PALLIDULA

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In this Issue

Front Cover: Photo of *Pecten maximus* L.1758 in his home aquarium, taken by John Batt. Article P42.

Back Cover: Photos by Roberto Rodolico, from dives off Cyprus. Species of *Luria lurida* (L. 1758) Bottom left specimen is *Cypraea spurca* (L. 1758)

Editorial

I write this during a week of thunderstorms, heavy rain, a heatwave, a british winner of the Tour de France and a new birth of a royal prince. These headlines have been in the news but what has been happening to members of our club? It can be noted that shells have been more prominent in the media. Did you catch "The Secret Life of Rock Pools" presented by Prof. Richard Fortey? Or "Country File" for research into the reef of sandworms off North Wales. What about our last president, Derek Howlett, on "Random Acts" (no.311) on Channel 4? Missed them? Live abroad? With TV boxes which record, playback and provide internet access to current or past programmes do we have an excuse? Perhaps you just didn't know? Well one way of keeping up with media is to become a member of Facebook, and join the B.S.C.C. Facebook page, setup and run by Roberto Rodolico. All these items were mentioned on it. So think about joining us on-line, to catch the latest in shell news and invite your friends too. Email Roberto on rodolico_roberto@hotmail.com for more details.

As editor I am very aware that PALLIDULA is the only form of communication that all members receive, as not everyone can attend all socials and all meetings, nor do we all have easy internet access. However the Facebook club page and our club website give you two things that I cannot. One - News instantaneously without waiting for six months. Two - more pages at no extra cost. For example on Page 56, I have inserted a few photographs from the last Theydon Bois Meeting. On our Facebook page there were 100s of photo's to peruse and enjoy of each event within hours of it taking place! A second example. On page 47, I have inserted a table of species found by David McKay during his Icelandic stopover. This has taken much time to get into a format to fit on one page. David has additional information in his original file. The entire file can be uploaded easily by club members from Facebook or the club website. So please be encouraged by your committee and consider joining us on-line.

In this issue members are sharing their collecting experiences and these articles have many contrasts: collecting in the UK and abroad; specimens of freshwater or marine specimens; places lacking in development and others with maybe too much; live specimens and dead collected. I was very struck by Carl having very good luck at finding a guide and helper in Gambia, during the flight out, yet David McKay researched his trip meticulously not relying on luck. I hope all these articles give you food for thought about what is happening in our "shelling" world and what you could be doing the rest of this year.

On a final note, due to illness I was very sad to miss you all in April and to cancel my editor's social. I hope that my health improves so that I might see you at the Shell Show, October - what will you be exhibiting?

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Landsnails (mostly) of Lombardy

By Jonathan Welsh

For our holiday in May 2011, Heather and I headed to the resort of Riva del Garda in northern Italy. Being a rather huge inland lake, there is obviously no marine material to be found here but you would expect there to be many species of freshwater mollusc in it. This turned out to be an incorrect assumption! On several occasions we went for a wander around sections of the lake close to Riva and the adjoining town of Torbole. The only thing there seemed to be in vast quantities was green algae, clumped together and, while visiting Melchesine, we observed the locals scooping it up in nets. Presumably this was to keep it from fouling up the water too much and blocking up fishing nets they were using.

Anyway, on closer examination of the material on the strandline, some of these green blobs contained tiny examples of *Dreissena polymorpha* which I suppose proves that they lived in the lake! Also amongst this were several examples of *Vivaparius vivaparius*, however two of them I found were still inhabited and one had live young within the aperture so these went back in the water. Of the two that I did keep, one was far larger than any that I've found in the UK, measuring 39mm and the other (which Heather found) was a baby one. I also spotted another dead one floating in the water one evening but the ducks (who are very common around the lake) decided to play with it and so it was swept too far away for me to be able to retrieve it without falling in. Heather also found a single example of *Lymnaea auricularia* half buried in the mud at the lakeside one evening but that was all. However, if you go to the natural history museum in the castle at Melchesine, there is a video of a scuba dive into the lake and, if you look really carefully on the vegetation that grows in the shallower sections of the lake, you can just about make out the shapes of lots of *Viviparius* which appear to be extremely common if difficult to collect at the shore line! The only other freshwater material which we found were *Pisidum* sp. (possibly *P.amnicum*) in a small almost dried up meltwater lake which had formed at the top of Monte Baldi, which is accessible by cable car from Malchesine.

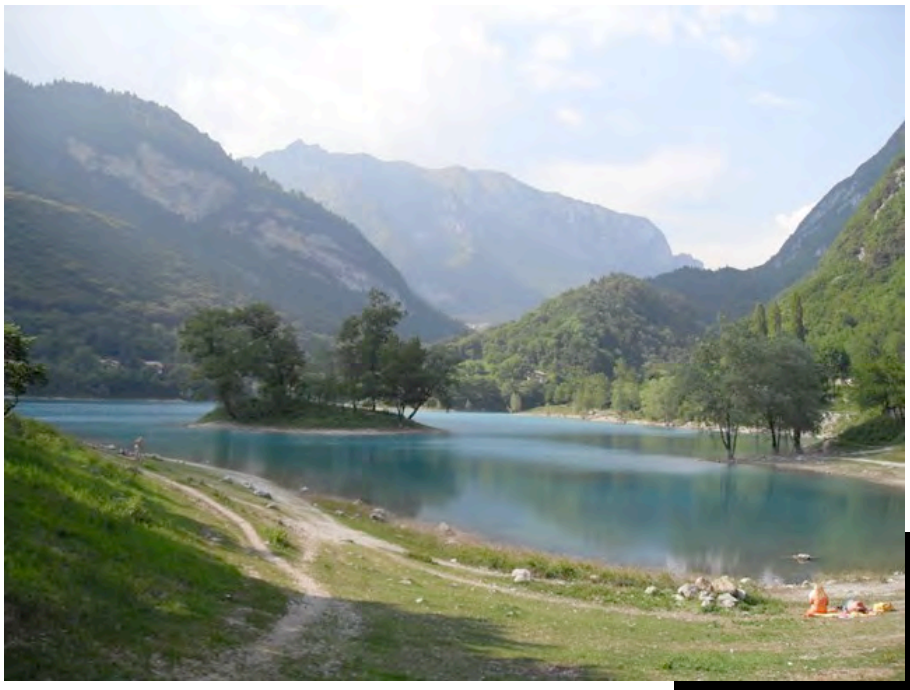
There were hundreds of them in the mud, all opened and gaping in the sunshine. They were also incredibly fragile so, of the dozen intact pairs or so I brought home, only 3 pairs survived intact.

So I, more a less, gave up on looking at the lake and turned my attention to the landsnails instead!

On the first proper full day in the resort, we decided to walk to a nearby waterfall, called CascataVerone. It was apparently a short walk and, seeing as it wasn't terribly hot, we set off after lunch. It turned out to be a rather fraught walk as we were badly lost due to poor directions. Anyway, once we did arrive, the view up into the waterfall was incredible – the river just falls off the edge of the valley where it has been truncated by glaciation and plunges 95 metres to the valley floor. We forgot to bring an umbrella and so got totally soaked. Luckily, by now it had warmed up sufficiently so we dried off in the sun. Located at the base of this waterfall were the largest *Clausiliid* I had

ever seen, they were alive and well, crawling about in the damp moss covered rocks at the base of the falls. I did try to take some photographs of these but sadly they did not come out very well; however they appear to be *Charpenteria itala punctata* (Michaud, 1831).

The other good place to look for landsnails, which we discovered on the way back, was in road cuttings. Many species just seem to be washed down to the base of the roadside (especially onto raised walls about 2 – 3 feet above the road surface) and can be easily collected. *Zebrina detritus* and *Pomatias elegans* were especially plentiful in these deposits.



Another little stroll around the town of Garda and along to Tombolini, another small local village, resulted in the following finds: *Pomatias elegans, Cornu aspersum, Cochlodina kuesteri* and a juvenile *Chilostoma* species.

The following day, we decided to have a nice long walk. There was a picture on one of the leaflets in the hotel of an amazing looking lake, called Lake Tenno, which was about 10km away. As public transport did not go anywhere nearby, we decided to walk. Assuming for normal (in our case) fast walking speed, we should have been there in 2 hours. This estimate was also assuming flat terrain …

Maybe we should have thought about this a bit more, as more than 4 hours later, in blazing sunshine and having climbed up some really steep paths and nearly getting lost at least twice, we arrived at the lake.

It really was worth it though, the colour of water does not show up well in this photograph but it is more like that seen in the Caribbean in the shallow sea. Here was another wall with a bit of decaying vegetation growing on it. It was a perfect place to find landsnails. A few minutes of looking produced a large amount of material, all dead (obviously) and much of it new to me. (Authors aside: one of the reasons it's taken me so long to write this article is that I am not terribly familiar with landsnails and there are few books about them!) Anyway, the species we found were: *Zebrina detritus, Pomatias elegans, Pomatias sulcatus, Helicodonta obvoluta* (an amazing shell with a weird lobed aperture), *Macrogastra attenuata, Cochlostoma porroigredlieri* (which looks almost like an *Epitonium*), *Chondrina oligodonta, Charpenteria itala punctata, Clausilia cruciata, Granaria illyrica, Retinella olivetorum, Marmorana signatatiburtina, Oxychilius cellarius, Hygromia cinctella, Cochlostoma henricae strigillatum, Discus rotundatus* and a large amount of still unidentifiable Clausiliids!

We did have a quick look around the edges of the lake to see if there was any freshwater material but alas, there was nothing. Subsequent searches on the internet have yielded no evidence of molluscs in the lake at all, which seems odd. Maybe no-one has looked properly yet? Anyway, after our hunt for these shells, we washed our tired feet in the water, stopped off for a drink and walked the long way back to Garda.

So, in an overview of the holiday, forget about the freshwater and marine (obviously!) molluscs of northern Italy and start looking at the walls…

Editor's note - Have you had a trip abroad when the shelling didn't match your expectations? Or did all your dreams come true. Please share them with us all and write an article for PALLIDULA.

