly DNA analysis.

Cypraea mappa 69mm photo: J. Joseph

Conus behelokensis Theydon Bois, April 2012 photo: R. Rodolico

This brings us to the central question. What is a species? As I am very much an amateur in both fields all I can do is explain my own understanding of the situation and how that influences how I bird and how I collect shells.

Darwin's seminal image of the tree of life as sketched in his notes for "The Origin of Species" (5) encapsulates my concept of evolution as a dynamic process of differentiation and speciation. I know of no better account of our modern understanding of evolution than "The Ancestor's Tale" by Richard Dawkins (2), although "The Origin" is itself a wonderful read. A tree trunk divides into major then minor branches followed by thick then thin twigs until the finest twigs bearing buds, corresponding to the major phyla, orders, genera and finally species. We do not have quite enough words to describe all the subdivisions of a tree, but a study of a large silver birch in my garden revealed 9 stages from trunk to twig. Thus Cernohorsky (6) gives the example of *Cypraea annulus noumeensis* with 13 stages, though I have to say this seems a bit over the top to me.

Kingdom	animal
Phylum	Mollusca
Class	Gastropoda
Subclass	prosobranchia
Order	Mesogastropoda (Taenioglossa)
Superfamily	Cypraeacea
Family	Cypraeidae
Subfamily	Nariinae
Tribe	Nariini
Genus	Cypraea
Subgenus	Monetaria
Species	annulus
Subspecies	noumeensis

All scientists use analogy to clarify their thinking, while being aware that they should not be pushed too far, but this one works brilliantly for me. I visualise speciation as a one dimensional process over time, sometimes standing still for hundreds of millions of years, sometimes much more rapid so that we observe transitional forms in the process of becoming new species. The finest twigs correspond to a species and the buds to potential or incipient species.

Our race of Coal tit, *Parus ater* is (left) very different to the race in eastern China (right) which has a stonking crest and very pinkish underparts. The species shows clinal variation from west to east across Eurasia.

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The description in "Birds of China" (6) of this species shows what I mean. On the other hand, various islands in the Indo-Pacific have forms of kingfisher or white-eye that are very similar in appearance, voice and behaviour and could well interbreed if given the chance, but are regarded as good (i.e. separate) species. What does one do? I suppose I recognise the island forms as "good" species on the basis that given enough time they will continue to diverge until they are no longer willing or able to mate with allied species.

The birding world follows the decisions of the professional authorities with bated breath, hoping for a split to be published and accepted so that they gain a so called "armchair tick". Such decisions are actively scrutinised by a world-wide army of very knowledgeable and committed active birders and are disseminated in the latest field guides and magazine editions. I have to say that I view the active interaction between museum professionals, field workers, conservation organisations, bird guides and companies, and the many gifted amateurs in the birding world as a very healthy state of affairs. I would love to know more about the state of play in the conchological arena. The article in the last issue of Pallidula, April 2012, the recent changes in Taxonomy of "Trochidea" by Simon Taylor, is just the kind of thing I would welcome. In passing, the best thing that can happen to a vulnerable bird population is elevation to species level. It is much easier to obtain funds to save a species than a race or subspecies.

Shell dealers and bird tour companies are essential to our activities, and would not survive if they were not seen to give value for money. Clearly they have a vested interest in offering as many species as possible for sale on their tray or on view on their tour, but that is as it should be. In the end it is up to us as collectors or observers to make up our own minds on the basis of the evidence before us. All we can reasonably ask for is accurate and up to date information. We all collect in different ways for different reasons. I struggle with the knowledge that however many *Cypraea mappa* I have from different locations, of different forms, markings or sizes there will always be thousands of others out there all different again and my collection will never be complete. Once I have seen a Black bee-eater *Merops gularis* in West Africa that's it! I envy those who collect because each item is acquired for its own merit, appeal or beauty and need not fit into an overall scheme of things, in the spirit of the 18th. century Cabinet of Curiosities. I suppose that I am nearer to the train spotter than the magpie, which is why I need confidence in the framework in which I operate. I would be delighted if this article engenders discussion, even if it is only to put me straight on naïve errors in my own thinking.

Dealer's array of cowries Theydon Bois, April 2012 photo: R. Rodolico

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6) W.O. Cernohorsky Marine Shells of the Pacific Pacific Publications
7) A Field Guide to the Birds of China MacKinnon and Phillips Oxford

Conus edaphus Dall, 1910 41 mm photo: J. Joseph *Conus tessulatus* Born, 1778 39.5 mm
Separate species? *C. edaphus* from California not common, *C. tessulatus* from Japan common.

