

SHELL-O-GRAM

Published By The Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc.

January-February, 1997

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Billie Brown



Volume 38(1)

Club Officers:

John Fatu, President
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D. D. Jewell, Secretary
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January Meeting

The January 23rd meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the Reid Medical/Science Building of Jacksonville University at 7:30 PM.

The month's educational program will be given by Bill Frank on the genus *Lambis* (the Spider Conchs) which is limited to the Indo-Pacific Region. All of the Recent species as well as four hybrids will be available for examination.

The Shell-Of-The month will be presented by Harry Lee on *Strombus oldi* Emerson, 1965, a rare stromb from the East African Area.

Refreshments will be served, and visitors and guests are cordially invited to attend.

February Meeting

The February 27th meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the usual time and place.

The educational program will be presented by Club member Charles Cardin of Daytona Beach on shelling in the Kingdom of Tonga. Charles is a long-time shell dealer, world traveler and a former resident of The Kingdom.

The Shell-Of-The-Month will be given by Club President John Fatu on *Strombus thersites* Swainson, 1823 (the Thersite Stromb); a rare shell which he personally collected in his native Tonga.

As is customary, refreshments will be served and everyone is encouraged not to miss this very interesting program.



The evening of Saturday December 14th, nineteen members of the Jacksonville Shell Club assembled at the home of Vic and Charlotte Lloyd in Jacksonville Beach to celebrate the Christmas Holidays. In addition to the host and hostess, in attendance were John and Jane Fatu, Chris and Judy Blocker, Bill and Betsy Lyerly, Paul and Billie Brown, Harry and Kitty Lee, D. D. Jewell, Mary Reynolds, Gertrude Moller, Selma Thigpen, Andy Hutchison, Teresa St. John, Leigh Murphy, and Bill Frank.

The tables literally groaned under the weight of the evenings repast, which not only included turkey and ham with all the trimmings, but the hostess's ever-popular spirited "Fishhouse Punch." The group then exchanged shell related gifts while finishing-off the last of the punch; the latter activity probably significantly contributing to the gatherings more merry (or "spirited") demeanor than usual. It was a fitting way for club friends to end another very successful year of club activities.

Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc.
1865 Debutante Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32246-8645

The Shell-O-Gram is issued bi-monthly and mailed to all regular members. Annual membership dues \$12.50 individual, \$15.00 family. Lifetime membership is available.

Send dues to:

Teresa St. John, 2605 Emily Court,
Jacksonville, Florida 32216-5101.

The club meets the fourth Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM at the Reid Medical/Science Building, Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address shown above.

Closing date for articles two weeks prior to the first of each month of publication. Articles may be republished provided full credit is given the author and this newsletter and one copy of the complete publication, in which the article appears, is mailed to Editor at the above address.



Membership Dues - Mailing Labels

The Club's fiscal and membership year is from September 1st through August 31st of the following year. Dues are payable on or before September 1st and become delinquent on that date. The Club By-Laws allow those joining after March 1st to pay one-half the yearly amount.

This policy is straightforward. However, in practice it has been problematic not only to those individuals joining the Club in mid-year (they being unaware of the contents of the By-Laws), but also to veteran Club members who may be accustomed to paying other organizational dues on a calendar year basis. It also causes additional work on the part of the Membership Chairperson who maintains the master records, and your Editor who maintains the Shell-O-Gram mailing list database(s).

In an effort to simplify the matter for all concerned, beginning with this issue of the Shell-O-Gram, your mailing label will contain information as to when your membership expires. This will be the first item on the label and will either contain the month and year of expiration (ie. 0897) or the exact date (ie. 8/31/97); depending on which data base is used to generate the labels.

All members are encouraged to check their mailing label and contact the Club Membership Chairperson if you believe the expiration date is incorrect.

President's Message

Hope that everybody had a safe, relaxing and very enjoyable holiday season. I am looking forward to 1997 being a great year for the Jacksonville Shell Club and all of its members and friends.

I want to thank all of you for your dedicated support and hard work in regards to the Club's numerous endeavors over the past year. I would also like to thank Charlotte and Vic Lloyd for hosting the Club's Christmas Party. I know that Jane and I really enjoyed everything and everybody.