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Hell Kettles, Darlington, County Durham

By John Robinson

The name "hell kettle" is often applied to ponds that are popularly believed to be bottomless. In particular these ponds are mentioned in Holinsheds Chronicles 1587 ed., vol. 1, chap. 24. "There are certeine pits, or rather three little pooles, a mile from Darlington, which the people call the Kettles of hell, or the Diuels Kettles. That from their loathsome brimms do breath a sulphurous sweat, Hell Kettles rightly cald."

Hell Kettles Darlington (the 2 remaining Kettles can be seen in the centre of the photograph)

The story of their formation is to be found in the Chronicles attributed to Abbot Brompton of Jervaulx: "1179. About Christmas a wonderful and unheard-of event fell out at Oxendale, viz., that in the very domain of Lord Hugh, Bishop of Durham, the ground rose up on high with such vehemence, that it was equal to the highest tops of the mountains, and towered above the lofty pinnacles of the churches; and at that height remained from the ninth hour of the day even to sunset. But at sunset it fell with so horrible a crash that it terrified all who saw that heap, and heard the noise of its fall, whence many died from that fear; for the earth swallowed it up, and caused in the same place a very deep pit."

Within comparatively recent times the two more northerly ponds have united to form the "Double Kettle", so-named to distinguish it from the "Croft Kettle" lying nearer Croft. The 3rd and 4th Kettles, referred to by Leonard West and Bernard R. Lucas, in this article have disappeared completely.

Although other bodies overlie the Magnesian Limestone Formation in County Durham, Hell Kettles is the only site in the county where open water fed by calcareous springs occurs. This is also the only site in County Durham with saw-edged dominated swamp, a vegetation type showing relationships to fens elsewhere in Britain, notably East Anglia. Additional interest is provided by stands of tall fen and damp grassland containing a rich assemblage of wetland plants, including several which are local.

The southern Croft Kettle which is approximately 6.5 metres deep is fed by subterranean springs issuing from the Magnesian Limestone. It has clear highly calcareous water and supports a luxuriant growth of stoneworts *Chara hispida* and *C. vulgaris*. The perimeter of the Croft Kettle falls very abruptly into deep water and care should be taken when approaching it. In contrast the larger northern Double Kettle which is of similar depth is fed mainly by surface water drainage and has turbid water supporting only a sparse growth of fennel-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton pectinatus* and the introduced pondweed *Elodea canadensis.* There are a number of stagings for fishing activities around this pond.

The marginal vegetation of the two pools also differs. Croft Kettle is fringed by a narrow swamp dominated by saw-sedge, but with common reed *Phragmites australis*, lesser water parsnip *Berula erecta*, mares tail *Hippuris vulgaris* and tubular water-dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa.* Around Double Kettle common reed predominates, but with some saw-sedge and common club-rush *Scirpus lacustris*.

The fringing swamp is surrounded by tall-fen containing lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis*, celery-leaved buttercup *Ranunculus sceleratus*, blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus,* common marsh bedstraw *Galium palustre* and common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*. Between the two

pools there is an area of damp grassland rich in sedges, including brown sedge *Carex disticha*, common sedge *C.nigra*, oval sedge *C.ovalis* and false-fox sedge *C.otrubae*.


Croft Kettle (No 1)

The driest parts of the site support neutral grassland, containing common grassland plants such as crested dogs-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and pignut *Conopodium majus*, although flat-sedge *Blysmus compressus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera* and plicate sweet-grass *Glyceria plicata* occur in transition zones between dry grassland and tall fen. Scattered trees and shrubs including, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, grey poplar *Populus canescens* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna,* which occur on earth banks, beside a ditch and on the margins of the ponds. The long history of botanical recording on this site, going back to 1777 is of particular note providing a detailed account of floristic changes which have taken place in the past two centuries.

I am indebted to Adrian Norris (non-marine census recorder Conchological Society) who very kindly updated the names of the species of shells recorded in and around the kettles by Leonard West and Bernard R. Lucas. The original lists were copied exactly as written by Lucas, the updated names are shown in dark green.

References:

Holinsheds Chronicles 1587 ed., vol. 1, chap. 24.
West L. 1885 Survey of Hell Kettles molluscs.
Lucas B.R. 1928 Survey of Hell Kettles molluscs. English Nature.
Norris A. 2010 (non-marine census recorder Conchological Society).


Double Kettle (No 2)

In 1885 Mr Leonard West of Darlington produced the following list of freshwater shells that occur in Hell Kettles. Following this is the list compiled by Bernard R. Lucas in 1928, together with a list of land shells he noted.

Leonard West - 1885

Limnaea auricularia	***Radix auricularia*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *peregra*	***Radix balthica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *peregra* var. *ovata*	***Radix balthica*** (Linnaeus, 1758) VAR
" *glabra*	***Omphiscola glabra*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
" *stagnalis*	***Lymnaea stagnalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Planorbis carinatus	***Planorbis carinatus*** O.F.Muller, 1774
" *spirorbis*	***Anisus (Anisus) leucostoma*** (Millet, 1813)
	Anisus (Anisus) spirorbis (Linnaeus, 1758) This record could refer to either of these two species
Zonitoides nitidus	***Zonitoides (Zonitoides) nitidus*** (O.F.Muller,1774)
Planorbis glaber	***Gyraulus (Torquis) laevis*** (Alder, 1838)
" *lacustris*	***Hippeutis complanatus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *contortus*	***Bathyomphalus contortus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Physa fontinalis	***Physa fontinalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Ancylus oblongus	***Acroloxus lacustris*** (Linnaeus,1758)
Bythinia tentaculata	***Bithynia (Bithynia) tentaculata*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Anodonta cygnea	***Anodonta (Anodonta) cygnea*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

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Bernard R. Lucas - 1928

Limnaea peregra	***Radix balthica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Planorbis carinatus	***Planorbis carinatus*** O.F.Muller, 1774
" *complanatus*	***Planorbis planorbis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *contortus*	***Bathyomphalus contortus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Physa fontinalis	***Physa fontinalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Limnaea palustris	***Lymnaea (Stagnicola) fusca*** (C.Pfeiffer, 1821)
	Lymnaea (Stagnicola) palustris (O.F.Muller, 1774)
This species has been split into two and dissection is the only reliable way to separate the two species. However, ***Stagnicola fusca*** is the more likely.	
Pisidium milium	***Pisidium milium*** Held, 1836
Valvata cristata	***Valvata (Valvata) cristata*** O.F.Muller, 1774
Byhinia tentaculata	***Bithynia (Bithynia) tentaculata*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

To endeavour to find if any difference of molluscan fauna takes place in the different Kettles, Lucas numbered them 1,2,3 and 4. Only Kettles 1 and 2 remain, the Croft Kettle and the Double Kettle.

Limnaea palustris	***Lymnaea (Stagnicola) fusca*** (C.Pfeiffer, 1821)
	Lymnaea (Stagnicola) palustris (O.F.Muller, 1774)
See Lymnaea note	
Planorbis carinatus	***Planorbis carinatus*** O.F.Muller, 1774
Physa fontinalis	***Physa fontinalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Pisidium milium	***Pisidium milium*** Held, 1836

No. 2 Kettle

Limnaea peregra	***Radix balthica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *palustris*	***Lymnaea (Stagnicola) fusca*** (C.Pfeiffer, 1821)
	Lymnaea (Stagnicola) palustris (O.F.Muller, 1774)
See Lymnaea note	
Planorbis carinatus	***Planorbis carinatus*** O.F.Muller, 1774
" *contortus*	***Bathyomphalus contortus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Bythinia tentaculata	***Bithynia (Bithynia) tentaculata*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Valvata cristata	***Valvata (Valvata) cristata*** O.F.Muller, 1774
Physa fontinalis	***Physa fontinalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

The following land shells have been found within a few feet of the Kettles (Lucas 2 November 1928):

Vitrea crystallina	
" *radiatula*	***Nesovitrea (Perpolita) hammonis*** (Strom, 1765)
" *nitidus*	***Zonitoides (Zonitoides) nitidus*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
Cochlicopa lubrica	***Cochlicopa cf lubrica*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
It is just possible that this record also includes the split ***C. lubricella***	
Oxyloma pfeifferi	***Oxyloma (Oxyloma) elegans elegans*** (Risso 1826)
Clausilia rugosa	***Clausilia bidentata bidentata*** (Strom, 1765)
Trichia hispida	***Trochulus (Trochulus) hispidus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Vertigo antivertigo	***Vertigo (Vertigo) antivertigo*** (Draparnaud, 1801)
" *pygmaea*	
Carychium minimum	***Carychium minimum*** O.F.Muller, 1774
	Carychium tridentatum (Risso, 1826)
This species has been split and the record may include both species, original specimens should be checked if possible.	
Agriolimax laevis	***Deroceras laeve*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
" *agrestis*	***Deroceras reticulatum*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)

No. 3 Kettle - none listed

No. 4 Kettle

Limnaea palustris	***Lymnaea (Stagnicola) fusca*** (C.Pfeiffer, 1821)
	Lymnaea (Stagnicola) palustris (O.F.Muller, 1774)
See Lymnaea note	
Planorbis complanatus	***Planorbis planorbis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)

In the fields known as Oxney Flats to the north of Hell Kettles, in a morass that has been drained, the following shells in a sub-fossil shale were found (Lucas 19 - 26 November 1928):