LIMERICKIDAE

By Jim Fray

The harp's a magnificent thing
Where both colour and pattern have zing.
Why cover them in
With a silvery skin?
It helps the pound and euro sell bling!

The conch is the host to a score
Of barnacles, squeezed in galore.
Now the shell on the roof
Is an obstinate hoof
And there's room to accommodate more.

The cone has a poisonous spear
So the secret is don't let him near,
For those on the bed
May finish up dead
But the lobster has little to fear.

Said a butterfly moon to his brother,
"I cannot tell one from the other,
If I weren't colour blind
We'd be two of a kind,
Instead, I have eaten my mother."


PALLIDULA
SHELL SHOW
newsletter
A Conchological Society


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British Shell Collectors' Club
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The changing foreshore of Mersea Island

By John E. Llewellyn-Jones

Many years ago in the 1950's as children and indeed with my own children in the 1980's we would spend our summer holidays on the lovely sandy beach at the bottom of Seaview Avenue, West Mersea, Essex where my parents lived. At the top of the beach there was a row of beach huts (Photo no.1) and the soft golden sand ran down past the high tide mark and onto what we called the 'mud' flats. In fact they were made up of sand, shingle and small patches of mud out to the low spring tide mark. Every large stone lifted would reveal scurrying baby crabs. We would collect cockles, mussels and winkles to boil in a 'billy' can on an open fire made from driftwood found on the beach. We would walk the tide line and across the flats, bare foot, looking for shells and other marine objects. I have included a table of the shells found by us and my mother on the beach in May 1974. We spent many happy hours wandering over the flats searching for live marine animals and seaweeds. There were chitons (*Lepidochiton cinerea* L.) (Photo no.2) under the rocks, cockles (*Cerastoderma edule* L.) would squirt water up, giving their position away and mussel beds on which there was the occasional Dog whelk (*Nucella lapillus* L.) drilling one or other of them. In the muddy puddles, if one dug down with one's hands one might find a Blunt/Truncate gaper (*Mya truncata* L.) or a common gaper (*Mya arenaria* L.) and some Baltic tellins (*Macoma balthica* L.). If one looked carefully over the muddy areas one might see a star-shaped pattern on its surface. Digging down quite a long way one would find a Peppery furrow shell (*Scrobicularia plana* da Costa). Here and there on the rocks were a number of seaweeds including *Fucus* sp. on which the flat periwinkle (*Littorina obtusata* L., there was only one species in the 1970's) (Photo no.3) could be found feeding. Another algal species, the edible Laver, (*Porphyra umbilicalis* L.) was common and where red seaweeds were to be found attached to stones in pools. In the small pools one could also see tracks on the muddy surface made by the edible periwinkle (*Littorina littorea* L.) crawling around.

1

3

2

This was the situation until the early 1990's when a few large rather worn, but still living, specimens of the Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas* Thunderg 1783) (Photo no.4) started to be washed up to the edge of the sandy beach in storms. It was in the early 2000's that the whole situation started to change and the 'mud' flats are now almost unrecognisable. Live *Crassostrea* started reproducing and forming colonies known as 'reefs'(Photo no.5). Mud started to settle between the areas where the reefs were forming at the low water mark. And now another species, the Quahog (*Mercenaria mercenaria* L.)

4

5

8

(Photo no.6) started appearing and is now common, often being found smashed open on the stones by seagulls. A small band of sandy and stony ground at the

6

bottom of the sandy beach remained and here a third introduction has started to appear, the Asian carpet shell or Manila clam (*Tapes philippinarium* (Adams & Reeve, 1850)) (Photo no.7).