Wishing everybody and their families a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Good shelling!

John

Upcoming Events

--Feb. 14-16: Sarasota Shell Show, Sarasota, FL. Contact Peggy Williams, P.O. Box 575, Tellevast, FL 34270 or call (941) 355-2291. Rules and entry forms are available from your Editor.

--Feb. 21-23: Naples Shell Show, Naples, FL. Contact Howard or Susan Roux, 152 Coral Vine Dr., Naples, FL 34110 or call (941) 514-0541.

--Feb. 28 - Mar. 2: S.W. Florida Conchological Society Shell Show, Ft. Myers Beach, FL. Contact Edie Chippeaux, 1308 Biltmore Dr., Ft. Myers Beach, FL 33901-8710 or call (941) 936-4058.

--Feb. 28 - Mar. 2: St. Petersburg Shell Show, Treasure Is., FL. Contact Bob or Betty Lipe, 440 75th Ave., St. Petersburg Beach, FL 33706 or call (813) 360-0586.

--Mar. 6-9: Sanibel Shell Show, Sanibel, FL. Contact Vi or Jon Greenlaw, 2813 SW 43rd Ln., Cape Coral, FL 33914 or call (941) 542-0935.

--Mar. 13-15: Marco Island Shell Club Show XVII, Marco Is., FL. Contact John Maerker, 365 Henderson Ct., Marco Is., FL 33937 or call (941) 394-3438.

--May 24-26: Suncoast Conchologists Shellers' Jamboree 97, Honeywell MINN-REG Building, Largo, FL. Further details will be provided as they become available.

Welcome New Members

Cherie & Ted Spenner
2215 Laughing Gull Circle
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
Phone: 241-0935

Herbert D. Athearn
5819 Benton Pike N.E.
Cleveland, TN 37323-5301
Phone: (423) 476-4963



In Memoriam

Elizabeth Mary Hunter

(1925-1996)

by Harry G. Lee

Our conchological community has lost a unique and resourceful member. Betty Hunter died quietly on December 3. She was 71 years old and had been retired from her professional career for five years. "Retired" is a bit of a malaprop for her level of activity; you see she was an educator. The powerful instinct impelling those of her ilk does not always yield to the temptations of inertia which lurk in life's autumnal shadows.

Betty was a native of Northeast Florida and received her education here, attending Fletcher High School in Jacksonville Beach during the war years. She spent the rest of the 1940's as a student at the newly-ordained Florida State University (formerly the College for Women) in Tallahassee, from which she returned with a master's degree and an ambition to teach Classical Culture to secondary school students. Oh how she did that! At Nathan Forest High School she taught two generations of students and saw many prosper academically and in their various careers. Many of these "critters" and her fellow teachers collaborated to recognize her achievements with kudos such as North Florida Star Teacher Award (1968, *et seq.*), Teacher of the Year (1975-76), charter membership in the Duval Co. Teacher Hall of Fame, and Outstanding Secondary Educator of America (1975). On news of her death, Forrest High School's faculty and administration established a scholarship fund in her memory.

Betty's mother, Mary, was a conchologist, but Betty did not manifest that bent early in life. Shortly after Mary's death, her daughter began her adventure in conchology - perhaps by having inherited a combination of genetic predisposition and a fine small shell collection. What she did from that point is "wondrous." In a mere 13 years of collecting and study, Betty Hunter created a masterpiece. Driven by her pedagogical and intellectual inclinations, Betty collected shells as instruments to invigorate the teaching of Classics. She was fascinated by the wealth of Roman and Greek culture embodied in the scientific names of mollusks. She developed copyrighted teaching programs such as The Roman Army - recreated with the names of various *Conus* species. Her study of molluscan nomenclature extended into topics such as mythology, anthropology, ancient history, and geography. At some point after the first few years of her involvement, the shell collecting became a bit more of a priority, but Betty was virtually always able to illuminate any of us with the etymology, symbolic relevance, and grammatical constitution of the name of her latest cowrie acquisition. The teaching of conchology and Classics continued uninterrupted after her official retirement. Her students included youngsters from almost every elementary school in Jacksonville - particularly those of her parish school, St. Matthew's. Betty Hunter also reached a vast and appreciative audience in the "shell world." One needs only to recall her programs at local and national meetings, her original and educational exhibits at a number of shell shows, or pick up a copy of the Shell-O-Gram or

American Conchologist to take measure of her contributions.