Retinella nitidula	***Aegopinella nitidula*** (Draparnaud, 1805)
Zonitoides nitidus	***Zonitoides (Zonitoides) nitidus*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
Vitrea crystallina	***Vitrea contracta*** (Westerlund, 1871)
	Vitrea crystallina (O.F.Muller, 1774)
This record probably includes both of the above species.	
Euconulus fulvus	***Euconulus (Euconulus) cf alderi*** (Gray, 1840)
	Euconulus (Euconulus) cf fulvus (O.F.Muller, 1774)
This record probably includes both of the above species.	
Hygromia libertus	***Trochulus (Trochulus) sericeus*** (Draparnaud, 1801)
Original material would need to be checked to confirm this record.	
Cepaea nemoralis	***Cepaea (Cepaea) nemoralis nemoralis*** (Linne, 1758)
Cepaea hortensis	***Cepaea (Cepaea) hortensis*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
Arianta arbustorum	***Arianta arbustorum arbustorum*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Cochlicopa lubrica	***Cochlicopa cf lubrica*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
It is just possible that this record also includes the split ***C. lubricella.***	
Vertigo antivertigo	***Vertigo (Vertigo) antivertigo*** (Draparnaud, 1801)
Vertigo pygmaea	***Vertigo (Vertigo) pygmaea*** (Draparnaud, 1801)
Vertigo pusilla	***Vertigo (Vertigo) pusilla*** O.F.Muller, 1774
Succinea putris	***Succinea putris*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Succinea pfeifferi	***Oxyloma (Oxyloma) elegans elegans*** (Risso, 1826)
Carychium minimum	***Carychium minimum*** O.F.Muller, 1774
	Carychium tridentatum (Risso, 1826)
Limnaea peregra	***Radix balthica*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *stagnalis*	***Lymnaea stagnalis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *palustris*	***Lymnaea (Stagnicola) fusca*** (C.Pfeiffer, 1821)
	Lymnaea (Stagnicola) palustris (O.F.Muller, 1774)
See *Lymnaea* note.	
" *truncatula*	***Galba truncatula*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
Leptolimnaea glabra	***Omphiscola glabra*** (O.F.Muller, 1774)
Planorbis carinatus	***Planorbis carinatus*** O.F.Muller, 1774
" *spirorbis*	***Anisus (Anisus) spirorbis*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
" *leucostoma*	***Anisus (Anisus) leucostoma*** (Millet, 1813)
Bathyomphalus contortus	***Bathyomphalus contortus*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Bythinia tentaculata	***Bithynia (Bithynia) tentaculata*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
Valvata cristata	***Valvata (Valvata) cristata*** O.F.Muller, 1774

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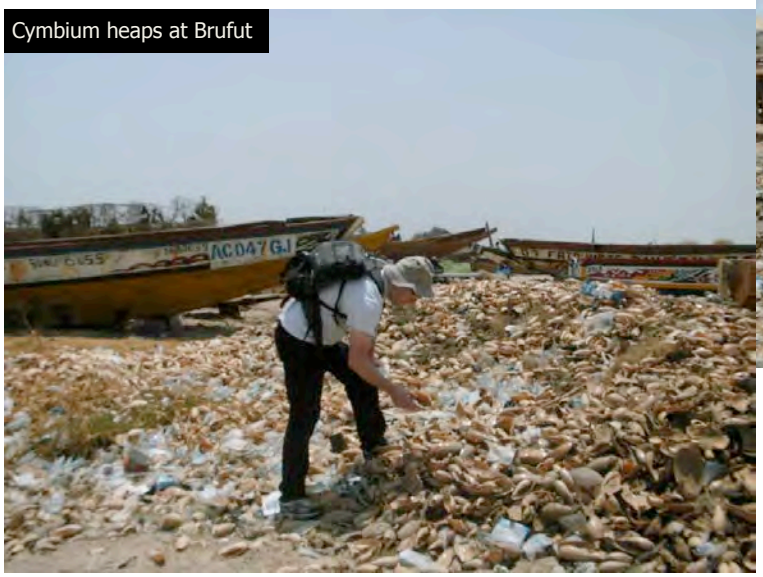
Return to Gambia 2012

By Carl Ruscoe

My brother, Craig and I made 3 trips to Gambia in West Africa to collect shells in 2000, 2002 and 2005. After 7 long years we decided to push the boat out and, with the help of our flexible friends, we booked a week in Gambia for March 2012. Our aim was to collect as many good quality shells as possible to pay for the trip. We managed to obtain thousands of beautiful shells during the most exhausting week of shell collecting we have experienced. We also obtained one shell which made the whole trip worthwhile.

Since Craig's last trip in 2005 we had lost contact with our guide who had been so useful and helpful to us during our previous trips. We were both anxious about who we would find to take us around Gambia and communicate with those locals who don't speak English. Our aim was to find someone as quickly as possible, so to not waste any time - we don't hang around when it comes to shell collecting. On the plane we were lucky enough to sit next to a lady called Margaret who was born in Gambia and lives in East Manchester. She just happened to be meeting her friends, Digital and Solomon, at Yundum airport who had the use of a car. Her friends would take us round all week and help us with whatever we wanted to do. We would only have to pay them a 'couple of horses' (£200) for their troubles.

Cymbium heaps at Brufut



At Yundum we met our new friends and we set off for the Palma Rima hotel. As we drove through the suburbia of Banjul there seemed to be unsavoury characters wandering along every street. I remember thinking that if we had broken down we could have been fried. After 10 years since my last trip to Gambia I had forgotten what a peaceful and safe country Gambia is.

At 5am I was awoken by Edge's snoring and I decided that I would walk down to the local beach. I couldn't see anything until 7 am and I just managed to collect 2 shells of *Tivela tripla*. I did however take a small sample of 'smashed crabs' (grit) on the shoreline to sample for micro shells. There were many locals jogging on the beach, but to my surprise, I had no problems with anyone. They just said 'good morning' and carried on running.

An early breakfast gave us the best table, as next to our window was a sort of perch where a family of monkeys sat and watched us eat. I had never seen wild monkeys so close before. It was a real pleasure.

At 10am Digital, Satellite and Solomon came to take us for our first day's collecting of the trip, starting with Brufut, which had been very productive in April 2002. This time it was a bit disappointing. There were thousands of shells in huge mounds, however they were almost all one species, *Cymbium glans* which is fished in huge numbers for food and almost all the shells were damaged.

Wish you were here - Tanjeh beach

We quickly pressed on and arrived at Tanjeh which is the principal fishing village on the Gambian coast. There are perhaps 100 boats here and an abundance of activity. Tanjeh must be one of the smelliest places on Earth! There were piles of rubbish on the beach everywhere and discarded remains of fishing catches; it must be a very unhealthy place to live. However, Tanjeh is not a good place for shells and our only find here was a reasonable specimen of *Cymbium senegalensis*, a quite uncommon species of Volute.

After a disappointing stop at Tanjeh we continued southwards to Sanyang, which had been the most

productive fishing village during all of our previous trips. On reaching Sanyang we were surprised at how much the village had grown. The population here had probably more than doubled since 2005. At Sanyang we collected hundreds of good shells all over the area of the beach where the boats were resting after their countless trips out to sea. The people on the Gambian coast rely 100% on the sea to provide protein in their diets. An abundance of molluscs are caught along with the fish and their shells litter this beach. Many shells were found on the sand and more shells were found just under the sand which protected the shells from the bleaching sun.


Gunjar Beach

Amongst the shells found at Sanyang were Natica, Cymatium, Muricids, Turrids, Nassariids, Turritellids, Cancellariids, Cardita, Corbula, Crassatella and many more interesting finds. Many larger shells could be collected here or purchased from the locals including: *Tonna galea, Cymbium pepo, Hexaplex duplex* and *Pugilina morio*. *Thais haemastoma*, a common species of Muricid, can be found here in abundance and specimens here are common at more than 90mm in length! Our trip to Sanyang made our first day's collecting a very successful one.

On the Monday we both strolled down to the local beach at 7am and walked northwards to Kotu Point, a small headland. Here we collected 35 specimens of *Tivela tripla* with beautiful patterns. The waves meet at Kotu Point and form a sort of giant 'V' shape. This sort of scenario is usually a good place to find shells on a long sandy beach.

At mid-day we arrived at Gunjur, which is a busy fishing village to the south of Sanyang. During our previous trips to Gambia, Gunjur had been very productive for bivalves and we hoped to find more bivalves here. As soon as we walked onto the beach we found fresh fishing catches with many bivalves tangled in the nets. In no time at all we had many people helping to untangle the nets and release the fresh bivalves which included *Cardium costatum, Cardium ringens*, beautiful bright yellow *Pitar tumens* and fantastic fresh specimens of *Circumphalus foliaceolamellosus*, an amazing species of Venus clam with numerous delicate concentric lamellae (frills). We then stumbled across a large tangled net which was covered with fresh specimens of *Pteria atlantica*, a beautiful winged oyster which is endemic to West Africa and quite uncommon.


Dogs on Banjul Beach

Then we walked to the inter-tidal rocks at the south end of the beach, where in 2000 we had found many live gastropods, including 3 specimens of *Chicoreus gubbi*, a rare species of Muricid which is seemingly unrecorded from further north than Ghana. On this occasion the tide would not recede and we had to settle for dead shells on the shoreline. Amongst our finds were several Columbellids and 3 small specimens of *Sinum bifasciatum*, but no rare Muricids could be found.

We made the long walk back to the car and proceeded to Kartong. Kartong is the last stop before the Senegal border and there is a military checkpoint here. In 2005 Edge had his car shot at because the driver refused to stop and Edge was detained in the barracks while the car was searched. Fortunately Solomon was more sensible than Edge's

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driver of 2005 and there were no such problems this time. On arrival at Kartong, we were saddened to see that the village was all but abandoned, probably as a result of the recent civil war in Casamance (Southern Senegal). We had to take our own small boat across a small channel of water to reach the main beach. Very little could be found on the beach which was littered with abandoned fishing boats. We purchased a few large shells here and then made for home.

On our third day in Gambia we both ventured down to the local beach and collected many more Tivela. Later we arrived at Sanyang. Many people had collected shells to sell to us. On this occasion I was allowed to get into one of the boats which contained a lot of shell material. I bagged it all up, shells, weed, slops and everything. There was a problem this time with paying one of the locals who had helped me in the boat. Things turned nasty and there was a lot of pushing and shoving over a discrepancy of 50 Delasis (a little over £1): it was ludicrous. We found a pile of material that contained many single valves of *Pitar floridella*, a beautiful Venus clam with extremely variable patterning. We collected all the single valves to pair up later. It is necessary to collect as many of the valves as possible in this situation to give yourself the best chance of making some pairs.