7

So the situation now is that the cockles have almost gone, the mussel beds have been buried and have gone with the Dog whelks and there are only a few groups of slipper limpets (*Crepidula fornicata* L.) (Photo no.8) left. The edible winkles have become uncommon, none of them able to cope with the sloppy mud building up between the *gigas* 'reefs'. Because a lot of the larger stones have become buried in mud the seaweeds have also disappeared, meaning there is less plant life for the grazers to feed on. The beach huts are still at the top of the sandy beach but the 'mud' flats are now covered in *gigas* reefs and sloppy mud. *Crassostrea gigas* (Thünberg 1973) shells have very beautiful purple striped frilly shells (Photo no.9) which are very sharp

9

edged. It is therefore either impossible or very difficult indeed to walk over the reefs and certainly not in bare feet or flimsy shoes. Because the shells are so tightly packed and cemented together they are very small and difficult to get at for eating. For some years now it has been noticeable that the number of species on the Mersea shore has been reducing. Included in the table below is a list of shells that I made over a day or two in 2010. At first the reduction was thought to be due to the hot cooling water from the Bradwell Nuclear power station being pumped into the Blackwater estuary and that it was killing off the marine species living on the flats. But it is now thought that it was more likely to be the highly chlorinated seawater used to keep the huge cooling inlet and outlet pipes extending into the sea, along with the generator castings, free of the barnacles, seaweed and silt which were continually fouling them up.

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Of course the sacrifice was the smaller less adaptable marine animals and molluscs in the area.

I don't believe that the power station was the only problem causing the species diversity reduction over the last few years .The warming of the water, both from the power station and global warming, the chlorination of the seawater and lastly the formation of Gigas 'reefs' and sloppy mud formation between them have all come together to produce a catastrophic change in the foreshore and its marine life, including molluscs, at West Mersea over the last few years.

The problem, far too late, has at last been recognised by the West Mersea Town Council who in their local newsletter (No.14 Oct/Nov.2011) made the following statement :-

'Beware sharp shells'

And I quote :- 'The Mersea beach working group have received complaints regarding the build-up of potentially dangerous rock oyster shells which could harm bathers. Rock oysters or Gigas were first introduced to British waters in the sixties – unlike the natives they grow with their edges pointing upwards. Brightlingsea (A nearby seaside town) Harbour Commissioners have taken action to remove these shells from their beaches.'

This was followed in the Courier (Mersea's free magazine) on 18 April 2012 Issue number 529 by the following article:-

'Beach cleared of wild oysters'

I summarise :- 'Dredgers started clearing West Mersea beaches of wild oysters, which originated in the Pacific and were introduced in the 1970's by MAFF and have now become a pest and are cutting the feet of bathers and dogs. Natural England considers them to be a pest and who with the Essex Wildlife Trust have given their backing to this form of removal'.

We can only wait and see?

On the right, table of the changing foreshore West Mersea lists. Column headed May 1974, collected at Seaview Av'; with column headed July 2010 collected at Monkey Steps.

Key
L=Live D=Dead C=Common O=Occasional R=Rare
VOS=Very old shell None=Blank

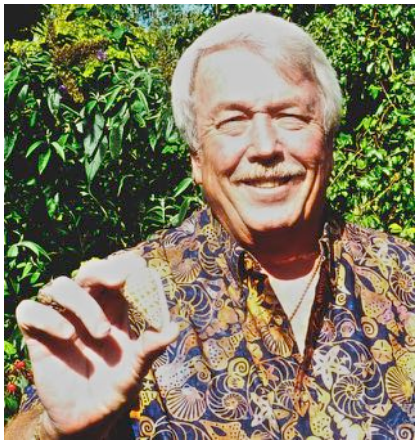
*1. *Urosalpinx cinerea* comes in shore to lay eggs early in the year.
*2. *Trivia arctica* may have come from the Red Crag at Walton-on-Naze.
*3. *Hydrobia ulvae* was living in the small piece of salt march behind the beach.
*4. *Phytia myositis* was living under the *Pseuda fruticosa* at the top of the beach.

	MAY 1974	JULY 2010
Lepidochiton cinerea	LC	LO
Patella vulgata	LO	DR
Littorina saxatilis	LO	LR
Littorina littorea	LC	LO
Crepidula fornicata	LC	LO
Littorina obtusata	LO	DR
Gibbula cinerea	LO	DO
Gibbula tumida	DR	
Nucella lapillus	LO	DRVOS
Buccinum undatum	DO	DO
Nassarius reticulata	LO	DO
Ocenebra erinacea	DO	DRVOS
Urosalpinx cinerea	LC	DR*1
Natica catena	DO	
Trivia arctica	DR*2	
Lora rufa	DO	
Lora turricula	DO	
Hydrobia ulvae	DO	LC*3
Phytia myositis	LO*4	
Rissoa membranacea	DO	
Turbonilla elegantissima	DO	
Cardium edule	LC	LR
Cardium glaucum	DO	DO
Cardium exiguum	DO	DO
Mytilus edulis	LC	LO
Ostrea edulis	DO	DO
Scrobicularia plana	LO	DO
Macoma balthica	LC	DR
Mya arenaria	LO	DO
Mya truncata	LO	DO
Corbula gibba	DR	
Spisula solida	DO	
Venerupis pullastra	LO	DR
Tapes aurea	DRVOS	
Petricola pholadiformis	DO	
Barnea parva	DO	
Barnea candida	DO	
Crassostrea angulata	DO	
Crassostrea gigas	LC	
Tapes philippinarium	LO	
Mercenaria mercenaria	LO	

