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X THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA X
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CIRCULAR NO. 76.

JULY, 1966.

PAGE 1.

Edited by Leila Kerr.

MEETING.

The next meeting of the Society will be held in the Lecture Hall of the S.A. Museum on Tuesday, 26th July, at 8.15 p.m. The shells for display will be Plate XV, page 111 of Barnard's Beginner's Guide.

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Minutes of the meeting held at the S.A. Museum 21.6.66.

Mr. P. Elston was in the Chair. Apologies were received from Mr. and Mrs. Ackermann, Mrs. Lowry, Mrs. Kerr. In the absence of Mrs. Kerr, Mrs. Giles acted as Secretary.

Mr. Elston gave a special welcome to Mrs. M. Prior who had been ill for some time, and to Mr. and Mrs. George and their two sons, newly arrived in our country.

The minutes, published in the last circular, were taken as read.

The following were elected as members of the society:-

- Mr. R. Carlsson, 18 Tecoma Way, Pinelands.
- Mrs. M. Dewar, 159 The Highway, Fish Hoek.
- Mrs. E. Germond, Box 94, Stegi, Swaziland.
- Mrs. A. Grant Thomson, 31 Kathleen St., Corinda, Brisbane, Australia.
- Mrs. J. Pearce, P.O. Box 167, Amanzimtoti, Natal.

The following were proposed as new members:-

- Master Geoffrey Connolly, proposed by Miss Bustin, seconded by M. Prior.
- Mrs. C. de Ridder, " " D.H. Kennelly, " " L. Kerr.
- Master Peter Watson, " " " " " M. Kempthorne.

Mrs. Connolly gave a very interesting and helpful talk on her shell exhibit, answering many questions from members on the different species of fusus, especially those found in Cape waters. Mr. Elston spoke about his shells, mainly from the warmer waters of Natal and some ex pisces.

After the tea interval, a very interesting film, "The Great Barrier Reef" was shown.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS.

These were due on 30th June. If you have not already paid, please forward to the Treasurer, without delay, remembering to add exchange on country cheques. Postal Orders to be made payable to Newlands and not crossed. Members - R1.50, Students - 50 cents. New members pay an entrance fee of R1.

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NATAL GROUP NOTES.

By Les Cock.

The Third Birthday Meeting of the above Group was held on Saturday afternoon, June 11th, in Durban, and 14 signed the register. This was rather disappointing as we have had larger attendances. Nevertheless, those present spent a very interesting and we hope instructive afternoon.

Greetings were extended by the writer on behalf of Mr. Kennelly, President of the S.A. Society, and also Dr. v. Bruggen, now in Holland, and Mr. P. Elston, both of whom were instrumental in the formation of the Group.

The shells for discussion was Cyprina of South Africa and

habits of some of the shells in this group. This was followed by a few slides depicting the various species.

A vote of thanks was conveyed by Mr. Cook, after which tea was served and members enjoyed some Birthday cake, baked by Mrs. Cook for the occasion. As usual, various topics of shell collecting were discussed at this period of the proceedings, all joining in these informal chats.

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GENERAL NOTES.

CYPRAEA LEUCODON BRODERIP, 1828.

By D.H. Kennelly.

As some further information is now available about the third known specimen of this very rare Cowry, this note should be read in conjunction with the one appearing in Circular No. 69.

The Hawaiian Shell News, Oct. 1965, states this latest specimen to have been recovered ex Pisce, Sulu Sea, Philippine Islands. Length of the shell is quoted as about 50 mm.

The fish in which the shell was found, known as a "Grouper", was caught by a native fisherman on a hand-line, in 60 feet of water.

Three very clear views - dorsal, ventral, and side - of this valuable specimen, are given in the publication mentioned.

CONUS GLORIAMARIS CHEMNITZ, 1777.

Some notes will be found in Circular No. 53 on this rare Conus, in which the total number of known specimens is given as twenty-eight.

Later, a writer to the Hawaiian Shell News, estimates the number to be over forty. This increase would be due to definite localities being established, where gloriamaris is living, and intensified search by Collectors.

The latest, and the most important, information about this rare shell, is published in the Hawaiian Shell News, Feb. 1966.

A specimen was taken by a trawler, complete with the body of the animal, which has been preserved and is in the possession of Mr. F.G. Dayrit, U.P. Village, Diliman, Rizal, Philippines.