Cymbium pepo sinistral

Buying the dream shell

Next we made our way to Palm Grove near Banjul. We had stayed here in 2000 and 2005 and it is a very good place to find several different species of shells. Unfortunately, the hotel has been closed and is to be turned into timeshare apartments. A huge wall prevents access to the main beach and there was no way across the lagoon. Digital explained to me that to traverse the wall you would have to be some sort of Ninja. We returned to our hotel for another long evening of cleaning shells. Every evening during our stay we cleaned shells until after midnight and on the Tuesday evening I was cleaning until 2.30am. I was also up by 7.00 am every morning to collect Tivela clams on my local beach. There was no way I could lie in my bed knowing that these beautiful clams were waiting for me on the beach. With the help of some locals we would collect a few hundred of these shells during our stay.

After my early morning collecting at Kotu Point, we set off for Banjul to see if we could buy some good shells at the market. We bought a few good locally collected shells but it was mostly disappointing. We traipsed back through the market and as I passed one stall I noticed a lot of Cymbium shells. Having already seen and acquired so many of these shells I carried on walking. But I changed my mind and turned back to the stall just to see if they had any *Cymbium senegalensis*, as we had only acquired a few examples of this species. One shell at the front of the stall caught my eye immediately. I had noticed a sinistral (left-handed) specimen of *Cymbium pepo*! I could not hide my excitement. I called back the others and Solomon bought the shell for me at a massive cost of 25 Delasis! (about 60 pence) To the women who worked on the stall, this shell must have looked just like all the others, they had no idea that they had such a rarity on their hands. We were absolutely delighted with our purchase.

In our 3rd trip to Sanyang we collected much the same shells as previously. In addition I collected an amazing specimen of *Turritella ungulina* which is white with a narrow brown spiral band running around the whole length of the shell! This is the only such specimen we have seen. Craig also collected a specimen of *Loxotaphrus deshayesii*, a rare deep water Cancellarid.

The following morning we went straight to Digital's compound in Senegambia to spend the whole day cleaning the larger shells. It would have been very awkward to clean these shells in the hotel so it was very helpful to have the use of Digital's compound where all the larger shells were stored ready for

cleaning and packing for the trip home. Digital assembled many of the local children to help with the cleaning. At times it was difficult to see what we were


Edge cleaning shells at Digital's compound

cleaning due to the thick clouds of flies. The smell was what normal people would call unbearable. Eight hours later the shells were left to dry. In the evening we went for a few drinks with our friends in Senegambia.

Friday morning came and we both went to the local beach and walked southwards this time towards Senegambia. There were huge deposits of broken shells of bivalves here. In the deposits were hundreds of single valves of *Pitar floridella.* I imagine that after stormy weather the beach here could be quite productive. After breakfast we went for our final trip to Sanyang. There on the beach, we met 2 members of the Dutch Malacological society who had just arrived in the country. The afternoon was spent wrapping the larger shells at Digital's compound ready for packing on Saturday.

On our final morning in Gambia we spent some more time on the beach near Senegambia. We weighed our cases packed with shells and they were right on the limit! We paid Digital's family with cash and gifts of clothing - it was very self-satisfying to help some people in need. The whole arrangement was beneficial to everyone involved.

Once home the task of cleaning, identifying and labelling 40 Kg of shells commenced. I hadn't been so exhausted for a long time. We can safely say that we put 100% into our trip and the rewards were endless, as we now have so many more beautiful shells from Gambia for our collection.


Sanyang tobacconists


Gambian cutting edge technology

During the last 12 years we have noticed considerable progress in the development of this poor country. Due to sensible government policies, peace and unity, combined with the contribution from tourists into the economy, Gambia is becoming a better place for everyone. I would strongly recommend a trip there for collectors who want to add some beautiful shells to their collection and give a little something back to a nation from which we Europeans have taken so much only a few centuries ago.

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Collecting at Weymouth and Portland

By John Batt

Following a very successful committee meeting in Essex, a small group of club members travelled down to Weymouth in Dorset, as previously arranged, to do some beachcombing. The group included myself, Selina Wilkins, Carl and Craig Ruscoe. On reaching Weymouth, we met up with the local expert and fellow club member, Adrian Brokenshire. He lives on the Island of Portland and has a great knowledge of collecting shells in the area. Adrian spent many years as a warden, based at the visitors' centre on the Fleet.

It was a very cold day but well wrapped up and complete with wellies we began our collecting on the main beach at Weymouth. The tide was to go out a long way, and was still going out on our arrival which allowed us to have a couple of hours of good collecting. We collected a very good diversity of species as you can see from the species list.

I was very fortunate to find a most desirable shell while walking along the strandline at the top of the beach. I noticed part of a shell sticking out of the sand, so I bent down to pick it up, but it was well embedded in the sand causing me to dig my fingers around the shell to remove it. To my surprise it was a beautiful large cockle, about 3 inches in diameter with lovely dark brown bands. I showed it to Adrian who looked in disbelief and said, "Good lord! That looks like an *Acanthocardia tuberculata*. Well I never."

This species is rare and hard to find in the UK. It is seemingly only found on the south coast and even here populations are sporadic and very localised. There has been some debate amongst other conchologists who say that the Acanthocardia at Weymouth are all *A. echinata or A. aculeata* with the spines washed off. There are clear and obvious differences between the British species of Acanthocardia and all the members of our party are all totally convinced that this specimen is that of *Acanthocardia tuberculata.*

On inspecting the shell more closely at home, I realised that the animal was still alive inside the shell (see photograph). Craig had told me how he and Carl had found several specimens here in 2011, complete with ligaments intact, but only dead, empty shells. To find a living specimen at this location was a very special find. I placed the living cockle in my marine aquarium where it lived for no more than a few minutes. I then transferred the animal into alcohol so the animal can be examined at a later date, just in case other conchologists want to confirm its identification for themselves.

After a very productive time at Weymouth, Adrian took us to a very good collecting site in Portland harbour to see if we could find some different species. We were very lucky in that we had a 'double dip' tide and with a moderate westerly wind helping to keep the tide out, we had a whole hour in which to explore the sandbar here which is rarely exposed at all. There were shells, both dead and alive wherever we looked. Most of the shells here are of common bivalves but there are carpet shells here with exceptional patterns and internal colouration, particularly the golden carpet shell, *Paphia aurea*. The specimens of *Paphia aurea* are probably as good as any you will find anywhere in the UK.

We did however, have to be very careful because Adrian knew from experience that the tide comes in very quickly and it is easy to get cut off. I have heard about John Fisher running into problems at Marizion in Cornwall, where he had to wade back to shore with

the water up to his waist. We collected some very beautiful bivalves including a very nice specimen of *Tellina incarnata* found by Selina.

As I am not really an experienced collector of British shells, I was a little embarrassed to find arguably the most desirable shell found on the trip. I was wading in the shallow water as far as my wellies would allow me when I noticed a large specimen of *Pecten maximus* lying flat side up amongst the weed. I picked it up and to my delight, the bottom curved valve was an incredible bright pink all over. I showed my find to Adrian who couldn't believe it. Specimens of *Pecten maximus* with exceptional colour colours or patterns are rare in the UK; such specimens are usually trawled from deep water and huge numbers of specimens are sorted through to find one with exceptional colour. This was a very nice find and I was delighted.

The photos showing the living molluscs were taken in my marine aquarium, but as my aquarium is heated for tropical species, none of them survived. The shells are now in my collection. It was bizarre to see *Pecten maximus* and *Acanthocardia tuberculata* living alongside *Cypraea erosa* and *Cypraea caputserpentis*!

On the whole we had a very enjoyable time collecting together and I am very much looking forward to returning to the area in the near future. Selina was particularly pleased to collect *Paphia rhomboides* for the first time, as well as two species of Tellina. Many thanks to Carl and Craig Ruscoe for collating the species lists which follow this article. Thank you also to Adrian Brokenshire for his company and his knowledge which made our day so successful. We are planning another trip to the area following next year's committee meeting in January. Anyone who wishes to join in the fun would be most welcome, please contact myself or Selina for details nearer the time.

Weymouth Species Feb' 13

Acteon tornatilis
Anomia ephippium
Buccinum undatum
Crepidula fornicata
Calyptraea chinensis
Acanthocardia echinata
Acanthocardia tuberculata
Cerastoderma edule
Parvicardium exiguum
Donax vittatus
Epitonium clathrus
Epitonium turtonis
Haminoea navicula
Cepaea hortensis
Loripes lucinalis
Spisula subtruncata
Mactra stultorum
Ocenebra erinacea
Modiolus adriaticus
Modiolus barbatus
Nassarius incrassatus
Hinia incrassata
Lunatia catena
Lunatia fusca
Chlamys varia
Mysia undata
Ensis ensis
Ensis arcuatus
Ensis siliqua
Pomatias elegans
Gari fervensis
Solen marginatus
Tellina donacina
Thyasira flexuosa
Trivia arctica
Gibbula magus
Gibbula cineraria
Gibbula umbilicalis
Calliostoma zizyphinus
Paphia aurea
Paphia rhomboides
Venerupis corrugata
Chamelea striatula
Dosinia lupinus

Portland Species Feb' 13

Calyptraea chinensis
Crepidula fornicata
Cerastoderma edule
Bittium reticulatum
Lepidochitona cinerea
Littorina littorea
Littorina obtusata
Lutraria lutraria
Patella vulgata
Pecten maximus
Tellina incarnata
Monodonta lineata
Gibbula cineraria
Gibbula umbilicalis
Paphia aurea
Paphia rhomboides
Venerupis corrugata
Ruditapes decussatus
Venus verrucosa

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An Icelandic Stopover

By David W. McKay

Always on the lookout for a new collecting experience, when I booked a transatlantic trip on Icelandair and discovered that I could stopover in Iceland for up to seven days without incurring any additional airline costs, I decided that this was a collecting opportunity that could not be missed. After booking I discovered how hard it was to find out anything about Icelandic molluscs. Simon Taylor loaned me a copy of a pamphlet on Icelandic prosobranchs and with the help of Koen Fraussen I got in contact with an Israeli shell collector who was living in Iceland. I tried a number of Icelandic biological organisations but the only response I got was from the Fishery Research Laboratory. With the help of the information I gained from these sources and a video of things to do in Iceland, by the time I arrived in Keflavik, I had a fair idea of what I was going to do.