Tales from Harlan E. Wittkopf

by Selina Wilkins

In September 2011, just before the first Chatsworth Shell Show, I had the opportunity to meet with Harlan at Tom Walker's home. We shared many of our shell experiences, including the love of shell poetry, shell art and really anything to do with shells! We mused on the love of finding a shell washed up on the shoreline. Harlan reminisced of his great passion of finding Alphabet cones, *Conus spurius* Gmelin, 1791 which is considered a rarity to find with clear letters. Harlan has collected a complete alphabet from specimens found at Sanibel Island over a period of 35 years. (He confessed that it was actually Peter Dance who first had the idea to search for letters on seashells.) His first Alphabet cone had the number "8" and got him hooked. His favourite "J" he loves to keep with him at all times (photo above) , as his wife's name is Jeanne. The shell gets its markings from the mollusc which deposits them in lines and blotches. Sometimes they look like letters, sometimes numbers, but often they're random dots and dashes. Letters and numbers with straight lines are easiest to find, while circular letters and numbers are less so. However in 2010, Harlan found a shell which has nearly become more famous than him. Harlan told me he was beachcombing at 3:30 in the morning, in 2 inches of water, using his flashlight to sweep across the sand when he spotted a shell that made him just stop and stare in disbelief. He picked it up, examined it and could not believe his eyes. The pattern of dots formed a fish, the symbol often used by early Christians. Turning it over, it had a further distinctive pattern, forming the number 7, which is considered by some to be a Christian number! Harlan said, "I think it's so neat the blessings I've received from all the things I've done, and then I find this."



Now the press in America have loved seeing this shell and it now has many names – the Bailey Matthews Shell Museum describe it as "a Christian shell", others refer to it as the Jesus Cone, or the Jesus Fish Cone.

We will continue this tale in the next issue, and share with you other curious cones that Harlan has found and will also tell you of his cone publications.

So what unusual shells have you found washed upon the shore? Have you a tale to share?


1

Sometimes you have to use your imagination, so look very carefully. What do you see?

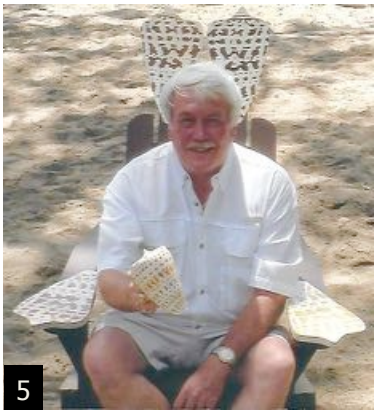
Photos: H. Wittkopf

1. Jesus fish on a cone,
2. lowercase a,
3. lowercase b,
4. lowercase f.
5. Harlan, this summer with a model of an Alphabet Cone.


2


3


4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The highs and lows of shell collecting *ex pisce*

by David W. McKay

We have all seen the term *ex pisce* in collection, sale catalogues and on auction sites and most of us know that it means collected from fish, but my guess is that very few of us have actually done it. The first specimen in my collection which was collected *ex pisce* was collected way back in 1967, when I had begun my shell collection as part of my honours degree course in Zoology. I was at sea, on my father's seine net boat, fishing for haddock to the east of Orkney when, during the gutting process, I noticed that the haddock had been eating a bivalve that I did not recognise. I put some aside and took them home at the end of the week and with the aid of Tebble's British Bivalve Seashells, identified them as *Abra prismatica.*

While I was employed at the Marine Laboratory, I would occasionally look at fish guts to see what was in them, especially on research trips when the fishing was poor and I had spare time on my hands. I collected my first *Roxania utriculus* in this way. But generally, research fishing trips on research vessels, were too hectic to allow me time to pursue shell collecting *ex pisce* on a regular basis. On those trips when fishing was good and I had some spare time, it was used much more productively cleaning fish to take home to eat (the only perk I ever got as a Civil Servant). Curiously enough when I moved to work on shellfish, I did lots of collecting *ex echinoderm. Astropecten irregularis,* unlike most other, swallows its prey of small bivalves and gastropods whole. On scallop dredging trips I used to collect *Astropecten irregularis* especially from dredge hauls dominated by stones and examine them at the end of the working day. Many of my small bivalves, especially *Yoldiella philippiana,* came from this source.

