



SHELL-O-GRAM

Official Publication of the
JACKSONVILLE SHELL CLUB, INC.

July-August 2009

Volume 50 no.4

Jacksonville Shell Club gets ready for 50th Year

Historical Highlights of the Jacksonville Shell Club
from Gertrude Moller and Richard Edwards

Since the Jacksonville Shell Club's inception, it has promoted an interest in shells and educated the public concerning marine and freshwater fauna. It has accomplished this through many activities besides its annual shell show. Over the years these activities include displays in various libraries and shopping centers; providing speakers to civic organizations and schools; the setting up of booths at various festivals and local events displaying shells and answering questions; having members assist in scientific classification, surveys, and expeditions; and providing shell specimens to local museums and educational organizations.

In addition, the club has sponsored field trips for collecting purposes to various locations in Florida and Georgia. Fresh water, marine and fossil gastropods and bivalves have been the focus of many trips. These trips have provided an inventory of local fauna in these locations and lists of these finds can be found on the club's website, JAXSHELLS.org.

Also, the club has sponsored the development of a shell book that specifically addresses Northeast Florida that has been over 20 years in the making (more on this in the featured article). It contains 804 pictured species found in the area.

The club has and continues to sponsor various scholarships that promote the knowledge of malacology through graduate study or the sponsorship of a class to visit a shell museum.

At the club's monthly meetings, usually on the third Thursday of each month, education is the theme. A shell of the month is usually presented describing various facts about a specific shell. This is usually followed by an educational program related to collecting (Florida, New Guinea, Philippines, Okinawa, Bahamas, the Gulf, etc.), the role of shells in society (coins, stamps, decoration, jewelry, etc.), classification, setting up shell displays, or shell craft. These are informative and individuals can get an idea of the program through the club's newsletter, The Shell-O-Gram, which is published every two months.

The Jacksonville Shell Club is an IRS recognized educational nonprofit organization. It is proud of its accomplishments over the past 50 years and will continue to fulfill its goals for the next 50 years.

Programs

At the club's June 25th meeting we decided to take the summer off for shelling. The **July and August meetings were cancelled**. We'll next convene at **7:00 PM on Thursday, September 24**. Then we can expect to share tales of summertime collecting, elect new officers, and talk a little about the July 18-23 COA Convention. The next (Sept.-Oct.) issue of the *Shell-O-Gram* will provide details of the programs.

Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc.
1010 N. 24th Street
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250

Membership: Charlotte Thorpe
E-mail: charlloyd@bellsouth.net

Editor: Richard Edwards
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This club meets each month at the Southeast Branch of the Jacksonville Public Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd., Jacksonville, Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address above.

The *Shell-O-Gram* is issued bimonthly and mailed to all regular members. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 individual and \$20.00 family (domestic) and \$25.00 (foreign). Lifetime membership is available. Please send checks for dues to the above address and made out to the Jacksonville Shell Club.

We encourage members to submit articles for this publication. Closing date for article submission is 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 sent to the above address.

Welcome New Members

Erika Bauer & Family
 Louis Therres & Family
 Davron Cardenas
 Marjorie Rogozinski
 Jeffrey & Doug Captain
 Dan McCarthy & Family
 Zhongliang Lu

President's Corner

Hello Everybody!

After months of saying, "it's coming. We need help. Do your part. Are we ready?" The '09 shell show is a thing of the past. However - parting words at the June meeting were, "we have to decide on a date for next years show --!!

Thanks to so many who worked hard to make sure we had a successful show and to Charlotte Thorpe who pulled everything together and ensured that everything ran smoothly. At our June meeting everybody received an itemized report on income and expenditures so that the economics of the show could be understood. We had a lot going for us this year. It was our 50th year as a shell club. We had a part of the "shell circus" on display as a loving tribute to the memory of Tom Duhon and of course, THE BOOK ! Most of us cannot begin to fathom the work involved, especially as "press time" grew near. My hope is that Charlotte (Thorpe) and Harry (Lee) feel the deep appreciation we have for their efforts. We owe a special thanks to our publicity chair - Claire Newsome - she is the first to start working and doesn't stop. Publicity was outstanding!!! (I wouldn't be surprised to find out that she is already thinking 2010.)

We will be meeting at Claire's (3875 Copper Circle E. 400-1455) on Sunday, July 12 - 2 PM to assemble shell packets for some of the elementary schools. John Fatu has agreed to pass these packets out at the school supply depot in August. You are urged to come and help with this project. We would like to have a very short board meeting before we begin our project. Officers and board members should arrive about 15 minutes early. Brian Marshall has agreed to chair a nominating committee for 2009 - 10 officers and board members. The slate will be presented and voted on at the September 24 meeting. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

PLEASE NOTE - because of so many varying schedules, vacations etc. the club voted not to meet in July and August. Our next scheduled meeting will be in September.