Betty left a fine collection of about 5,000 lots to the Florida Museum of Natural History. Malacology Collections Manager, Kurt Auffenberg, told me the museum was unusually pleased with the donation. The fine and rare *Cypraea*, *Conus*, muricids, and paleotropical terrestrial snails nicely complement the museum's prior holdings.

Elizabeth Hunter was a consummate sheller. She hit the fossil pits, tidal flats, scallop dumps, auctions, shell shops, mail order catalogues, and shell shows. But most of all, she hit the books. In doing so, she ably lead armies of her students (and almost all who knew her fit that definition) in her literacy crusade. We shellers have been elevated by her excellence and industry and are diminished by her passing.

In Memoriam

Dr. Harald Alfred Rehder

(1907-1996)

Dr. Harald Rehder, Zoologist (Emeritus), in the Department of Invertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Smithsonian Institution, passed away on November 10, 1996. He served as a curator in the NMNH for more than 40 years before retiring in 1976. He published over 140 papers and, although having broad research involvement in malacology, was especially renowned as an authority on the taxonomy and biogeography of marine mollusks of the southern Indo-Pacific.

Dr. Rehder was a consummate curator and not only helped build the huge collection of mollusks at the USNM through his extensive fieldwork (especially in the Pacific) but also updated the entire collection several times.

The world of malacology is saddened by his passing and grateful for his contributions over many decades and his friendship and assistance to colleagues, amateurs and students.

In The Mail

Inspired to reminisce by Dr. Harry Lee's account of a recent naiad (Freshwater mussel) collecting trip to the Tennessee River System (Shell-O-Gram Vol. 37:6; Nov.-Dec., 1996), veteran collector and club member Herb Athearn* writes to share a rather unique method of cleaning your aromatic naiad catch while on the road:

"Much of my early collecting was done from a bicycle (1940-41) except in the latter year my mentor, Jim Miller had me accompany him on a month's journey to Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. ... On this trip we came to the Tennessee River in Henry County, Tennessee. Here Jim bought about 75 pounds of live mussels from a fisherman. By the time we woke up the next morning in a cheap motel near Memphis, there were indications that a crisis would soon be upon us. ... The mussels were deposited in the shower and the hot water turn on. Presto, the problem was solved. Clam guts easily flush down a toilet!"

*5819 Benton Pike NE, Cleveland, TN 37323-5301

Club News

by Billie Brown

Happy New Year! Hope this year past was a good one for you. We have (as a club) had a fairly good year. Sadly, we lost some friends but hopefully we made a few new ones. While keeping our old friends in our hearts, we need to cultivate people who have joined us this past year. We have some good times and we have a lot to offer each other and to our community. We need to be visible, not only at shell show time but at every opportunity - schools, festivals, exhibits, everyday. Promote our club to your friends, co-workers or during any conversation that gives you an opening to talk about the shell club. Let's have a great year and work hard to increase our membership. New members -active members- are important to the "life" of our club.

Seafest '96 was a new experience for John and Jane Fatu who volunteered to head up this activity. This is good exposure for us and we have people who look for us each year. The people look forward to our exhibit and hopefully crafts to buy. While we may not actually need the money earned, it is good to have items to offer for sale. So when crafting, make an extra. One man approached, telling us how he liked collecting sea shells in Tonga. Claimed to know a prince there with the name of Fatu (related to our prince?). Never found out more. He was a talker and just sort of drifted away. Another encounter was with a tall, distinguished looking black man wearing a choker-type necklace of cowrie shells. Exchanging greetings, I commented on the neck piece. He gave me a big smile and said "I got it from home." Confident of an interesting exchange, "Where's home?" I said. CLEVELAND. He was less intriguing after that, but he knows there is a shell club in Jacksonville.