It was only when I started going to sea on commercial fishing trawlers that I really started shell collecting *ex pisce* in earnest. Commercial trawlers use nets with 'codend' meshes of either 100 or 110mm stretched length, so that few shelled molluscs other that the larger whelks and bivalves are retained. As my time is my own on these vessels and I can spend it as I see fit, I began collecting fish guts from most hauls and examining them in detail once all the catch had been cleaned and stowed. Obviously, the first requirement of shell collecting *ex pisce* is a plentiful supply of fish and not just any fish; it must be those species that specialise in eating invertebrates. My experience as a deckhand on my father's boat and as a fisheries scientist, indicated that three species were the likeliest candidates: the haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), the plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) and the catfish or wolffish (*Anarhichas lupus*). The plaice and catfish soon proved to be rather a waste of time as the shells in the intestines of both fish were broken into fragments.

Indeed, one of the greatest lows of collecting *ex pisces* is to open up a catfish to find it's guts bulging with shelly material which, on closer examination, proves to be numerous specimens of *Pseudamussium septemradiatum,* a species that I had searched the catch and decks assiduously for during the whole trip, all reduced

Pseudamussium septemradiatum as it should look, not the shards that one gets from catfish stomachs.

to fragments by it's powerful jaws and muscular stomach. I now almost entirely restrict myself to examining haddock guts. I should add at this point that if you are on a boat that is fishing in relatively shallow water, you may find haddock guts are entirely filled with sandeels, but in the deeper water where the boats I have been on were fishing, haddock live on a diet that is almost

Sample of haddock guts about to be processed.

entirely made up of invertebrates.

During the hauls, while I was helping to gut the fish, I put promising guts (those with obvious lumps) into a bucket for later examination. At the end of the haul I open the guts with scissors and empty the contents into a sieve.

Up until my latest trip I used a 2mm mesh sieve. However, on my latest trip I took both a 1mm and a

Contents of the guts after washing waiting to be sorted.

2mm sieve and on one haul, by mistake, I washed the gut contents through the 1 mm sieve and after removing all larger mollusc specimens, I was left with a small amount (two or three dessert spoonfuls) of what looked like shell gravel. I was at the point of discarding this, when it occurred to me that if that material had been left from the catch of the small net I attach to scallop dredges, I could have taken it home and examined it under the microscope. I therefore preserved the residue and examined it when I got home. I was well rewarded, with specimens of *Anatoma crispata, Rhizorinus acuminatus, Turbonilla crenata* and at least three small eulimids. A full list of all the species recovered from fish stomachs on my latest trip to the northern North Sea is given in Table 1.

The highs are most definitely collecting species that I have only seen occasionally or not at all in my collecting life. The lows, apart from the catfish, are the loss of sleep as each haul lasts five hours. It takes on average two hours to clean and stow the fish. It takes me a further one or two hours to do a preliminary analysis of the guts and preserve my finds. The crew in general regard me with a mixture of amusement and disbelief that I would give up valuable sleeping

Boreotrophon multicostatus

time simply to cut open haddock guts, but as it does not interfere with their work, I am politely tolerated.

On one occasion, not on my latest trip, I was chastised by the skipper of the vessel for spending too much time helping the crew and not enough collecting shells. I was able to assure him that the two activities were, as far as I was concerned, entirely compatible. The other major low is that specimens are not in prime condition. Many of the larger specimens are crabbed and often appear to be serially crabbed. However, as all my attempts to develop a small net, similar to the one I use on scallop dredges which can be attached to a trawl, have proved almost entirely futile, I will continue collecting *ex pisce* as long as I am able to go to sea.

Table 1, List of species collected ex pisce in August 2011, is presented overleaf on Page 23.