Despite arriving in Iceland on 24th April we emerged from the airport terminal into a landscape covered in 3" of new snow, resulting in it taking 2hrs for us to drive the 40 km from the airport to our apartment in Reykjavik. My first stop after getting settled in was to have a walk down to the harbour where I found a pontoon that had recently (the molluscs on it were still alive) been lifted out of the harbour and successfully collected my first Icelandic shells- only some *Mytilus edulis*, *Littorina obtusata* and *Lacuna vincta,* but it was a start.

Boreotrophon clathratus from Stykkisholmur

The following day the snow had all but disappeared and with low tide in the late morning I went collecting at a small island, called Grotta, which is joined to the mainland by a causeway and is exposed at low tide. My first impression was that I was on one of the boulder shores common on the west coast of Scotland as everything was covered in a thick mat of *Ascophyllum* that merged into *Fucus serratus* and then *Laminaria digitata*. Mollusc wise, I was immediately struck by the absence of friends, such as *Patella vulgata, Gibbula cineraria* and *Littorina littorea* appeared to be entirely absent. Despite diligent searching I found no *Patella vulgata or Gibbula cineraria* in any of my collecting. I did find a handful of small specimens that I called *Littorina littorea* but I must admit to being very doubtful about the identification. I was soon scrambling over the very slippery shore turning over stones where possible and being rewarded with both *Tectura virginea* and *testudinalis, Tonicella rubra* and *Ischnochitona albus* as well as old friends such as *Nucella lapillus*, *Littorina saxatalis* and both *Littorina obtusata* and *mariae*. By the time I was sated with collecting I had amassed 25 species, including those from weed washings. I had had a good day.

In the afternoon we did a little exploring and drove out to Akranes and at the head of Kollafjordur spotted a wide area of sand flat. Having found somewhere to park I ventured down to the beach to see if it was worth a visit the following day, as one of the species I wished to obtain was *Macoma calcarea*, which occurs as a subfossil in Scottish waters. I found some single valves and decided that this beach was worth a visit. So the following day I arrived at the beach about 2 hours before low water and followed the tide out. Near the top of the beach I found *Cerastoderma edule* and *Mya arenaria* and as I followed the tide out I collected increasing numbers of dead articulated *Macoma calcarea* plus occasional single valves of *Arctica islandica*. Despite sieving numerous lots of sand from the shore, the beach seemed lacking in any live molluscs. As the time of low water approached I had more luck as I started to collect pairs of dead *Arctica islandica* of various sizes from 15mm up. The smaller specimens were an attractive light brown colour while the older specimens were the familiar black. My sieving began to reap rewards as well with a few live *Macoma calcarea,* a single *Thyasira flexuosa* and several small specimens of a bivalve I did not recognise and I progressed NW along the beach it turned muddier as I approached a mussel bed that occupied the NW corner. In this muddier area I picked up more dead specimens; some bivalved *Astarte* and larger specimens of the unrecognised bivalve in the sievings. After abortive efforts to identify it from the books I had with me, I emailed Graham Oliver a description and he identified it as the Greenland Cockle *Serrepes*

Arctica islandica from Head of Kollafordur

groenlandicus. Having concluded that I had exhausted the possibilities of sand flat I travelled a mile further round the shore of Kollafjordur to a piece of more sheltered rocky shore, near Grundafhverfi where the first mollusc I saw on the shore was a *Velutina plicatilis*. Despite the spectacular start I found little else of huge interest except a single valve of the Icelandic Cockle *Clinocardium ciliatum*.

In the evening, having found out that one of the wildlife tour vessels that operated out of Stykkisholmur on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula did at least one dredge haul so that guests could sample Icelandic scallops, straight from the sea, I booked a place on the Saturday excursion. The tour visited lots of the small Islands off Stykkishholmur where passengers could see nesting sea birds including a pair of white tailed eagles and the spectacular basaltic columns. For me the trip was a bit of a disappointment as we caught very little apart from the *Chlamys islandica*. However I did get single specimens of *Musculus laevigatus, Margarites striatus* and *Gibbula tumida*. When the boat returned to port, it was conveniently low water so I visited a bit of accessible shore that I had identified on Google Earth. It looked extremely unprepossessing as it was crossed by an open sewer which was steaming in the cold air. I skirted round the edge of the shore and eventually arrived at a piece of rocky shore where, once I had got over trying to collect every *Margarites helicinus* I saw, I found *Puncturella noachina* and *Boreotrothon clathratus* living on the shore.

All in all I found Iceland to be an excellent shelling destination with lots of interesting species to find. Like everywhere one visits for the first time it is best to do some preliminary research. Like much of Scotland it is not for those who consider a hard day shelling as a walk along the beach collecting stranded shells and some shell sand. I certainly shall take advantage of the stopover opportunity the next time I fly Icelandair and if it is in the summer time I shall attempt sampling further north in the hope of finding some more arctic species. My one disappointment was being unable to get much offshore material. There is a fleet of inshore vessels which fish with gill nets but when I was there they were targeting lumpsucker; perhaps later in the year they target cod and haddock.

Shore at Grotta near Reykjavik

Serripes groenlandicus from head of Kollafordur

From Grotta *Tonicella rubra* and *Ischnochitona albus*

Key to species table on Page 46

Location

SR = Sandgerdi, Rekjanes
SS = Stykkisholmur,Snaefellsnes
BT = 1.5'W of Stykkisholmur
GS = Grotta, Seltjarnarnes
HK = Head of Kollafjordur
RH = Reykjavik Harbour
G = Grundarhverfi

Habitat

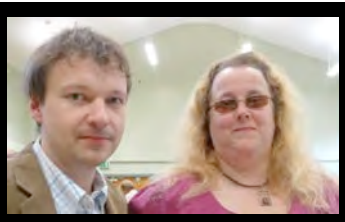
R = Rocky shore
D = Dredged on Sea Tours Vessel
S = Sand
M = Mussel bed
P = Pontoon

Condition

A = alive
B = dead

Icelandic Species Table, Article on Pages 44-45

Genus	Author	Summary
Macoma calcarea	(Gmelin, 1791)	SR R A
Tonicella rubra	(Linnaeus, 1767)	SS RS A
Ischnichiton albus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	SS RS A
Puncturella noachina	(Linnaeus, 1771)	SS RS A
Tectura testudinalis	(Muller, 1776)	SS RS A
Tectura virginea	(Muller, 1776)	SS RS A
Margarites helicinus	(Phipps, 1774)	SS RS A
Margarites striatus	(Leach, 1819)	SS RS A
Lacuna vincta	(Montagu, 1803)	SS RS A
Lacuna pallidula	(da Costa, 1778)	SS RS A
Skeneopsis planorbis	(O Fabricius, 1780)	SS RS A
Omalogyra atomus	(Philippi, 1841)	SS RS A
Onoba aculeus	(Gould, 1841)	SS RS A
Onoba semicostata	(Montagu, 1803)	SS RS A
Littorina saxatilis	(Olivi, 1791)	SS RS A
Littorina littorea	(Linnaeus, 1758)	SS RS A
Littorina obtusata	(Linnaeus, 1758)	SS RS A
Velutina velutina	(Muller, 1776)	SS RS A
Boreotrophon clathratus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	SS RS A
Nucella lapillus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	SS RS A
Buccinum undatum	Linnaeus, 1758	SS RS A
Diaphana minuta	Brown, 1827	SS RS A
Mytilus edulis	Linnaeus 1758	SS RS A
Musculus laevigatus	(Gray, 1824)	SS RS A
Heteranomia squamula	(Linnaeus, 1758)	SS RS A
Cerastoderma edule	(Linnaeus, 1758)	SS RS B
Turtonia minuta	(Fabricius, 1780)	SS RS A
Hiatella arctica	(Linnaeus, 1767)	SS RS A
Margarites striatus	(Leach, 1819)	BT D A
Gibbula tumida	(Montagu, 1803)	BT D A
Modiolus modiolus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	BT D A
Musculus laevigatus	(Gray, 1824)	BT D A
Chlamys islandica	(Muller 1776)	BT D A
Heteranomia squamula	(Linnaeus, 1758)	BT D A
Monia patelliformis	(Linnaeus, 1761)	BT D A
Tridonta elliptica	(Brown,1827)	BT D B
Tonicella rubra	(Linnaeus, 1767)	GS RS A
Ischnichiton albus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	GS RS A
Callochiton septemvalvis	(Montagu, 1803)	GS RS A
Puncturella noachina	(Linnaeus, 1771)	GS RS A
Tectura virginea	(Muller, 1776)	GS RS A
Tectura testudinalis	(Muller, 1776)	GS RS A
Helcion pellucidum	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS RS A
Margarites helicinus	(Phipps, 1774)	GS RS A
Margarites striatus	(Leach, 1819)	GS RS A
Gibbula tumida	(Montagu, 1803)	GR RS B
Lacuna vincta	(Montagu, 1803)	GS RS A
Lacuna pallidula	(da Costa, 1778)	GS RS A
Littorina mariae	Sacchi&Rastelli, 1966	GS RS A
Littorina obtusata	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS RS A
Littorina saxatalis	(Olivi, 1791)	GS RS A
Skeneopsis planorbis	(O Fabricius, 1780)	GS RS A
Onoba semicostata	(Montagu, 1803)	GS RS A
Onoba aculeus	(Gould, 1841)	GS RS A
Boreotrophon clathrus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	GR RS B
Boreotrophon truncatus	(Strom, 1768)	GS RS A
Nucella lapillus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS RS A
Buccinum undatum	Linnaeus, 1758	GS RS A
Hinia incrassata	(Strom, 1768)	GS RS B
Odostomia unidentata	(Montagu, 1803)	GS RS B
Brachystomia scalaris	(Macgillivray, 1843)	GS RS A
Mytilus edulis	Linnaeus 1758	GS RS A
Modiolus modiolus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS RS A
Musculus discors	(Linnaeus, 1767)	GS RS A
Heteranomia squamula	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS RS A
Kellia suborbicularis	(Montagu 1803)	GS RS A
Tridonta elliptica	(Brown,1827)	GS S B
Cerastoderma edule	(Linnaeus, 1758)	GS S A
Turtonia minuta	(Fabricius, 1780)	GS RS A
Hiatella arctica	(Linnaeus, 1767)	GS RS A
Mya arenaria	Linnaeus, 1758	GS RS A
Sphenia binghami	Turton, 1822	GS RS A
Aporrhais pespelecani	(Linnaeus, 1758)	HK S B
Boreotrophon clathratus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	HK M B
Nucella lapillus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	HK M A
Mytilus edulis	Linnaeus 1758	HK M A
Thyasira flexuosa	(Montagu 1803)	HK S A
Tridonta borealis	(Schumacher,1817)	HK S B
Astarte crenata	(J E Gray,1824)	HK S B
Cerastoderma edule	(Linnaeus, 1758)	HK S A
Serripes groenlandicus	(Brugiere, 1789)	HK S A
Macoma calcarea	(Gmelin, 1791)	HK S A
Abra nitida	(Muller, 1776)	HK S B
Arctica islandica	(Linnaeus, 1767)	HK S A
Mya arenaria	Linnaeus, 1758	HK S A
Lacuna vincta	(Montagu, 1803)	RH P A
Littorina saxatalis	(Olivi, 1791)	RH P A
Littorina obtusta	(Linnaeus, 1758)	RH P A
Littorina mariae	Sacchi&Rastelli, 1966	RH P A
Mytilus edulis	Linnaeus 1758	RH P A
Tectura testudinalis	(Muller, 1776)	G RS A
Margarites helicinus	(Phipps, 1774)	G RS A
Tectura virginea	(Muller, 1776)	G RS B
Gibbula tumida	(Montagu, 1803)	G RS B
Velutina plicatilis	(Muller, 1776)	G RS A
Lacuna vincta	(Montagu, 1803)	G RS A
Lacuna pallidula	(da Costa, 1778)	G RS A
Littorina obtusata	(Linnaeus, 1758)	G RS A
Littorina mariae	Sacchi&Rastelli, 1966	G RS A
Littorina saxatalis	(Olivi, 1791)	G RS A
Boreotrophon clathratus	(Linnaeus, 1767)	G RS B
Nucella lapillus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	G RS A
Buccinum undatum	Linnaeus, 1758	G RS A
Modiolus modiolus	(Linnaeus, 1758)	G RS A
Musculus laevigatus	(Gray, 1824)	G RS A
Heteranomia squamula	(Linnaeus, 1758)	G RS A
Kellia suborbicularis	(Montagu 1803)	G RS A
Clinocardium ciliatum	(O Fabricius, 1780)	G RS B
Mya truncata	Linnaeus, 1758	G RS B
Hiatella arctica	(Linnaeus, 1767)	G RS A



