



SHELL-O-GRAM



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July Meeting

The July 28th meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the Southeast Branch Library at 7:00 PM.

No formal educational program will be presented. Instead, that portion of the meeting will be devoted finalizing plans for the upcoming shell show.

The Shell-Of-The Month will be given by Harry Lee on *Turbinella pyrum* (Linnaeus, 1758) – Sacred Chank of India – a shell with an interesting history.

As is customary, refreshments will be served and guests are cordially invited to attend.

August Meeting

The August 25th meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the usual time and place.

Club founding member Gertrude Moller will present the educational program. She will discuss some of the highlights of her 40 years as a club member to include travel and shelling trips.

The Shell-Of-The-Month will be given by Bill Frank on *Spondylus americanus* Hermann, 1781 – American Thorny Oyster.

Refreshments will be served. Plan now to attend and bring a friend.

A Cold Day In May

On Saturday, May 15th, thirteen members and friends of the Jacksonville Shell Club traveled to Cumberland Island, Georgia to take advantage of the day's minus one-foot tide. Participating in the expedition were your editor, Charlotte Lloyd with friends Marilyn and Ann, Bill and Betsy Lyerly, Jim Miller (Tallahassee), Trudy Doerr, Rob and D.D. Jewell, and Teresa St. John with two friends including former club member Kathy Hughes (Bristol, Florida near Tallahassee).

Your editor was the first to arrive at the ranger station in St. Marys, Georgia – the embarkation point for the Cumberland Island Queen Ferry - our transportation to the island. Arriving shortly thereafter were Rob and D.D. Two things were immediately apparent – Rob and D.D. had a totally flat tire (they both disavowed any knowledge of it), and it was unseasonably cold and windy for the middle of May. While Rob changed the tire and D.D. wrapped herself in a towel for protection from the fierce wind, the remainder of the group arrived.

So it was all aboard, and following a windy, cold, rough, and spray-filled 45-minute ride, the Queen arrived at the Dungeness Dock, where about half the group disembarked to avail themselves of the cultural aspects of the island. The remaining "hard core"

continued on to the Sea Camp Dock, where it was but a leisurely 15-minute walk to the beach.

Upon arrival at the Sea Camp Beach, it was obvious that not much had changed from your editor and Jim Miller's observations on April 15th (see Shell-O-Gram Volume 40(3), May-June, 1999). Despite the intervening northeasters, the wrack line had little in the way of dead shells, and what there were had been nearly buried by the omnipresent winds.

As low tide was yet four hours away, the wrack line was explored in depth. Most of the species found were bivalves – both as singles and as pairs – a good portion drilled in the umbo area probably by *Neverita duplicata*. Of interest were the numerous lengthy *Busycon* egg cases interspersed with the debris. To confirm the species that had produced them, they were dissected. Surprisingly, very few of the egg cases contained larval shells, but the few present were all identified as *Busycon carica*. The paucity of larval shells in the capsules was surprising in light of past observations of *B. sinistrum* egg cases beach-stranded at other collecting areas. Characteristically these contained hundreds of larval shells. The differences in hatching ratio between *B. carica* and *B. sinistrum* may be due to intrinsically higher fertility or more forgiving weather conditions where the egg cases were deposited at spawning. Either way this accurately reflects the abundance of *B. carica* thriving on the Cumberland beach. (Continued on Page 3.)



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Send dues to: Teresa St. John, Treasurer
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The club meets the fourth Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM at the Southeast Branch Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Boulevard, Jacksonville Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address shown above.

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 mailed to Editor at the above address.

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President's Message

Have just returned from the Conchologists of America (COA) Convention and it was a tremendous success for the folks in Louisville and COA alike. Through the hard work of Lynn Scheu, Gene Everson, Bobbie Houchin and their hard-working friends (count me as one), they raised over \$25,000 with their silent and oral auctions - an all-time high. Everything ran smoothly and all 272 attendees had a good time!

Now is the time we all buckle down and make last minute preparations for our shell show. We are getting excellent publicity and I'm sure that it will be a tremendous success. I hope that all the workers will be present at the shell show-planning meeting on July 15th, 7:00 PM at Claire's. Call Claire at 398-6383 if you need directions.

See you there!

Central Florida Shell Show

The Central Florida Shell Club will hold their "Festival of Seashells" at the Central Florida Fairgrounds in Orlando on September 17-19th. The show will be open to the public on Saturday the 18th from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM and on Sunday the 19th from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

For additional information you can contact Edward Radschweit (the shell show chairman) at P.O. Box 692371, Orlando, FL 32869-2371 or by phone at (407) 240-0049. Entry forms are also available from your editor.

A Cold Day In May – Continued from page 1.