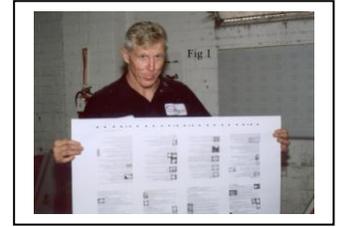
Thanks again to everybody who has worked so hard this year to help our club succeed! Every member is important and needed!

Best, Billie 241-3755

Membership Dues are Due Now
Please send in your dues: Individual \$15.00 Family
\$20.00 to
Charlotte Thorpe
1010 24th St. N
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
Want to know your due date? Look at your S-O-G
address tag and if the date has passed or is close to
today's date -Your Dues are Due

Marine shells of northeast Florida: a chronicle of the campaign
By Harry G. Lee

What turns out to be a sentinel event in the Jacksonville Shell Club's history was a stimulus delivered by Mr. William G. Lyons, a noted research malacologist and senior administrator with the Florida Marine Research Institute, State of Florida Department of Natural Resources (DNR), St. Petersburg Beach (Lyons, 1975). Citing the lack of information on the molluscan fauna of our region of the state, the value of the untapped knowledge and experience of our club members, and his read on the capability of our membership to carry through the project, he "suggested" in the May-June, 1975 *Shell-O-Gram* that we publish a report on the marine shells of northeast Florida. With the exception of meeting (many) a deadline, we followed Mr. Lyons' guidelines in the production of such a work, which was delivered from Drummond Press (Figure 1) to the writer on May 28, 2009, a mere 34 years after Bill's gauntlet was thrust.

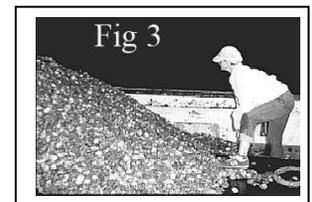


Our crowd was a mostly young and ambitious lot, pretty well-tested in field work, including SCUBA-diving and even a little dredging. We had strength in numbers, which abiding asset, perhaps more than any other, kept the momentum going when distractions, setbacks, and various other obstacles intervened. Figure 2 shows Bill Lyons during the 1975 Shell Show, discussing the project with some of our beachcomber-dredger-diver collectors (from L: Lyons, John Lott, David Pugh, and the author).

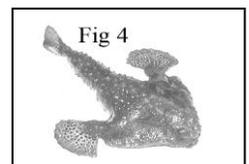


Very early on we defined the geographical limits of the project to be the mouth of the St. Mary's River (Florida-Georgia border) south to the Flagler Co. line and offshore to the outer Continental Shelf, arbitrarily set at the 60-fathom isobath, and all estuarine waters within Nassau, Duval and St. Johns Cos. By the end of the year the first short species-list appeared in the *Shell-O-Gram*. Over the next few years a cumulative list, arranged in phylogenetic order, would be published. Each time a few to several dozen entries were installed. By 1978 over 200 species had accrued.

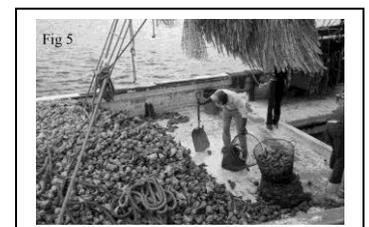
About that time, members including the late June Dawley, Clyde Hebert, and Bonnie Holiman began sorting through what was familiarly known as "Yocius grunge." The late Ted Yocius was a shrimp trawler who lived in St. Augustine and actively dredged for marine shells, principally off St. Johns Co. He sold culled specimen shells as well as unsorted dredged sediment and related debris to collectors around the world. The peak of his activities was in the 1970's. This operation was a major innovation for our project, and it brought into focus a neglected element of the fauna, microshells, which ultimately proved to be a signature feature of the published account and was largely responsible for the molluscan biodiversity. The fever spread quickly, and nearly a dozen club members got involved with "Yocius grunge." The cumulative species list ranks swelled quickly, and within a few years we were at 400 species.