Mr. Dayrit purchased this shell from a fisherman working on the trawler, and his description follows:-
Shell (121 m.m.) in excellent condition with deep colour. Depth 70/80 fathoms, ocean bottom being sand and dead shells. Locality 3-5 miles south of Salomague Island, Marinduque. Date 22nd Dec. 1965.

Scientifically, the importance of this discovery cannot be over-estimated. For the first time since Conus gloriamaris was described 189 years ago, there is now an opportunity to study the body of the animal.

The writer is not certain, but it seems probable, the Mr. Dayrit mentioned is the collector for whom a Cowry was named, i.e. Cypraea dayritiana Cate, 1963, habitat West Central Philippines.

I am indebted to Mrs. Hazel Jefferies for the loan of the issue of the Hawaiian Shell News, from which the foregoing information was extracted.

SYLVANOCOCHLIS ANCILLA (HANLEY) 1859.

For the benefit of some Members who may not be familiar with this shell, the following notes have been compiled.

The habitat is in deep water, and specimens are seldom found on beaches. Living examples have been trawled off Port Alfred, depth 40 fathoms, and from Algoa Bay, depth 39 metres (about 127 feet).

Existing records reveal the range of this shell to be from Cape St. Francis to Kei Mouth. Cook (1965) does not record S. ancilla as occurring in Natal, nor is it mentioned as occurring at Nthlonyana, Transkei, (Cir. No. 69.)

It is probable that further search may reveal other localities to be inhabited by this shell.

Hanley recorded the type locality as Kaffraria, which may be taken as indicating some point on the coast of the Ciskei. In a collection, or an annotated list, S. ancilla is placed with the Family Olividae.

The shell seems to have worried Marine biologists to some extent, as it resembles both Oliiva and Ancilla. Hence Hanley's specific name - ancilla - originally in the genus Pseudoliiva.

In 1889 Melvill further investigated, and finding it differed from Pseudoliiva (in sensu stricto), erected a new genus, Sylvanocochlis, for this species.

Apparently Melvill was inspired by Hanley's Christian name - Sylvanus - when erecting his new genus.

Barnard, in his remarks on this genus - Sylvanocochlis Melvill, 1889 - refers to it as being a monotypic, indigenous genus, if maintained distinct from Pseudoliiva.

Smith (1904) and Bartsch (1915) both mis-spelt the name as "Sylvanocochlea", the errors being corrected by Turton (1932).

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|-------------|---------------------|---|
| References: | Barnard, K.H. 1959 | Annals S. Af. Museum,
Cont... S.A. Mollusca, Part 2. |
| | Bartsch, P. 1915 | U.S. Nat. Museum, Bulletin 91,
South African Shells. |
| | Cock, B.L. 1965 | List of Marine Shells from Natal/
Pondoland. |
| | Kennelly, D.H. 1964 | Marine Shells of Southern Africa. |
| | Sowerby, G.B. 1892 | Marine Shells of South Africa. |
| | Turton, W.H. 1932 | Marine Shells of Port Alfred. |

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PATELLIDAE AND HALIOTIDAE.

By B.L. Cock.

Relative to the observations of Mr. Kennelly on the finding of Patella and Haliotis on the beaches without the tell-tale hole of one of the rock shells, I wonder if the Star-fish is the only culprit.

Neither of these species is really plentiful in Natal waters, particularly the latter, and strange to say neither is the Star-fish in evidence in the inter-tidal pools as it is in the Cape where both species are fairly plentiful. This may be a pointer to the two families being part of the staple diet of the Star-fish as has been suggested. Just an observation, and it would be interesting to get observations from members at different points along our coast.

In a recent Australian paper on the Haliotis group it was suggested that often these shells are found in quantity near the holes of the octopus. Perhaps this is the answer and needs investigation.

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A PEEP INTO THE PAST.

By D.H. Kennelly.

I hope readers will realize that recently I have been in a state of absolute frustration. I could not think of a suitable subject upon which to write. The deadline date for articles was very close, and our Editor - who I am really scared of - was waiting for my contribution. All writers are scared of Editors, the latter being fearsome individuals armed with blue pencils!