Sharing shelling on Facebook

by David & Naomi Dubnyckyj

Cleethorpes N.Lincolnshire

Scheveningen, Netherlands

Scheveningen, collecting *Echinocyamus pusilus* (Muller,1776)

'Muzee' Scheveningen, Netherlands. photographed in a round jar, a preserved *Nautilus pompilius*

Spurn Point 2/5/13 left is the North Sea & right is the Humber

Cleethorpes 24/5/13

Poole Pottery, underside of vase

Castleton, Derbyshire. Dead land snails near Odin's Mine

These are just a glimpse of some of Naomi's photos from facebook. There are also fossil collecting days, shells in situ, shells purchased and images of Antwerp shell show. Thank you David and Naomi.

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Shell Collecting in Arabia

and the case of *Strombus listeri*

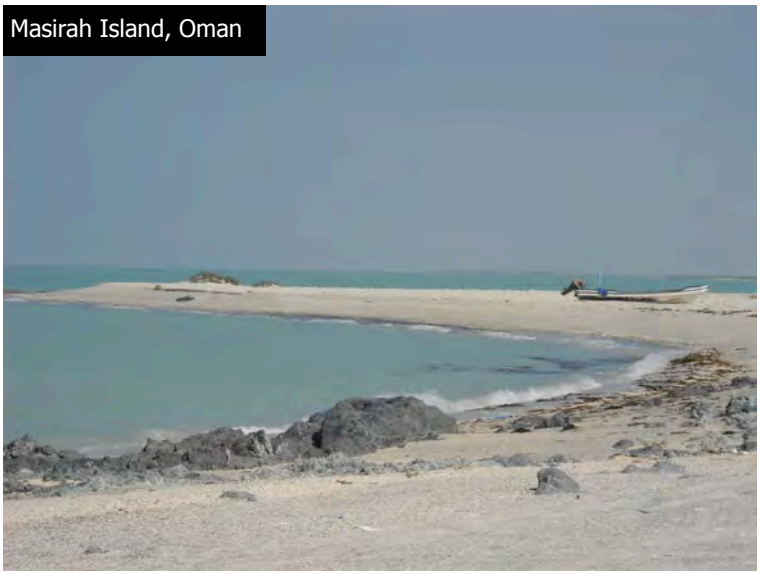
By Sara Whitfield

A number of long standing BSCC members have collected shells and documented beach locations and conditions in Arabia (notably Oman, but also the United Arab Emirates). I wonder when they were here last? I also wonder if they realise the extent of the changes that have taken place over the last decade. Recording collecting conditions and the extent of the inevitable development of the region and the rate of change I believe is an important role of interested individuals. This however, should be coupled with scientifically collected data on species, especially in light of the fact that the distribution range of a species can be less than 10km (as highlighted by Gavin Malcom's Endangered Cones Species article in last issue of Pallidula).

Two years ago when I arrived in the UAE to live in Dubai, joining my husband who works here, I contacted BSCC members for advice and information. I also found a paper on the internet written by Sandy Fowler, a former Dubai Natural History Club member, written in the late 90's and updated in 2004, detailing the best places in the UAE to find shells. The situation is deteriorating rapidly, but it is not all 'doom and gloom'; we have found over 250 different types in two years.

Shell collecting on the west coast of the UAE is 'patchy' to nonexistent. Nearly the entire coast from Abu Dhabi to the Oman border is developed with industry, military, private villa and hotel complexes making it impossible to access beaches. However, as soon as you cross the border into the Mussandam, Oman, the first beach accessible (after about 5km) produced over 40 different shells on the weekend of 10/11th May 2013, including four *Argonauta hians.* Surprisingly, this beach (which we named Border Beach) produced fragments of *Tibia insulaechorab curta* and 11 *Bullia Mauritania*; both shells have proved very elusive to date.

top row: Festilyria festiva (5), Conus betulinus
bottom row: Strombus (Tricoris) oldi (2), Argonauta hians (4)



Masirah Island, Oman

The east coast of the UAE from Dibab down to Kalba is much more promising. We have favourite beaches turning up large quantities of Cones (*betulinus, elegans, textile* and *striatus*), Olives (*bulbosa* and *tremulina*) and Cowries (*felina fabula*, *turdus winckworthi* and *grayana*). But we are limited to about six beaches again due to lack of access for the reasons detailed above. 'Wentle' beach (so named by Sandy Fowler), a 15 metre stretch of sandy beach with rocks and coral offshore, has produced nothing much over the last two years but from mid April to June 2013 we found (you guessed it) over 20 *Epitonium aculeatum* and *Gyroscala lamellosa*. Apart from one small, broken *Epitonium aculeatum* found on Masirah Island Oman, these have been our first Wentle finds. Over the last two months this tiny stretch of beach has thrown up dozens of different shells.

Once over the border into Oman the situation is much better but again based on BSSC member contacts access is decreasing at an alarming rate. The beaches nearest to the northern UAE border near Shinas have produced some nice *Bullias* and very large numbers of

Architectonica perspectiva and rather amazingly, our best finds to date, two *Strombus listeri*!! Confirmed by Peter Dance we thought these may be a 'first' for Arabia but on closer investigation it emerged that one was found near Sur some years previously (by another BSCC member).


Strombus listeria

From Shinas to Muscat the coastline is developed, over collected and driven over by people in 4X4s including the once famous shelling beaches of Al Sawadi and Al Seeb.

East of Muscat, towards Sur, the collecting is better and the beaches still largely deserted. Sur always produces *Magilus antiquus*, the only place we have found them to date. Our favourite location is Masirah Island which takes two days to get to from Dubai. We make the journey twice a year and camp in total isolation. In November 2012 we added 48 new specimens including several *Conus biraghii omanensis*, our first and only *Cypraea caputserpentis*, several *Festilyria festiva* and three *Strombus (Tricornis) oldi*.


Masirah Island, Oman

As the theme of this piece seems to be 'over development', we are happy to report that Masirah Island seems, in the main, to have escaped so far; although a new tarmac road now circles the island...a taste of things to come?


Wentle Beach - UAE

MEANING

Why do you move me, please, small shell?
What is this passion, from the heart?
Your perfect form requires my love
And so you have it, I submit
To willing adoration felt
For shape, for colour, pattern made.
Your fragile strength gives me the same
Please take me onward, journeys both
Entwined and met, we'll share and smile.
For living beauty you've arrived
But guileless, you don't own or care.
Instead, *I* praise your glory now,
Owing you that compliment,
And show you off to all I can,
To him, to her, to those who see
What harmony and grace is yours
That gives us joy, and peace within.
That's why you move me, so it is,
For knowing you, my heart is full
With what it means to truly care.

by Ingrid Thomas

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Philippines, a shelling trip

and a new form of *Conus marmoreus*

By Allan Vargas

Introduction

When I lived in the Philippines I used to go on shelling trips. I spent weeks, sometimes months on a single trip. My father, a ship's captain, always took me when he went fishing or shelling, and that imbued me with an appreciation of sea life at a very young age. I always enjoyed the experience, observing different sea creatures and their habitats. I only started collecting shells in 2003, because creating a life for myself and my family, and my work as a computer programmer, occupied all my time.