The beginning of the second quarter of the 1980's saw the resurrection of the long-idle northeast Florida Calico Scallop fishery and, within a few years quite likely over 100 tons of molluscan by-catch were reviewed and culled by over two dozen shell club members and friends aboard the trawlers (Figure 3 shows Gayle Motes at work on a active scallop boat), ports of call in Jacksonville and St. Augustine, dumpsites, and deliberate landfill operations. Interviews with boat captains allowed a measure of precision in determining the origin of the catch. Among the familiar faces at the "scallop dumps" were Nellie Hawley, Charlotte Lloyd, and Henry McCullagh, the late Norma Bullock, and a newcomer, the late Betty Hunter. Unanticipated subsets of material from this phase of our collective good fortune came from nearly 1000 batfish (Figure 4) and a somewhat smaller number of Heart Urchins, *Meoma ventricosa* (Lamarck, 1816) in the scallop bycatch. These were dissected by the writer and June Dawley respectively, and many thousand specimens of no less than two hundred species of mollusks, mostly "micro's," were harvested from these little molluscan predators.



A whelk fishery (Figure 5) based in Fernandina Beach provided some of our team with shells after the flesh was removed during processing. Like the scallop fishery, this enterprise proved to be ephemeral, and we collectors were forced to move on in our pursuit of easy pickings.



Another unforeseen opportunity exploited by the Jacksonville Shell Club members and friends intermittently during the 1970's to 1990's was the "beach renourishment" initiatives along the shoreline of southern Duval Co. Marine sediment was excavated from depths of approximately 10 fathoms situated about ten nautical Miles offshore, barged to a point about 100 m. outside the breakers, and pumped onto the shore through Pipes about 1.5 m in diameter. Over 10,000,000 cubic meters of sediment was transferred during at least Nine contracted campaigns (Gail Gren, Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville, personal communication, 23 Jan., 1989). Dozens of species of mollusks never previously found on these oceanic beaches were easily collected, some actually abundantly, during these ecologically disruptive but scientifically rewarding activities. Among the several participating in this free-for-all were Judy Blocker, Billie Brown, and Bill Hansen. None of us active during those days will forget the extensive and meticulously-assembled collection Of micromollusks from 16th Avenue S., Jacksonville Beach made by Norma Bulock, which was begun in the early 1980's.

Around 1986, a fisherman-turned-net-maker and patient of mine, Bill Skipper of Fernandina Beach, surprised me with a gift of some 10,000 specimens of micromollusks he had extracted from thousands of seastars, *Astropecten articulatus* (Say, 1825), trawled in about 5 fathoms off Big Talbot Is. Of the approximately 180 Species in this trove, many were new to our northeast Florida records, which continued to accrue almost every day.

Various watercraft were employed for the collection made over the long course of this study, but the most consistently and frequently put to use was "Reef Raider II," docked in Mayport, FL and with Captain Vic Lloyd of Jacksonville Beach at the helm. Most of our collecting by SCUBA and much of dredging was conducted from this vessel, specifically designed as a dive and commercial-angling craft. Charlotte Lloyd accounted for the lion's share of the dived and dredged, including from other, smaller, vessels she operated offshore of Duval Co.

By the time full measure of the material produced by the work outlined above was taken, it was apparent that the writer had seen tens of thousands of specimens collected from over 100 stations by no less than 63 individuals in the long course of the "collection phase" of the project, which continued into the month preceding publication. At final count, accounts of 804 species would appear in the book.

Identification was accomplished by reference to standard books, literally hundreds of relatively recent periodical publications, and more than a few older, often obscure and rare works. Of particular value in this regard was the Malacolog 4.1.0, a database created and maintained by Dr. Gary Rosenberg at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. This resource treats all western Atlantic marine mollusks (Rosenberg, 2005). Visits were made on one or more occasion to the following museums to review their holdings, principally type material: Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia; Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, Sanibel, FL; Charleston Museum; Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville; National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institution); and the Florida Dept. of Natural Resources, St. Petersburg. Except for a few records provided from the Florida Department of Natural Resources/SEAMAP inventory provided by Bill Lyons, all material presented was directly examined and identified by the writer.

The illustration of this report was originally the responsibility of Allan Walker, with the writer essentially serving as an assistant. With his wife, Hazel, Allan is a Life Member of the club, and at the time he was a professional news photographer. We had assembled a portfolio with images of about 250 species when Allan was stricken with a debilitating stroke in 1994. Unable to carry on without Allan's skillful service, I let this aspect of the project lag. Publication, expected to be imminent, was essentially put on hold.

Most of the final fifteen years was essentially devoted to fleshing out the text of the report to keep pace with the burgeoning relevant literature. Essentially every species account saw some refinement, and many were greatly expanded as published work by others and consequent changes in my perceptions were incorporated into the text. When I'm pressed for a rationale for the dilatory appearance of the book, I think I can safely say that what would have appeared in print in say, 1995 would have been riddled with errors. Hopefully that won't quite be the case with the 2009 book 14 years hence. Retrospection is always 20/20.