As a last resource I turned to my Scrapbook, wherein I found a cutting from the Sunday Times dated some time in 1959. This cutting is a long article all about my very good friend, Mrs. Helen Boswell, and her notable shell collection.

After reading this newspaper report, my mind reverted to the year 1950, or thereabouts, when I was living in Uitenhage.

One evening towards the latter end of the year mentioned, I had

school friend, the late Mr. Billy Wilmot of the Post Office staff, and had called to view my collection.

That was a memorable evening, and the visit became an annual event in the years that followed, celebrated when the Circus was showing in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage. Later on, after he had become a member of our Society, Mr. E.C. "Ginger" Wicks, also attended these annual reunions.

In those far-off days, shell collectors were very few in number. The Conchological Society was not then in existence, or even dreamt of. Helen Boswell and I were lonely Conchomaniacs, and always looked forward to the next annual visit.

At the conclusion of our first meeting, I escorted Helen to the old Uitenhage station, where her travelling railway coach home was parked. I was invited in for tea, and met Stanley Boswell, also Tickie, the famous South African clown, and the Lion-Tamer. In private life the latter did not resemble a Lion-Tamer in any way, and would easily beat the team in the present-day Springbok Radio feature, Nice Work.

When I was leaving my new found friends, Stanley Boswell very kindly told me I would not have to walk home, as he had a car ready. The car proved to be a 10 ton Circus truck, a huge affair with six wheels, embellished with a design in red and gold on a blue background, and Boswell's Circus in large letters on each side. It was just as well that the hour was 1 a.m. Had it been daylight, my homecoming in state would have drawn a large crowd of children in the neighbourhood, to say nothing of their parents.

Too soon, and to my lasting regret, the year came when the Circus was sold. Helen and her husband left the strenuous life of the Circus to enjoy the peace and quiet of "Bandula", and so ended the annual meetings.

Correspondence between us still continues, which reminds me that I have a note of the specimens acquired by Helen during the past three or four months, and a list is appended.

Voluta guttata, (a new find and extremely rare); Tibia martini (the rarest of the Genus); Cymatium ranzani and Cymatium tigrinum (both are rare shells).

Helen Boswell is to be congratulated on obtaining such splendid additions to her famous collection.

P.S. I hope our Editor, and my very good friend, Helen, will pardon this digression from the path of science.

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HARPIDAE.

By E.T. Haywood.

I refer to "A Note on the family Harpidae", by D.H. Kennelly, which appears on page 8 of Circular No. 75 of June, 1966, which gives a list - presumably intended to be complete - of the known species of this lovely shell.

In the "Handbook for Shell Collectors", by Walter Freeman Webb, he refers to Harpa Crenata (Swain), and says that it is the only Harpa in the Western Hemisphere.

In "The Shell Book," by Julia Ellen Rogers - published in America - she also refers to Harpa Crenata (Swain), and gives its habitat as Panama. In addition, she lists Harpa gracilis (Brod. and Sby.) and gives its habitat as Polynesia. She describes this latter shell and says, inter alia, that it is slightly smaller than Harpa amouretta (syn. minor).

In the light of the foregoing, I am compelled to ask the question, were these two Harpa overlooked when Mr. Kennelly prepared his "list of the known species", or is there some other reason for their omission?

I know nothing concerning Harpa gracilis, as I have never seen one, but I do know about Harpa Crenata, as I have a fine specimen from America, and I can say, without fear of contradiction, that it cannot

TWO ERRORS IN IDENTIFICATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MARINE SHELLS.

By D.H. Kennelly.

The first species to be mentioned is Cassia madagascariensis Lamarck, which was originally named in the early part of the 19th Century, a period when writers and collectors were notoriously careless in recording exact localities of shells.

Why Lamarck used this name is not known, and it indicates that this species occurs in Madagascar.

In later years, from the description, Lamarck's madagascariensis was identified as a shell occurring in the Gulf of Mexico.

Abbott (1954) gives the range of this species as South East Florida (rare), the Bahama Islands, and the Greater Antilles. It has never been recorded from any other locality, according to available literatures.

Barnard (Beginners Guide, page 87), refers to this species as being a shell commonly seen in Curio shops, but in writing in later years never again referred to it. Why Barnard mentioned madagascariensis will now never be known. It may have been a lapsus calami on his part. Possibly he intended to mention Cassia cornuta Linn, which ranges from the East African coast right through the Indo/Pacific region. In 1963 Barnard stated that Braga (1952) recorded C. cornuta from Mozambique Island - the nearest locality to our shores known at that time (1952).