As the tide ebbed, the beach both north and south of Sea Camp was explored. *Busycon carica* form *eliceans* was the predominant taxon – but only in modest numbers. As we continued south toward the jetty at the St. Marys River entrance, a pair of *Busycotypus canaliculatus* were also found – having been overlooked by Jim in his search for *B. carica* form *eliceans*.

At this point, club member Carol Ruckdeschel and her research partner, Dr. Bob Shoop, arrived on their four-wheel all-terrain vehicles and transported Charlotte to the jetty where she found a large *B. sinistrum* that was subsequently photographed and released.

Because of the high winds and low temperatures, seven of the group left early for St. Marys on the 2:45 PM ferry. However, the remaining six (your editor, Charlotte, Jim, and Teresa's group) persevered until the 4:45 PM ferry and were not disappointed.

As the tide continued to ebb, *B. carica* form *eliceans* were present virtually everywhere in all sizes, colors, etc. Your editor examined so many that he too gave up after an hour of this insanity. Collecting the species might be doing them a favor as there were so many live mollusks sharing a common habitat, their food supply must be doubt. Other live species seen in numbers were *Terebra dislocata*, *Sinum perspectivum*, *Neverita duplicata*, and other small species (*Nassarius* sp., etc.). Surprisingly, no *Oliva sayana* was seen.

As the afternoon progressed, the wind abated, the temperature increased, and it was a calm, warm and relaxing return trip aboard the Queen to St. Marys.

Cumberland Island is truly a special place – a place that gives one an insight into what the barrier islands of northeast Florida/southeast Georgia looked like to the early explorers of the New World. Whether it is the wild horses (which freely roam the island), the readily availability of the various molluscan species, or the surprising lack of fear of man exhibited by island animals (not so the deer), it is an experience that is well worth the time and effort required to visit.

Thanks to Carol and Bob for taking time away out of their busy schedule to once again serve as hosts to Jacksonville Shell Club members.

Neverita duplicata – An Update

As you may recall, just over a year ago we published an article in the Shell-O-Gram (Volume 39(3), May-June, 1998) chronicling the observations of club member Phil Poland of Clearwater in regards to an unusual form of *Neverita* he had found in west Florida. Images of Phil's shells, as well as the normal *Neverita duplicata*

(Say, 1822) (Shark Eye), were subsequently posted on the Jacksonville Shell Club's web site. Through the use of the Conchologists of America E-mail Listserver, and the participation of Dr. Michael Hollmann (Göttingen, Germany) and Dr. Gary Rosenberg (Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP), it was learned that this form had been named *Neverita delessertiana* (Recluz in Chenu, 1843) and *Neverita fossata* (Gould, 1847). However, the question remained unanswered as to whether this form was in fact a separate species from *Neverita duplicata*.

Dr. Rosenberg volunteered the laboratory services of the ANSP to perform DNA analysis on the Florida animals, as well as specimens in their wet collection from other locations, if funding could be obtained. The Jacksonville Shell Club and Phil's home club (St. Petersburg Shell Club) subsequently each authorized a \$250 stipend to fund the research, and Phil provided the appropriately preserved specimens for study.

As we all know, scientific discoveries don't happen overnight. Recently word was received from Dr. Thomas Wilke (ANSP) that DNA sequencing of *N. duplicata* was successful. However, problems in sequencing the two populations of the *Neverita* variant form provided by Phil were encountered. Specimens from another population were requested to see if better results could be obtained. Dr. Wilke stressed that results obtained thus far don't necessary indicate that the form is a different species from *N. duplicata*. In lieu of additional specimens from another population, Dr. Wilke intends to pursue the sequencing of another gene – although it is not as reliable in establishing a separate species status. At any rate, Dr. Wilke states that "I'm going to do my best to solve the problem."

Founding Member Celebrates 40 years

- Or -

How A Club Was Born

When Gertrude Moller picked up that first seashell, she didn't realize it would change her life forever! It was in January of 1955 that her marine engineer husband, Knud, moved his family to Eleuthera Island in the Bahamas. He was the manager of a huge dairy and poultry farm – plantation, supplying much of the region. As the going hobby of the other company wives was "shelling," they wasted no time inviting Gertrude to join them on their weekly forays. Her son Eric, 8, and daughter Linda, 4, also learned quickly and wasted no time learning to snorkel for their shells. It was an idyllic and happy time in their lives, and the three years went by all too quickly.

In the summer of 1956, Gertrude and her husband renovated a small house on the bay as a respite for the many worldwide yachters. He aptly named it "The Hatchet Bay Yacht Club." Gertrude became manager and, meeting many interesting people, became an occasional shelling tour guide, including clients Donette and Julius of the Fleischmann dynasty, who were also ardent collectors.

Upon settling back in Jacksonville, it was in April of 1959 that the Florida Times-Union did a photo story on Gertrude's shelling forays and large collection. She has never forgotten that Sunday.



Photograph which appeared in the Florida Times-Union.