Over the final year or so of the project, particularly during the home stretch of March and April, 2009, a *dei ex machina* phenomenon occurred. Amy Benson, of the U. S. Geological Survey, Gainesville, deftly drew a digital map to my specifications, and a pair of skilled photographers, Emilio Garcia and Charlotte Lloyd, picked up not too far from where Allan Walker had left off. They provided the images for over 300 previously unfigured species in a matter of about six weeks. By any measure this was an awesome feat. I shall ever be indebted to these guardian angels! The timing couldn't have been any more exquisite, the May 28 delivery was less than 24 hours before the doors opened to the Jacksonville Shell Club's 43rd Shell Show – and in its Golden Anniversary year (Figure 6)!



Many lessons came from this chronicle, but the spirit of cooperation and the power of amateur devotion seem to resonate throughout the campaign. Bill Lyons' read on the Jacksonville Shell Club was on target, and we can all give him credit for setting the bar just high enough to permit ultimate, I didn't say timely, success.

Lyons, W.G., 1975. Shells of the Jacksonville area; a suggested club project. *Shell-O-Gram* 16(5): 3. May

Rosenberg, G., 2005. Malacolog 4.1.0: A Database of Western Atlantic Marine Mollusca. [WWW database (version 4.1.0)] URL <http://www.malacolog.org/>.

2009 SHELL SHOWS & RELATED EVENTS from COA

(August-December)
Changes and additions

Oct. 10-11, 2009

PHILADELPHIA SHELL SHOW, Philadelphia, PA
Academy of Natural Sciences, Parkway & 19th St.
Paul Callomon, Academy of Natural Sciences
Parkway & 19th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103
E-mail: callomon@ansp.org
Tel. (215) 299-1159

Oct. 30-31, 2009

SEA SHELL SEARCHERS SHELL SHOW, Lake Jackson, TX
Lake Jackson Civic Center, 333 Highway 332
Contact: Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show
c/o Brazosport Museum of Natural Science
400 College Blvd., Clute, Texas 77531
Patty Humbird, Tel. (979) 265-1320
Wanda Coker, Tel. (979) 297-0852
Email: shellclub@earthlink.net

Beach Shelling and Learning about our local Beaches

Rick Edwards will be conducting shell walks for the GTMNERR (Guana Environmental Education Center) on August 15. If you are new to the area or are a novice collector, you may wish to consider one these guided beach walks. For information on time and meeting place contact the Environmental Center at 904-823-4500.

A \$3.00 parking fee does apply to park in the beach parking lot.

In Memoriam

Ms. Nancy Gilfillan
a member of the club has passed in South
Carolina

List of shells for School Kits

1. **Knobbed Whelk** *Busycon carica* (Gmelin, 1791)
2. **Lightning Whelk** *Busycon sinstrum* Hollister, 1958
3. **Pearwhelk** *Busycotypus spiratus* (Lamarck, 1816)
4. **Shark Eye** *Neverita duplicata* (Say, 1822)
5. **True Tulip** *Fasciolaria tulipa* (Linnaeus, 1758)
6. **Eastern Banded Tulip** *Fasciolaria hunteria* (G. Perry, 1811)
7. **Crown Conch** *Melongena corona* (Gmelin, 1791)
8. **Lettered Olive** *Oliva sayana* Ravenel, 1834
9. **Florida Rocksnail** *Stramonita haemastoma floridana* (Conrad, 1837)
10. **Horse Conch** *Triplofusus giganteus* (Kiener, 1840)
11. **Eastern Auger** *Terebra dislocata* (Say, 1822)
12. **Eastern Mudsnail** *Ilyanassa obsoleta* (Say, 1822)
13. **Thick-lip Drill** *Eupleura caudata* (Say, 1822)
14. **Common Atlantic Slippersnail** *Crepidula fornicata* (Linnaeus, 1758)
15. **White Baby Ear** *Sinum perspectivum* (Say, 1831)
16. **Channeled Duckclam** *Raeta plicatella* (Lamarck, 1818)
17. **Disk Dosina** *Dosinia discus* (Reeve, 1850)
18. **Common Jingle** *Anomia simplex* dOrbigny, 1832
19. **Incongruous Ark** *Anadara brasiliana* (Lamarck, 1819)
20. **Green Mussel** *Perna viridis* (Linnaeus, 1758)