Cleaning shells with a staff member

My family moved to the UK in 2005 and I joined the BSCC in 2007, participating in the Club's October Convention that same year. After that event, I became inactive; I was too busy being a full-time father to my three children, who were then very young, and working in a full-time job. However, I still found time to go through my shell collection and admire each piece, and continued to study and learn. I also checked shell web sites from time to time. It was late last year, 2012, when my children were more grown up, that I decided to return to active shell collecting, and I planned to go on a shelling trip once again. So, almost a decade since my last shelling trip in 2004, I was determined to have another go, and the Philippines, the country of my birth, was my target. I managed to book a flight two days after the April 2013 BSCC Convention, so that I would have the opportunity to go to the next shell show with renewed enthusiasm. I had the most wonderful time at the 2013 Convention, meeting people who shared the same interest. I couldn't compare the feeling of meeting them in person with meeting them online. It is a great experience one shouldn't miss!

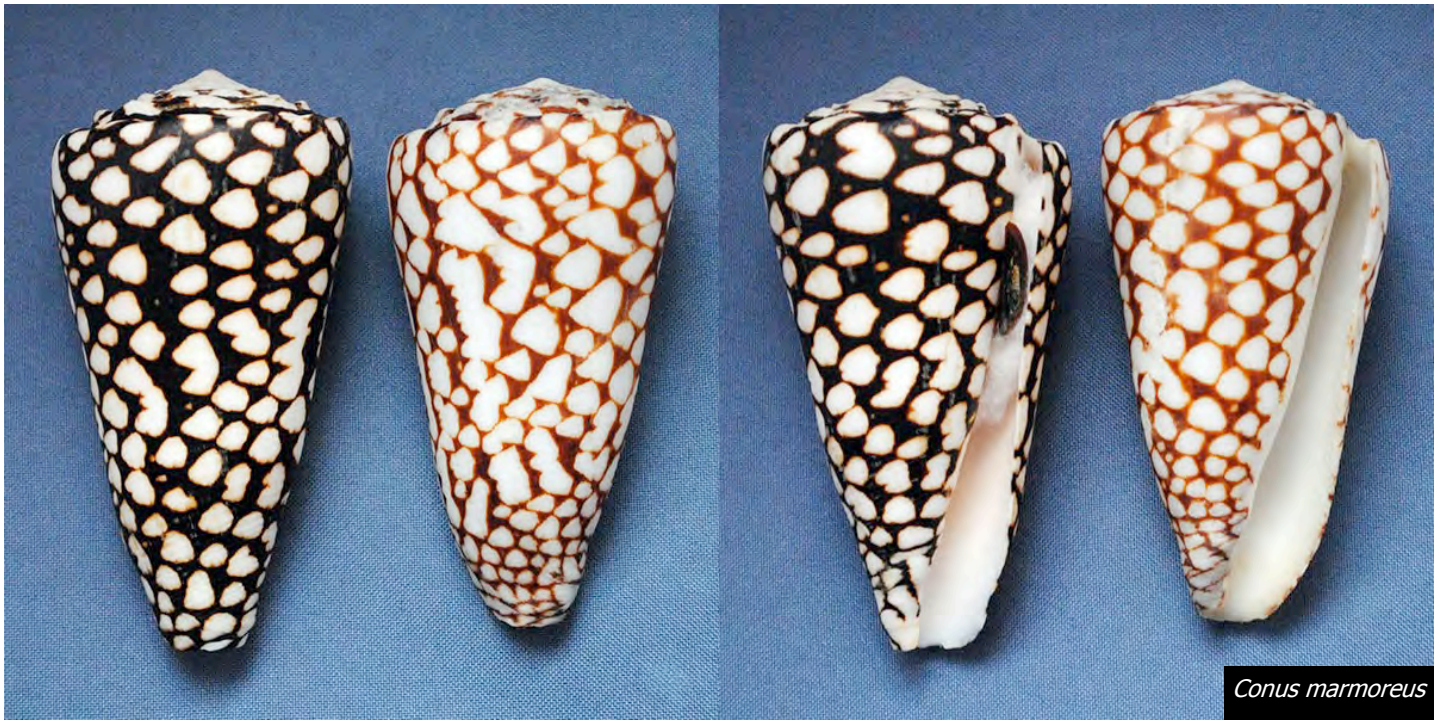
Dr Gen (left) and I

The Flight

I left for the Philippines on 29th of April, full of hope, eagerness and excitement. Like every enthusiast who goes on a shelling trip, I had high hopes of discovering something new or unique to add to the collection, and of bringing information about my finds to the community. After long hours on the plane and too many stops at airports, I reached Manila on the 31st of April, but still had one more connecting flight, to Silay City. It was on May 1st that I finally arrived at my destination, Negros. I was born in Iloilo City, Philippines and Negros is one of the neighbouring islands, sharing the same dialect and differing only in accent. It was lovely to hear my first language again, and I enjoyed the nostalgia. I only had 16 days there and I had to make the most of it, so I made a list in my diary of the places I wanted to go to. Cebu was my last planned stop as I had lived there almost all my life and I wanted to visit old friends and local dealers alike before I returned to the UK.

The Discovery

On my previous shelling trips, I normally went with my staff, armed with fishing nets or cages. I liked going to very remote islands where no local collectors had ever been before. For me, these were the best places to look for unusual finds and real, unaltered specimens. There was always something nice to take back after every trip and I kept thinking about what it might be this time. My stay was very short and I had no time to get the right staff or all the equipment I needed, so I hired a small pump boat, locally called a '*bangka*', and went to various small islets around Negros. In a little under two weeks, I visited 6 different islets: Botigues, Panitugan, Bantayan, Sagasay, Silagon and Hilotongan. Although I got something nice on each islet from the locals, who are very warm and hospitable, the highlight of my trip was when I met a local citizen on one particular islet. He had the typical look of a man in his late 60's living on a remote is-



Conus marmoreus

land. He said he had been collecting shells for years in the hope that one day someone would come and pay him a good price for them. I had a look at his collection and saw that it consisted mostly of common shells scattered in his backyard; many others, which had been served as food, were in sacks. I noticed that some of his shells were unusually large, so I started selecting for the best quality I could find.

Then something caught my eye... I will never forget the feeling of amazement and anticipation… that was when I first saw a red *Conus marmoreus*! I thought for a moment and said to myself, this can't be the real thing. I knew how this form had acquired a very bad reputation because of the fakes that have been made in the past, so I examined the shell closely and saw that parts of the dead animal were still in it... and it had an awful smell! I did not think it would be possible for anyone to make a fake in such a remote area. I continued to look around and found a few more. My suspicions grew. How could he have collected so many specimens of such a rare form? There was only one way to find out, so I questioned this local collector further. He explained that the shells in question were sold to him on various occasions over a period of many years by local divers and fishermen together with edible species, and that he had been stuck with them because no one had come to buy them. He said they were live taken and the animals were still in them when he bought them, but that as they were not edible they went straight into a corner of his extended hut, where they were left to decompose. He said they were all red when they came to him. Indeed, I did not see a single black *C. marmoreus* in his entire collection. I asked him when he had last bought one, and he said it was some time last year, as this shell doesn't come up very often. He also had *C. vidua* Reeve, 1843 with some reddish coloration. I assumed that this coloration must be caused by something in the local habitat. He also said, as he stretched his arm and pointed towards the Visayan Sea, that the shells were found locally. He was very friendly and treated us to fresh seafood, which we enjoyed together as we talked.

Eventually the sun started to set and we had to leave. I gave him the reasonable sum he asked for the quite considerable number of shells I wanted from his collection and promised him that we would meet again.

reddish *Conus vidua*

Home

On my way home, I thought that doubts would be inevitable and the authenticity of this cone will surely be questioned. However, I decided to keep an open mind because my initial reaction had been the same: they cannot be real.

(cont. on p53)

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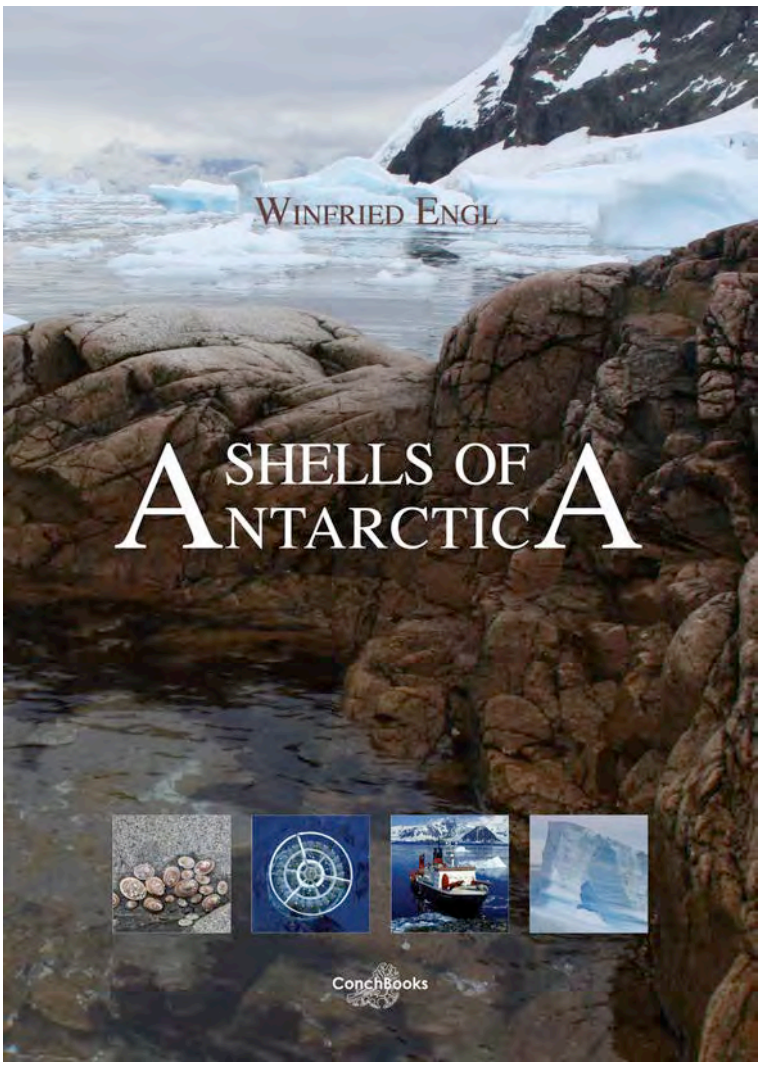
Shells of Antarctica by Winfried Engl

A Review by Yves Terryn

'*Djinn*' translates from Arabic as 'that what remains hidden'. The meaning in Arabic can also be interpreted as: concealed, hidden in time or encircled by a wall. Nothing is more appropriate to describe the 'Shells of Antarctica' by Winfried Engl. For the first time, the information provided in this book has now become available to both the collector and the scientific community. Never before has such a comprehensive overview of the molluscan fauna of the Antarctic been published that enumerates and illustrates all known species.