The Beginners Guide was published a long time ago, but the year of publication was not stated in the book. The writer obtained his copy in 1951, and it seems strange that the presumed mistake mentioned above has apparently never been mentioned earlier. Attention to this should be called, if ever the Beginners Guide is reprinted.

It is unfortunate that madagascariensis is mentioned in a book devoted entirely to South African shells. This appears to have helped in the error made when a shell from Natal waters was identified.

B.L. Cock (1965) lists C. madagascariensis as taken alive in Natal. While there is no doubt about the specimen being taken alive, there seems to be an error in the identification.

The American shell does resemble C. cornuta to a certain extent, a species confined to the Indo/Pacific region.

Abbott (1954) depicts madagascariensis on Plate 23 which reveals its likeness to cornuta, and this could also cause an inexperienced collector to make a mistake in identification, if reference were made only to Abbott's Plate 23.

In all probability the Natal shell will be found to be an example of Cassia cornuta Linn - the first undoubted record of this species as occurring in South African waters.

The second incorrect identification concerns Fusus dupetitthouarsii Kiener, an American shell unknown as occurring in the Indo/Pacific region.

Keen (1958) records the range of this species as the outer coast of the Gulf of California, through the Gulf, and South to Ecuador.

B.L. Cock (1965) includes a List of Ex-pisces shells held in the Bell-Marley collection, Durban. This list was supplied by Mr. P. Elston, item No. 48 being F. dupetitthouarsii, a name obviously incorrect for a South African shell.

Barnard (Beginners Guide, page 68) mentions and figures Fusus longicauda, which had been found from Natal. Later, in 1959, Barnard placed longicauda as a synonym of Fusus colus Linn, and the latter is proved beyond doubt to inhabit Natal waters.

This indicates the Bell-Marley shell as being an example of F. colus, and not F. dupetitthouarsii. Illustrations in the available literature show that these two species resemble each other to a certain extent.

While consulting the literature referred to in this paper, it

Dr. Barnard used Fusus Bruguiere, 1789. Dr. R. Tucker Abbott and A. Myra Keen both used Fusinus Rafinesque, 1815, while Joyce Allan (1950) states the correct Generic name for use now is Colus, which has priority over Fusinus. Unfortunately Joyce Allan failed to mention the Author of the Generic name Colus, and the date of the erection of this Genus.

Under present circumstances it appears desirable to leave all questions arising from the contents of this paper in abeyance for the time being.

Later on there will be up-to-date Monographs of the Families Fasciolaridae and Cassidae published in Abbott's Monographs of Indo/Pacific Mollusca - then all arguments will be settled.

- References:
- | | | |
|-------------------|--------|---|
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| Allan, Joyce | (1950) | Australian Shells. |
| Barnard, Dr. K.H. | | Beginner's Guide (undated). |
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| Keen, A. Myra | (1958) | Sea Shells of Tropical West
America. |

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NEW LAW FOR THE PROTECTION OF MOLLUSCA IN THE SEYCHELLE ISLANDS.

By D.H. Kennelly.

The attention of our Members is directed to the Hawaiian Shell News of October, 1965, which may be consulted in the Library of our Society.

This new Ordinance by the Legislature of the Seychelles, will have further details published when decided upon by the Governor in Executive Council. Contravention of the new law may possibly result in a fine not exceeding 1000 Rupees AND imprisonment not exceeding 12 months, as may be decided by the Governor in Executive Council.

While all steps taken to prevent Mollusca becoming extinct in any particular part of the world have our support, it would appear that it will become increasingly difficult in the future to obtain specimens from the Seychelles. It is hoped the details of this new Ordinance will not be too drastic.

Nothing is known of the reason for this new law, but it seems possible that over-collecting for enthusiastic Shell Dealers may have some bearing on the matter.

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NEW STAMP ISSUE.

Of interest to those members who are also interested in Stamp collecting, a new stamp has just been issued in Australia - the 9 cent.

Of a greenish colour, it depicts a Hermit Crab well exposed in the aperture of a shell. Other values in the same set show various fish in natural colours.

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