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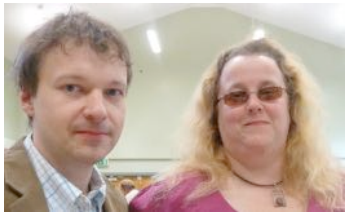

La Garde, Gent and Bunny Ears

By David Gac & Naomi Dubnyckyj

The Eureka moment for us was attending the BSCC event at Chatsworth in September 2011. Coming from the monotone world of fossils we were struck by one thing, colour! And after only a few minutes at the show, we were both on the way to becoming shell collectors.

General view of the Shell Show at La Garde

We were unable to visit the BSCC show last October, but noticed that there was a shell show in La Garde, France at the same time we were on business in Marseille, so decided to take a day out to visit the show.

Naomi posing with a large replica shell, AFC stand, La Garde

Our plan was to have a quick look around the show before making any purchases, a plan which failed as soon as we reached a very large selection of cowries which gave us the chance to obtain a lot of common species in "one hit" for our fledgling collection. As we looked at more and more tables we soon realised that the specimens that were attracting our attention were all cowries.

As a rough guess, around 50% of the specimens at the show were either cones or cowries. Whilst most specimens were common species, many we had only previously seen in books and on the internet, and never had the chance to handle and compare them. We made a point of looking for some of the rarer cowries, such as *leucodon* and *valentia*, which whilst not abundant were readily available (at a price). Although of the rarer species we found *tessellata*, the most impressive, if a little smaller than we had realised. After much consideration we decided to hold off acquiring any of the higher value species until we have had chance to see a few more specimens and compare quality and prices. We left the show with a good selection of cowries and were particularly pleased with our " Bunny Ears" *annulus*.

Monetaria annulus (Linnaeus, 1758) 24mm, Zanzibar

The show had a good mix of both professional sellers and collectors, mostly from Southern France, but also from Belgium, Italy and even New Caledonia. With the Show being only a few kilometers from the sea, it was a little surprising how little Mediterranean material was on offer, although the quality of the specimens that were available more than made up for this.

Sadly we did not have enough time to see everything, or speak to many exhibitors, our visit to the show at La Garde was all too short, but it certainly whetted our appetite for visiting more shows in the future.

Luria lurida (Linnaeus, 1758) 30mm, Cirkewwa, Malta

A fortnight after our trip to La Garde we made our annual trip to the mineral show at Gent in Belgium, although predominantly a mineral and fossil show there are always a few shells on offer. This year saw two large stalls full of shells along with a scattering of specimen shells on some of the mineral and fossil stalls. One stall in particular stood out with a very varied offering of shells at

very reasonable prices, which seemed to prove very popular with visitors to the show.

The stall belonged to a local shell collector who was offering duplicates from his collection. We examined every shell on this table and made quite a large selection, including about a dozen species of cowries. A particular favourite of ours is *Luria lurida*, and we were very pleased to obtain several specimens from Malta, as all of the specimens currently in our collection are from Italian localities. Whilst these specimens suffered a little from the growth lines that seem to blight this species, they came with excellent collection data; dates, localities etc., so half a dozen of them made their way home with us. Also on offer was a tray of *Cypraea tigris* showing a superb range of colours. They looked so good as a group we decided to have them all. A small part of the lot is shown in the photograph.

Shell Dealer at the Gent Mineral Show

Cypraea tigris Linnaeus, 1758, largest 73mm
All from Philippines, apart from top left specimen which is from the Solomon Islands.

So, back home and time to start planning our next shell trip, definitely the Antwerp show, then Prato near Florence, but what about Prague? or Ottmarsheim? or Oehringen? and of course Theydon Bois!

Cont. from page 21. The highs and lows of shell collecting *ex pisce.*

Table 1, List of species collected *ex pisces* in August 2011.