Our Christmas party was small but spirited - Fish House Punch spirited. We drank the bowl dry! We had an interesting and fun group. There was a redhead creating many comments - turned out to be our Mary (Reynolds). Looked great! Leigh Murphy's outfit was accented with a belt of gold shells. Stunning. Harry informed me that my necklace was *Hippocampus erectus*. And I thought they were Seahorses! The gift exchange was lively - no "Tickle Me Elmo" for this crowd but a windsock in the form of a Seahorse was much in demand! The coveted prize will fly from a place on Vic's boat!

Gertrude Moller was back from N.Y. telling of a wonderful visit. Judy and Chris Blocker have bought a home in the mountains of N.C. and are looking forward to summer and blackberry season. Paul and I try to be there in July to make preserves from the plentiful berries. Charlotte and Vic had holiday visitors - lovely granddaughter Ty from Gainesville and sister Gail from Miami. They kept Charlotte so busy that as of this writing Christmas decorations, etc., are still in place. (Hold the thought and we'll all be back in Dec. - just refill the punch bowl!)

The Times Union recently featured a picture and list of the Debutantes for the season. Included was Sarah Claire Lee, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Harry G. Lee. Congratulations Harry and Kitty and best wishes to a lovely brown-eyed young lady affectionately remembered by the nickname "Slammer!"

There were nice photos of Charlotte and Betsy Lyerly in the Beaches Leader and Shorelines packing up the shell display from Fletcher, to be stored until such time as a place is designated at the new Fletcher Middle School.

It's not the "Corner Store" but we have a place to run for shells and supplies. "Seashell Creations." Drop in and see Rodney. He is very accommodating and has some really nice things.

Happy Birthday and Anniversary to those celebrating in January and February! You know who you are! So - remind us. I have misplaced my calendar.

Don't forget - this article as well as the Shell-O-Gram cannot be written without some input from you! Call Me! Call Bill! Call somebody! Best, Billie (241-3755).

Majuro - The Dirty Paradise

by Jose' & Marcus Coltro*

Over the years we have always wanted to visit some atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean so we talked with our friends Bunnie and George Cook of Hawaii, and they suggested Majuro Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands. Following their suggestion, we planned our trip there just after the Conchologists of America Convention in Florida and decided to take our best diver, Alfredo Bodart, along with us.

At the convention, many people told us that Majuro is the lousiest place in Micronesia and we would not be able to find many shells. Therefore we were concerned with the possible results of the trip.

We first flew to Hawaii, and our trip from there to Majuro began during the early morning hours of Monday, July 22nd. The flight to Majuro took 5 hours with a stop at Johnston Island, a military base where Americans destroy chemical weapons. It was a very nice island, but it is the kind of place that we personally prefer to avoid! We arrived in Majuro Tuesday at noon after loosing one complete day crossing the International Date Line.

Approaching Majuro, the view from the air was great. The local airport is really small, and it is really interesting how narrow and long the atoll really is. We had the RRE Hotel bus waiting for us, and we had a short scenic ride between the airport and "downtown".

The island is quite poor and dirty. The people are not friendly and most of the time they even stare at you when you speak

[continued on page 8.]

Philippine Shell Export Ban

Whether you are a serious scientific shell collector or one who only collects those which you find aesthetically pleasing, chances are that a good portion of your collection is comprised of shells which originally came from the Republic of the Philippines. Both specimen and commercial grade shells have been one of that country's major export commodities for a number of years.

There is now a chance that this may come to an end. During the Republic of the Philippines 10th Congress, the House is considering the passage of Bill No. 3023 banning the exportation of shells. As of the second week of December, the Bill had already undergone four hearings and was scheduled for a final hearing before being brought to a vote.

The first two sections of seven declare the Senate promote and encourage the maximum utilization of marine mollusks for food and conserve marine resources by allowing only local Filipino fisherman, academicians, and entrepreneurs on the reef. It states that it shall be unlawful for any person, whether natural or juridical, to engage in the export of seashells, raw, dried or processed, either for food, research and other commercial use as decorations and the like.

Word from Philippine shell collectors is that opposition to the bill has been marginal because shell collecting isn't really a popular hobby there. However, the shell dealers have mounted a lobbying effort, but because they represent commercial interests, the law makers view them as suspect.