Winfried Engl, from Düsseldorf, has been involved with malacology for more than 4 decades and published his findings and described new species in dozens of articles. He is a celebrated author and was awarded both the Ritter-von-Spix medal of the Bavarian State Collection (ZSM) in 1999 for expanding their collections, and the Cedemar Species Award in 2010 for the description of 15 new species. Altogether he has described more than 20 species from Antarctica. The work for this book, started in 2000, took more than a decade to complete ever since Winfried started working on the molluscan assemblage retrieved from the *Polarstern* ANT XVII/3 expedition.



The cover of this book is adorned with an inviting intertidal scene, shot on the Antarctic Peninsula with insets of a typical rocky intertidal outcrop, deep sea research equipment and ice flows, so iconical of Antarctica. The back cover is decorated with typical representatives of a few families: limpets, bivalves, muricids and trochids inviting the reader towards the plates within the book. The inside cover has a colour map of Antarctica, which facilitates the reader to trace back major geographical areas and island groups. The book is dedicated to his wife Nilgün, for her never-ending support throughout the many years of work invested in this book.

The author in his short introduction explains the background by placing historical collection efforts, discoveries and publications (e.g. Powell, 1960; Dell, 1990) into perspective. He limits the area of investigation to within the Antarctic Convergence, and the scope of the information given for each species in the book. There is listed a table outlining the chronological overview of molluscan collecting and discoveries within Antarctic waters.

Molluscan collecting started in 1873 on the famous voyage of the HMS *Challenger*, followed by a myriad of expeditions from Western European countries (including British *Southern Cross* and Scottish National Antarctica expeditions) to more recent endeavours by New Zealand, Spain, the former Soviet Union and Germany with their ongoing *Polarstern* expeditions. Winfried had the opportunity to study all the recently collected material from the various *Polarstern* expeditions, which span over almost 2 decades (1985-2005).

The main part of the book consists of two sections: firstly a systematic listing of gastropods and bivalves with a black and white image for each species where possible, and the second section consisting of figures on 88 colour plates. The systematic part lists 87 bivalve species from 40 genera in 24 families and 336 known gastropod species, from 130 genera in 49 families. In addition, a number of species from adjacent areas are discussed for comparison.

The particularly diverse fauna of the Antarctic waters are shown in the rich numbers of species from the bivalve genera: *Cuspidaria* (9 species), *Yoldiella* (7) and *Limopsis* (7) and *Philobrya* (5) and for the gastropod genera: *Prosipho* (22), *Onoba* (13),

Melanella (11), *Brookula* (9), *Trophon* (9), *Pleurotomella* (9), *Lissotesta* (8) and *Cerithiella* (8). The richest family in the Antarctic is without doubt the Buccinidae with 50 species in 20 genera, followed by the Turridae with 32 species. A comparison with the Arctic fauna shows a similar dominance of these two groups.

The taxonomical listing for each species is subdivided into several parts: a full name, synonymy, type material, type locality, a brief diagnostic with remarks as to differentiate the species from allied taxa and includes additional material studied, with emphasis on the *Polarstern* collection. Within the book the genus *Prosipho,* from the Buccinidae family, is extensively discussed and excellently figured on the plates and comparative plates.

The second section has the 88 colour plates containing images of almost all species (by their type, often illustrated for the first time in this book – and by additional specimens), which is an invaluable asset for the study of the Antarctic fauna. The plates are of good quality, considering the often-small size of the majority of shells, and therefore allow comparison with allied taxa. Great attention has been paid to the micro-shells, which are printed large enough from the scanning electron microscope (SEM) images to distinguish fine sculptural features. To those who say that cold-water shells can never be beautiful, this book proves them wrong.

In addition to the two parts discussed here, Winfried gives the reader a detailed listing of the relevant *Polarstern* and Soviet Antarctic expeditions from which the author opens up a 'enclosed world' to the reader. This includes a separate chapter describing life and labour on board the research icebreaker *Polarstern* - a floating multidisciplinary laboratory and supply vessel. Finally there is an extensive bibliography.

The book is a result of a huge undertaking which spanned decades and only made possible by the kind assistance of a large number of amateur malacologists, scientists and institutions. It goes without saying that a magnificent book on such a difficult topic will not be repeated any time soon and that it has no comparison that matches even remotely its quality in scientific prudence and photographic imagery.

Shells of Antarctica
Winfried Engl
First published in 2012 by ConchBooks
ISBN 978-3-939767-44-2
In English, hardcover, 402 pp, 88 pls, numerous text figs and map
Price: 148E / £130 - available from www.conchbooks.de

Philippines cont. from page 51.

If I had not personally been there and found these shells, I would probably conclude that they must be fakes. But I have seen a "real" fake made in Cebu and I could immediately tell the difference. The form I found has a dark reddish-brown ground colour, tending to a burnt orange hue towards the large and irregular white tents, its aperture is white and its geographic range is the Visayan Sea. The fake shells appear dry and pale because they have been heated.

I was enjoying the sun too much and suffered terrible sunburn on my arms and legs by the time I came home to the UK, but I brought good memories which will always be with me.

Postscript

I sent a specimen of the *C. marmoreus* to cone expert Paul Kersten for his opinion, and he believes it to be authentic. Antonio Montéiro, another authority on the Conidae, based on the photo's he has seen, also believes it to be genuine. I am including photo's of the red *C. marmoreus* which I took using my Nikon DX camera with 18-55mm lens in natural daylight. I am also describing this very elusive form as forma *roseus*, to record for the shelling community that there does indeed exist a real red colour form, not only fakes.

I asked one of my staff to go back to that islet and find out the depth and possible habitat of the red cones. He was told in the local dialect "*mga 20 ka dupa, sa balas, kilid sa mga bato*" which means, "the length of 20 pairs of outstretched arms" – that's the local method of measuring depth. Both arms outstretched measure approximately 1.5m, so the cones live at a depth of 30m. They were found on sand, beside or under rocks.

I would like to thank Paul Kersten and Antonio Montéiro for giving me the benefit of their expertise. I would also like to thank Julian Joseph for encouraging me to write this article and helping me to proofread it, and the BSCC for publishing it. And finally, a special thank you to Dr. Gen, who left the comfort of her clinic to join me on my shelling expedition during extreme weather conditions.

I truly believe that if the great Linnaeus were alive today nothing could stop him from continuing to identify new shell discoveries, for that is what makes the world of shells so compelling!

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Living molluscs from Guernsey

By John E. Llewellyn-Jones

Continuing our mission to help members enjoy living specimens and improve identification of British species, here is another set of photographs from John. They were put together during a Porcupine meeting 5th-10th April 2013 on the island of Guernsey, in the Channel Islands. It was a wonderful visit with very low spring tides and warm weather for most of the time. It included a weekend when collecting ormers was also allowed.

If you have any photographs to share with club members, please send them to either the editor, the webmaster or upload images yourself onto our facebook page.

Haliotis tuberculata L.1758 Ormer under a rock

Haliotis iris L.1758 crawling around enamel tray

Ocinebrina aciculata Lamarck 1822

Note bright red flesh

Ocenebra erinacea L.1758 mating on upper shore rocks during spring tides

Nassarius reticulatus L.1758 feeding on a dead *Patella vulgata* L.1758

Nassarius reticulatus L.1758 feeding off a smooth cockle

Acanthochiton discrepens Pennant 1777 on underside of rock in rock pool

Hermaea variopicta Costa 1869 on red seaweed

Hermaea variopicta

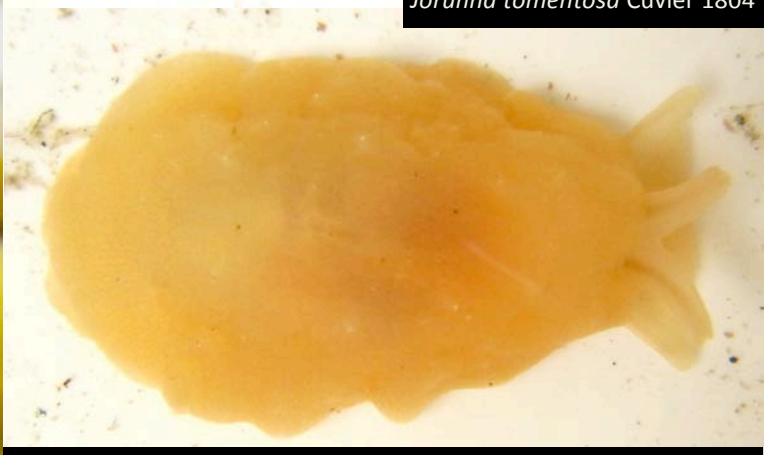
Elysia viridis Montagu 1804 on *Codium*

Lamellaria latens Muller 1776 on dead shell

Archidoris pseudoargus var.flammea Rapp.1827

Aeolidiella alderi Cocks 1852

Jorunna tomentosa Cuvier 1804



An attractive pale amber colour of *Berthela plumula* Montagu 1803

Shell Convention 2013

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This year's convention was held on Saturday 27th April 2013. These photo's are a selection from the 226 by Roberto Rodolico available on-line at Facebook and some by Lise Landmark. As editor, I was sorry to miss the day and to also have to cancel my editor's social the following day. (I was struck down by a nasty strain of virus.) Well done to my husband, Paul, my son Christopher and friend Lewis, for managing the catering in my absence. The photo's show that we are a very sociable club, with plenty of talking, questioning and gesticulating about shells.