The phone "rang off the hook," from other collectors, and Gertrude made a list of the names and phone numbers of the many callers. Among the callers was Harriet Hedgecoth, who, during the conversation, requested her own list of names.

It was sometime during the following July that Mrs. Hedgecoth called again. She invited Gertrude to their home to view the slides she and husband, Larry had taken of their shell collection. They were "amateur photographers," she said. Upon arriving at their Retaw Street home, Gertrude met about ten of the many shell collectors from the original list.

Enjoying the lemonade and cookies afterwards, and exchanging shelling trips, collections, etc., the strangers who had a common bond decided that they had to meet again. The next meeting was at the Moller home. For the next few months they met at their various homes, but when "the club" grew quite rapidly, the Hendricks Avenue Library became the next meeting place of "The Jacksonville Shell Club."

Gertrude became Club Historian and is now celebrating her 40th year in that post. From 1959 to 1976 she ably served the club as publication chairman. To announce the monthly meetings to the members, penny

postcards were mailed out. But when "newsy shelling stories" abounded, it was determined that a newsletter was in order and it was decided to have a name contest for this budding publication. Mrs. Alberta Stacy won, with "The Shell-O-Gram" and Liz Eubanks became the first Editor, with hubby, Ed, doing the great shell drawings. (Liz is now a Ph.D. Microbiologist in Boston).

The members dreamed of having a shell show but had no money. As a fund-raiser, several underwater movies were rented from Washington, D. C. With the Prudential Insurance Company lending a free auditorium, a 50-cents admission fee was charged. The club was "on its way" and held its first shell show in July of 1962 at the small Lions Club at 21st. and Main Streets. Dr. William J. Clench and Sammy Lawson were two of the three judges. Gertrude's daughter Linda, 11, won the first blue ribbon in the children's category. The State Chamber of Commerce loaned the 6-foot exhibit cases for the first few shell shows.

In the ensuing forty years, Gertrude has exhibited and won many awards in Florida and Georgia shell shows - both in scientific and shell craft categories. She has also judged shell art at Sanibel and other Florida shows.

Travel is one of the bonuses of searching for the elusive seashell. It has taken Gertrude to the Bahamas, Virgin Islands, Costa Rica, Greece, Bornholm (Denmark), Bermuda, and, in 1993, to the Solomon Islands in the Pacific.

At the end of this month (July) the Jacksonville Shell Club presents its 33rd and last shell show of this century. Gertrude is looking forward to exhibiting as always, enjoying the camaraderie of the members, and meeting the public. She is hoping to gain some new shell club members who may already have picked up that first seashell!

Club News

By Billie Brown

Hi everybody! All our friends are scattered doing summer stuff. I'll share a few things that I know about.

Andy Hutchison is in Connecticut for the high school graduation of his granddaughter, Amy. From there he is going to New Jersey to visit with his brother and sister. My grandson, Billy, graduated from Nease High School on June 5th. Needless to say, Paul and I are very proud. Billy is an honor student and is thinking seriously about marine biology. I like to think that the shell club might have been a good influence. Billy went on many trips with us to Cedar Key and other collecting locations - always enjoying the benefits of learning and socializing

with our members. Congratulations to these two young people.

After graduation come the class reunions. Teresa St. John is participating in the Duncan U. Fletcher class reunion this month - Class of '79 - 20 years - hard to believe. Hope it was fun.

We all had a good time at the Shellers' Jamboree. You always get to meet and talk with fun people. I managed to catch up with Gloria and Kermit Pearson from Naples. Kermit did a slide program on shelling Kwajalein Island (Marshall Islands). In the 1970's, he and his wife were at the installation there along with my cousin, John. They have kept in touch through the years. It was a nice visit, and I even found out some family news.

All the times Charlotte and I have gone to Shellers' Jamborees we have heard reports about a restaurant called "Leverocks'." With great detail we have heard of their special dessert - hot apple pie with cinnamon ice cream. This year was no exception. Bill Frank and Bill and Betsy Lyerly reminded us (a lot) how good it was and that they had been there. Well, Charlotte and I always seemed to be in another place and have never been to this restaurant. Now, we may just a chance. A building permit has been issued for Johnny Leverocks' Seafood House in Deerwood Park. Could it be?

At a recent meeting of the Beaches Area Historical Society, Charlotte Lloyd was installed as the recording secretary. Charlotte's grandparents figured prominently in the settlement and development of the beaches area. Congratulations Charlotte!

A request from Selma - "Please remember to gather shells or shell-related items for the half-hour/hourly door prize drawings." The time interval between drawings depends on how many prizes she receives. Be sure and bring donations to the July meeting or even to the show. A call to Selma, detailing how many items you will be providing, would be helpful.