There appears to be no disputing the fact that Philippine reefs and all manner of marine life are being threatened on a massive scale and that some sort of environmental legislation is needed. However, some believe that it is not the shelling industry that is the primary culprit, but the large-scale commercial fishing fleets, power plants, cement factories, etc, that are located near the beaches and waterways that dump, degrade or outright strip mine the coasts - everything that the present government is soliciting foreign funding for in the name of "progress".

The banning of the export of shells from the Philippines would no doubt be catastrophic for all specimen shell collectors and could literally eliminate some shell dealers.

It should be noted that passing a law and subsequently enforcing it are two different things, especially in a developing country such as the Philippines where the per capita income is only \$830 a year. However, even if the shells were still collected and exported illegally, their import into the United States would also be illegal in accordance with U.S. Federal Law (The Lacey Act). This act prohibits the import, export, transport, sale, receipt, acquisition or purchase of any wildlife taken, possessed, transported or sold in violation of any law, treaty, or regulation of the United States, and/or in violation of any law or regulation of any State of the U.S., and/or in violation of foreign law. In other words, even if the Philippine Government was unsuccessful in effectively enforcing their law, the United States has laws in place which would prohibit the import of the banned material into the U.S.

Based in-part upon E-mail messages from the Conchologists of America Listserv - CONCH-L.

You Know You're A Marine Sheller When...

...The lowest minus tides of the year are marked on your calendar.

...You're not at work the day after every big storm.

...You travel with empty plastic bags, containers and rubbing alcohol.

...Your toolbox includes dental picks, toothbrushes and an engraving tool.

...You stop for sand trails on the beach.

...Your beachwear includes a broad-brimmed hat and bucket or bag.

...Each rock at the shore is evaluated as being turnable or not.

...Your neighbors have noticed that your yard smells like something died each time you return from a trip to the shore.

...There are non-edible mollusks in your freezer.

...The back of your neck is the most tanned part of your body.

...Paying \$100 for a book no longer seems outrageous.

...There is at least one room in your home that looks like a museum.

...You don't leave the beach when it starts to rain.

...You are a little disappointed when the hurricane doesn't hit.

...The names Abbott, Lamarck, and Linne' mean something to you.

...You identify the craft shells in stores.

...Standing in frigid water up to your waist is still an enjoyable experience.

...Necessary furniture is moved out of the living room to make room for your collection.

...You consider buying a shell instead of food for dinner.

...You spend Sunday afternoon reading the messages on CONCH-L (Conchologists of America E-mail Listserv) instead of watching the Steelers.

...Your standard diving gear includes miners light, coat hanger, four prong garden tool and your wife's spaghetti strainer.

...You're on vacation and you know there is good shelling close by, so you give all your money and credit cards to your spouse, and say "Have a good time dear!"

...You receive a card from friends on vacation. It's a beautiful ocean shore scene. You evaluate the shoreline for proper shelling terrain while knowing full well you may never go there.

...When your dive partners talk about turtles, fish and scenic vistas after a dive, you know you have no competition.

...You think that if you unhook your tank, the regulator hose might just be long enough to let you crawl in and reach that rare *Murex laqueatus* in the cave.

...It's only when your hand is in the hole up to your elbow that you wonder how fast a cone shell really is.

...Shelling on the cliffs between dives is not a surface interval, it's considered "Not wasting any time."

...Your E-mail address includes the name of a well known gastropod genus.

Adapted from E-mail messages from the Conchologists of America Listserv - CONCH-L.

A Florida Marsh Snail Hunt

by Phil Poland*

A recent monograph (A.M.F. Martins, *Malacologia****) on the Ellobiidae (formerly Melampidae), or marsh snails, got me going on a enjoyable project. Martins' work is comprehensive, with detailed habitat and range information. The plates are great.