Chitons	*Ondina divisa* (J. Adams, 1797)
Leptochiton asellus (Gmelin, 1791)	*Turbonilla crenata* (Brown, 1827)
	Acteon tornatalis (L., 1758)
Gastropods	*Scaphander lignarius* (L., 1758)
Anatoma crispata (Fleming, 1828)	*Roxania utriculus* (Brocchi 1814)
Puncturella noachina (L., 1771)	*Cylichna cylindracea* (Pennant, 1777)
Lepetella laterocompressa (Rayneval & Ponzi,1854)	*Retusa umbilicata* (Montagu, 1803)
Jujubinus montagui (W Wood, 1828)	*Rhizorus acuminatus* (Bruguiere, 1792)
Gibbula tumida (Montagu, 1803)	*Limacina retroversa* (Fleming, 1823)
Alvania cimicoides (Forbes,1844)	*Philine scabra* (Müller 1776)
Alvania jeffreysi (Waller,1864)	*Philine pruinosa* (Clark 1827)
Alvania punctura (Montagu, 1803)	*Philine punctata* (J. Adams 1800)
Alvania subsoluta (Aradas, 1847)	
Onoba semicostata (Montagu, 1803)	**Bivalves**
Turritella communis Risso, 1826	*Nucula nucleus* (L., 1758)
Aporrhais serresianus (Michaud, 1828)	*Nuculoma tenuis* (Montagu 1803)
Trichotropis borealis Broderip & Sowerby, 1829	*Jupiteria minuta* (Müller 1776)
Velutina velutina (Müller, 1776)	*Musculus discors* (L., 1767)
Polinices catena (da Costa, 1778)	*Palliolum tigerinum* (Müller 1776)
Polinices fuscus (Blainville, 1825)	*Heteranomia squamula* (L., 1758)
Polinices montagui (Forbes, 1838)	*Limatula gwyni* (Sykes 1903)
Polinices pallida (Broderip & Sowerby, 1829)	*Myrtea spinifera* (Montagu 1803)
Polinices polianus (delle Chiaje, 1826)	*Semierycina nitida* (Turton 1822)
Epitonium clathratulum (Kanmacher 1798)	*Tellimya ferruginosa* (Montagu 1803)
Epitonium trevelyanum (Johnston 1841)	*Mysella bidentata* (Montagu 1803)
Eulima bilineata Alder,1848	*Thyasira croulinensis* (Jeffreys, 1847)
Polygireulima polita (L., 1758)	*Thyasira ferruginea* (Locard,1886)
Vitreolina philippii (Rayneval & Ponzi 1854)	*Thyasira obsoleta* (Verrill & Bush, 1898)
Vitreolina collinsi (Sykes,1903)	*Astarte sulcata* (da Costa 1778)
Trophonopsis barvicensis (Johnston, 1825)	*Goodallia triangularis* (Montagu,1803)
Boreotrophon clathratus (L., 1767)	*Parvicardium minimum* (Philippi 1836)
Boreotrophon truncatus (Ström, 1768)	*Spisula elliptica* (Brown 1827)
Buccinum undatum L., 1758	*Arcopella balaustina* (L., 1758)
Colus howsei (Marshall, 1911)	*Moerella pygmaea* (Loven, 1846)
Colus gracilis (da Costa, 1778)	*Gari tellinella* (Lamark, 1818)
Liomesus ovum (Turton 1825)	*Abra prismatica* (Montagu, 1803)
Volutopsius norwegicus (Gmelin, 1791)	*Arctica islandica* (L., 1767)
Hinia incrassata (Ström, 1768)	*Timoclea ovata* (Pennant, 1777)
Oenopota turricula (Montagu, 1803)	*Hiatella arctica* (L., 1767)
Mangelia coarctata (Forbes, 1840)	*Thracia phaseolina* (Lamark, 1818)
Raphitoma linearis (Montagu, 1803)	
Odostomia unidentata (Montagu, 1803)	**Scaphopods**
	Dentalium entalis L 1758

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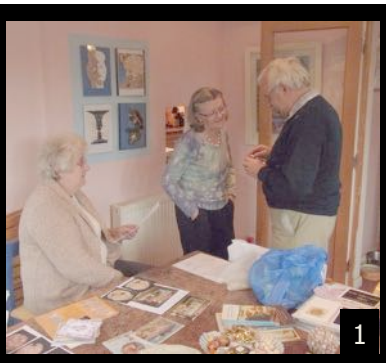
Photographs 1-3 by J. Llewellyn-Jones and S. Wilkins.

Editor's social; 17th March 2012 when 18 visited Selina's home, exchanging shell art ideas, viewing work on the internet, many reference books available, talking molluscs and a few purchases were made too.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Photographs 4-5 by Y. Joseph.
Derek and Daphne's Social; 7th July 2012. A gathering of 26, enjoyed a full day of sunshine. There was shell identification, *Valvata piscinalis 'sinistrorsum'* (P8) viewed under the microscope, freshwater molluscs collected on walks, lots of talking and some purchases made too.