Happy Birthday to our dear friend Marion Webb - July 30th. Marion and her late husband Harry joined the shell club in 1962! Marion still supports us in our efforts. Also, Happy Birthday to Leigh Murphy on July 20th. Our best wishes also go to Nancy Garry-Chadwick and Harry Lee - they share a birthday on August 2nd. Nancy always says, "I had it first!" Happy Birthday to any people with July/August birthdays that I have not included. Give me a call with a birthdate - month and day only. It's nice to be greeted on your day. I should know - thanks!

In closing, on a recent TV show featuring "real" pets, there was a little boy with his "pet snail" - really a hermit crab. The boy held the crabbed shell in the air and called to the crab "Come out Sanibel, come out." Sure enough the hermit starts to emerge. Anyway, trick

or not, the little boy and his pet were cute and made it on national TV!

Do your part for our shell show, and keep in mind, we all like to hear what our friends are doing. So call me at 241-3755. Best, Billie.

Shellers' Jamboree 1999

By Bill Lyerly

Every two years, the Suncoast Conchologists hold a "Shellers' Jamboree" and this was the year, May 29th and 30th were the dates, and the Honeywell Minn-Reg Building in Largo, FL, was the location.

There were approximately 125 shell enthusiasts in attendance and the Jacksonville Shell Club (JSC) was well represented. Charlotte Lloyd and Billie Brown went down early the Friday preceding the Jamboree, with anticipated stops along the way at flea markets and antique shops. Bill Frank, Betsy and I went down Friday afternoon and Harry Lee came in Saturday morning. Also in attendance were JSC corresponding members - Alan Gettleman (Merritt Island, FL) and Karen Vander Ven (Pittsburgh, PA).

The Jamboree is a full two days, beginning at 9:00 AM Saturday, with registration and a silent auction. After a very entertaining welcome skit, an interesting program was given by Kermit Pearson, Southwest Florida Conchologist Society, on "Shelling Kwajalein," followed by a buffet lunch. The meals at this Jamboree could be the subject of another article. To say the least, all were excellent.

After lunch, Jim Brunner of the Gulf Coast Shell Club gave another program entitled "How did this get so screwed up? Part 1," which was a humorous presentation on the very early beginning of conchology and the naming of shells. A shell hunt (similar to Easter egg hunt) was held outside to provide a break and a chance to work-off some lunch. After the hunt (and that's all it was for our club members as we found no shells), the shell market opened. For me, this is a highlight of the Jamboree. It consists of individuals with tables of shells and shell-related items for sale. There were shells for the collectors and well as the crafters. There were shirts, books, jewelry, craft items - you name it, it was there.

During the Shell Market, Ed Schelling and Harry Lee set up tables for measuring and identifying shells - Ed measured and Harry identified. A report at the end of the Jamboree indicated that each table has approximately 50 participants.

This brings us to dinner, again a buffet with too much food. After dinner, a program was presented by Dave Green, Houston Conchology Society, on "Scripps Institute of Oceanography: Examining the Past and

Looking into the Future,” another great presentation which ended the first day.

Sunday began at 10:00 AM with another silent auction. These silent auctions were great fun with a lot of bargains. A program was then presented by Bob Pace of the Greater Miami Shell Club, entitled “Shelling Goodland” - another very interesting program. Also, Sunday was the day for a single specimen shell show, sea life art and craft show and the parade of snails. Harry and Billie both had entries in the show, with Harry winning first place in worldwide self-collected four feet or less, with a *Chicoreus jickelii* (Tapparone-Canefri, 1875) from Dahlak Kebir, Ethiopia, and third place in Florida-Caribbean any means, with a sinistral *Eburna lienardi* (Bernardi, 1859) from Recife, Brazil. Billie won first place in the sea life category with her skate egg case exhibit. The parade of snails is an exhibit of snails in four categories - colors of the sea, snail toys, snail and a friend, snail with a real shell. Winners in these categories were selected by secret ballot by Jamboree participants. Judges for the shell show were Conchologists of America President Linda Brunner and Charlotte Lloyd. Judges for the arts and crafts exhibits were Mary Ellen Akers and Betty Lipe.

Time for lunch and more good food.

After lunch, a verbal auction of specimen shells was held. Shells were furnished by Ed Schelling (shell dealer from Shalimar, FL), with Dave Green as auctioneer. This ended the Jamboree at Minn-Reg and we reconvened that evening at Banquet Masters for the closing banquet with more good food and a program presented by Charlotte Lloyd on “Living Caribbean Mollusks Part II.” We all know about the good programs Charlotte gives and this one was no exception. Good work Charlotte!

Also, good work Suncoast Cochologists! This was an excellent Jamboree, enjoyed by all. If you do it again in 2001, save us a seat.

**See you at the shell show at the Ramada Inn Resort in Jacksonville Beach
Saturday, July 31st and Sunday, August 1st**

Open to the public from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturday and 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Sunday

Jacksonville Shell Club
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