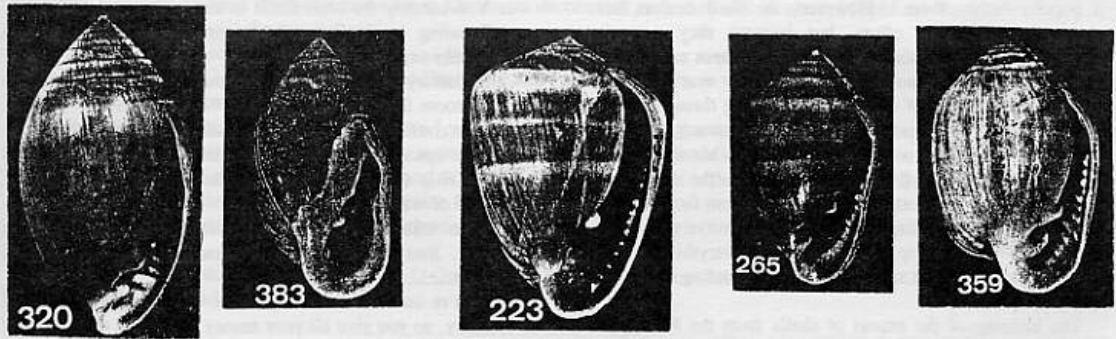
A happy fact about marsh snails is that they can be sought and found when tide, weather or season isn't ideal for most collecting. These airbreathing snails generally live in protected areas near or above high-water. As most of the Western Atlantic species have been found in south Florida, I planned to make a determined search on my next Keys trip. I left Clearwater for the Keys in late September, taking the interstate south. My first stop was at the Myakka River at US 41, a short jog off the interstate near Port Charlotte. I'd been surprised to learn from Martins that *Melampus floridanus* (fig. 320) had been found there. I'd thought it was a species from northeast Florida and northward.

What I found was a freshwater river bank. *Neritina reclinata* were abundant at the water's edge, but no sign of *Melampus* on the grasses further up the bank. It took a few minutes to figure out that the fragile, banded, 5 mm snail lived under rotting plant debris at the wrack line. Though abundant, it took a close look to find. It is the only Florida marsh snail found in this freshwater environment.

With the data and snails bagged and in the cooler, I headed to Miami via Alligator Alley. My destination was Key Biscayne, near the northeast end of the island chain we call the Keys. I don't accept the idea that the Keys begin with the billboards at the Monroe County line.

At the north end of Key Biscayne, a rocky shore and a mangrove swamp looked promising for the marsh snails. Sadly, for the purposes of this story, netting of marine grasses and other subtidal collecting activities at this location were very productive, and I was distracted for a few precious hours.

One of Florida's least common ellobiids, *Tralia ovula* (fig. 383), was found on the shore as a dead shell. A belated search under rocks and debris near high-water turned up no live specimens. I plan a return trip to try again and to "do the swamp" that time didn't allow on this visit.



The following day found me, bright and early, at Harry Harris County Park near Tavernier in the Upper Keys. A hard shore with tidepools gave way to mangrove and a gently sloping shore. The mangrove sheltered a bonanza in marsh snails. After clearing a path through the spider webs, I was able to find a reasonably comfortable spot near the high-water mark to turn rocks and debris around the roots of the mangrove. *Melampus coffeus* (fig. 223) were the first spotted, actively moving about on mangrove roots and most other wet surfaces in this well-shaded area.

Melampus bidentatus (fig. 265) were fairly common here too, though closer to the ground. Their shells are generally lighter in color and more slender than those of the larger *M. coffeus*. Striae on the shoulders are the verifying feature (*M. coffeus* have none).

Young *Melampus morrisoni* (fig. 359) (formerly *Dentralia clarki*) were found with *M. bidentatus* but were not recognized as such until brought home and cleaned. While the young superficially resemble *M. bidentatus*, the upturned columellar teeth give this species away.

Melampus monile (fig. 338) clustered in crevices on the undersurfaces of rocks and larger pieces of wood. The deep-brown shells, sometimes banded, have tiny hairs or setae on the tops of the whorls. Pits remain if they've worn off.

Melampus bullaoides (fig. 295), distinctively tapering at both ends, were easily found under rocks and debris near the high-water mark. At a location on Florida Bay near the Marathon Airport, I found that rocks, just above the high-water mark and shaded by mangrove, hid populations of three other marsh snail species.

Laemodonta cubensis (fig. 85), a 3 mm species with a hispid periostracum, was found in several dense colonies. *Pedipes ovalis* (fig. 129), which has generally been lumped with *P. mirabilis*, was abundant at this location, and is common throughout the Keys.

Pedipes ovalis can be distinguished from *P. mirabilis* by its protoconch, dentition and finer sculpture. I have found *P. mirabilis* on the east coast of Florida, *P. ovalis* only in the Keys and on the west coast.