Cone Wordsearch

Hidden in this grid are names of cones, selected from the interview of Mike Filmer, and from the collectors' encyclopedia of seashells for curious names and pure beauty.

abbreviatus anemone athenae aurora ciderryi coronatus diadema elegans emersoni gabelishi generalis gloriamaris imperialis jaspideus lachrymosus lacteus laetus leopardus litteratus magus marmoreus monachus nobilis princeps purpurascens prometheus ranunculus regius sulcatus superstes suturatus victoriae virgatus virgo ximenes zonatus

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Dates for your diary

6th October 2012
Conch. Soc. AGM, Angela Marmont Centre, Darwin Building, Natural History Museum, London. 11.00 am.
Robert Cameron: *Cepaea megalab project.*

27th October 2012
Shell Show at Theydon Bois Community Centre: CM16 7E For directions please look in the club website.

24th November 2012
Conch. Soc. Workshop at Judith Nelson's home:

8th December 2012
Conch. Soc. AGM, Angela Marmont Centre, Darwin Building, Natural History Museum, London. 2:00 pm.
Miranda Lowe: *Blaschka Nudibranch Models.*

27th April 2013
Shell Convention at Theydon Bois Community Centre: CM16 7E For directions please look on the club website.

28th April 2013
Editor's Social at Selina's home: RG40 2LT. Tel: 0118 9786380

26th October 2013
Shell Show at Theydon Bois Community Centre: CM16 7E For directions please look in the club website.

For further information please check our website : www.britishshellclub.org and also see Conch. Soc website: www.conchsoc.org

In the next issue …

Peter Dance writes about *Pholadomaya candida* from his Rare Shells book, David McKay searches for British *Palliolum*, see the results of Shell Show 2012, and read more poetry. What would you be able to contribute?

Obituary – Joe Ekins

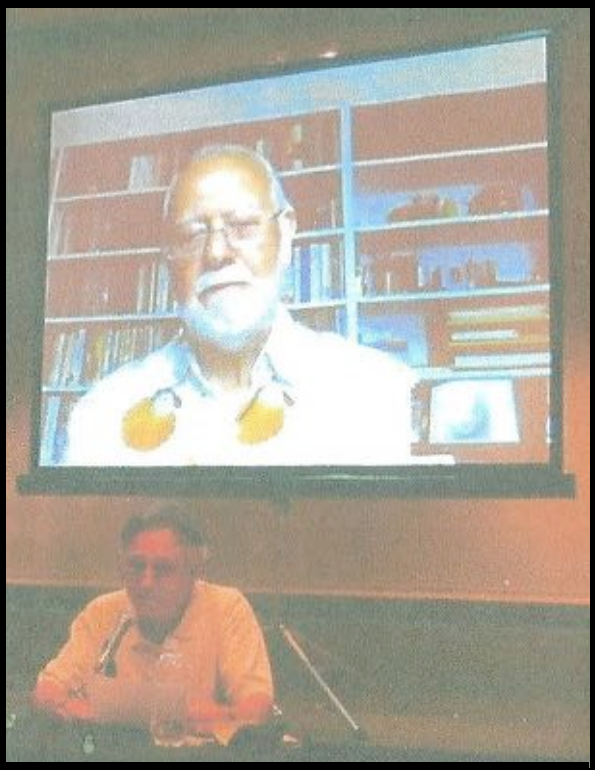
I was saddened to hear of the death of Joe Ekins on 1st Feb. Members will remember Joe who for some years regularly attended both meetings at the Napier Hall and the Isleworth get-togethers. His exhibits, at Napier, of self-collected material from Papua New Guinea were of considerable interest. He was often accompanied by his daughter, Rosie, and he was devastated when she died before him. As a result he decided to sell his collection some years ago, though he retained his membership. More recently his wife, Gwen, who attended some meetings with him, also died. Obituaries in the national press record his notable achievements as a tank gunner during the Second World War – something he was very modest about. He is survived by a son to whom we extend our sympathy.

Kevin Brown – March 2012.

John Batt's social

On 4th August 14 members enjoyed the sunshine all day, delighting in great food by Goga, lots of mollusc chatting and some purchasing too. Photos : S. Wilkins

Breaking news



Peter Dance appeared from Scotland on Skype at the Boston COA convention, 22nd June 2012, telling the stories behind his "Rare Shells" book. This is a first for shellers!