Some of the rocks from near the high-water mark were rinsed in a bucket of saltwater. The collected "gravel" contained tiny and fragile *Microtralia occidentalis* (fig. 177). These 3 mm translucent snails were not discovered until the frozen material was thawed and examined at home. Other species under the rocks included *Assiminea* and three *Truncatella* species. At Middle Torch Key, on the salt barrens, shaded and damp areas with an accumulation of organic matter harbor a rarely collected species, *Ellobium dominicense* (fig. 4) (formerly *E. pellucens*). Their presence is indicated, wherever they are found, by numbers of dead shells accumulated near wrack lines. Colonies apparently bloom and die off regularly. I was able to find live snails by moving large rocks and wood debris.



At Sugarloaf Key, near the famous (sort of) bat tower at Perky, low and open ground, periodically flooded by the highest of tides, is a great spot to find *Melampus morrisoni*. Wherever wood debris occurred, fine specimens of *M. morrisoni* did too. Banded or solid, brown or white, the cylindrical and distinctively dentate adult shell isn't too difficult to separate from other marsh snails that occur with it.

In dense mangrove nearby, rotting plant matter accumulates among the roots to a considerable depth. Coconuts and other wood embedded in this material were rinsed in a bucket of seawater and two other species collected.

Blauseria heteroclitia (fig. 24), a white pellucid snail in a sinistral and transparent 3 mm shell, stood out vividly against the black of rotting wood.



A little less conspicuous, and found with *Blauseria*, was *Creedonia succinea* (fig. 149) (formerly *Marinula succinea*). Also a 3 mm shell, it was easily collected by rinsing wood and examining what settled in the bottom of the bucket.

Indications are that at least two other marsh snails live in Florida, one in the Keys, one in the northeast. The hunt continues.

During this little field trip of a few days, I collected snails under tree bark, in dirt, from marine algae and grass, under rocks and in sand. Hundreds of little species, some not even named, are there to challenge you when you've gotten all the cones and cowries. Good Luck!

*2741 Enterprise Rd. #30, Clearwater, FL., 34619

***Malacologia* 37(2):163-356, Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, 1996. Photos accompanying this article are copyrighted and are published with permission of the Editor of *Malacologia*.

[Majuro - continued from page 4.]

English. Along the road we saw lots of old trucks, boats, and other old war equipment littering the reef. The islanders discard all their trash into the ocean too.

Just after dropping off our luggage at the hotel, we took our snorkel equipment and went to look for shells. We Brazilians normally wear "speedo" swim suits, and that is what we wore during the first two days. Then we met a Brazilian that lives there and he told us that we almost went to the jail - the people in Majuro considered us naked! They go the beach wearing shorts and T-shirts; even when they swim!

Majuro is 45 km long and in many parts is only 100 meters wide. The lagoon is really large and has a wide opening to the sea and small islets. Close to downtown the water still clear, but it is possible to find things underwater like TV sets, refrigerators, cars, etc. We found some good places to snorkel, especially in Laura, the largest land area on the atoll. Laura has a private park with some facilities. We had to pay US\$ 3 to park the car (the official money in the Republic of the Marshall Islands is the American Dollar!). The place has a really nice coral reef and many species of shells. Common cowries, cones and others are easily found. Near the airport we found a nice place where we found some of the best shells, like *Cyprara cribraria gaspardi* and *Cypraea stolidia kwajalensis*.

We were a little bit disappointed with the low tide shelling. Very common Indo-Pacific species were hard to find, like *Cypraea moneta* or *Nerita* spp.

We made three dives and one was quite fantastic, not for the shells, but for the dozens of sharks swimming around us. They were very friendly, and it was one the best dives that we had.

Although many people consider Majuro a bad place for shells, we found over 400 different species there. Most of them are common, but in really nice condition.

Just after we left Majuro they opened a nice hotel with a good restaurant. Food is really a problem there. If you wish to lose weight finding shells, you can consider Majuro a great SPA!

*Adapted from an article by Jose' and Marcus Coltro, Femorale Specimen Shells, CX.P. 15259 Sao Paulo SP - Brasil 01599-970.



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