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X THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA X  
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Circular No. 113.

PAGE 1.

NOVEMBER, 1969.

Meetings:  
The next meeting of the SOCIETY will be held on Tuesday, 25th November, 1969, in the Lecture Hall of the S.A. Museum, at 8.15 p.m. The shells for display will be South African Marginella. Mrs Day will talk on Burrowing and Boring Marine Animals. We have a parcel of Australian shells for disposal.

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The next meeting of the BORDER GROUP will be held on Sunday, 30th November, 1969, in the Lecture Room of the East London Museum, at 3 p.m.

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The next meeting of the NATAL GROUP will be held on Saturday, 15th November, 1969 at 312 Florida Road, Durban, at 2.30 p.m. The December meeting will probably be held on 6th December, same time, same place.

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The next meeting of the TRANSVAAL GROUP will be held on Friday, 21st November, 1969, in the Theatre Hall of Shell House, at 8 p.m. Slides on Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands, Pacific Ocean, will be shown. Will members please bring their swops.

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Dinoplax gigas (Gmelin) by C.M. Connolly.

In July, 1969, while shelling at Gonubie, I was surprised to find a 7-valved Dinoplax fossus (Sykes) and near to it a Dinoplax gigas (Gmelin) which, on examination, was found to have lost half of the third plate or valve. On the left-hand side the half valve was overlapping the fourth valve more than usual while, on the right-hand side, the girdle had pulled the second and fourth valves together without showing any signs of damage. The valve may have been broken by rocks moving in rough water, and the remaining half valve might possibly have been rejected at a later stage.

I have a large 7-valved Dinoplax gigas and also a 7-valved Callochiton castaneus (Wood). The girdle on neither of these shows any damage.

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A Rare Semi-Cowrie from East Africa. By F.A. Schilder

Mrs. Hazel Jefferies, Kei Mouth, has sent me a curious little shell which had been collected by her daughter, Mrs. Gene Webb, Nanyuki, Kenya, in October, 1967 on the outer coral reef of Shanzu, about ten miles north of Mombasa, Kenya. The specimen which I returned to Mrs. Webb, had been live taken with the clear yellow mantle extended.

The shell undoubtedly belongs to the semi-cowrie Pseudocypraea adamsonii Sowerby which is rather uncommon in the Pacific Ocean: colonies have been found in the wide area between Japan, the Philippines, New Guinea, New Caledonia, the Tuamotu Islands and Marshall Islands. The report of Liénard (1877) that "Cypraea" adamsonii lives at Mauritius is rather doubtful so that I did not mention the species from the Indian Ocean (Schilder 1941). However, in 1964 the University of Tel Aviv, Israel, sent me a well preserved beach shell of C. adamsonii which was said to come from Eilath in the northernmost gulf of the Red Sea: the returned shell (N.S. 721) showed the dorsal spots confluent laterally, but was otherwise typical. Even then I doubted the existence of the Pacific species in the Indian Ocean the more as neither B. Verdcourt nor R.S. Benton found it during many years of careful collecting in Shanzu and in other places of Kenya. But now Mrs. Webb's important discovery settles the problem: C. adamsonii lives in the Indian Ocean too.

The shell/...

The shell looks like a pyriform cowrie of about 10 millimeters, with the teeth well developed on both lips; however, the shell is not smooth, but finely ribbed like in Cypraeovula capensis both dorsally and basally, and dorsally even cancellated; there is no trace of a spire as it is entirely involute like in Ovula. The shell is dirty white with five brown blotches on the dorsum, and several brown dots along the right margin. A photograph of Mrs. Webb's specimen will be published in Hawaiian Shell News.

Pseudocypraea adamsonii is not a true cowrie, but this species and the Panamic Jenneria pustulata are the only two survivors of the Cretaceous and Tertiary subfamily Eocypraeinae which are the ancestors of the living Ovulinae: the anatomy, especially the features of the radula, prove both genera to be more allied to Ovulidae than to Cypraeidae. The shells are intermediate, as in all Eocypraeinae there are distinct teeth on both lips as it is in Cypraeidae, but the involute spire of all stages is like in Ovulidae.

South African collectors should be on the look-out for the species, especially when collecting in Natal or farther North. Suspected specimens (also from other areas of the Indian Ocean) should be sent by registered parcel for examination and return to Prof. Dr. F.A. Schilder, 19 Schleiermacherstrasse, DDR 402, Halle-Saale, Germany.

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A Note on Two Species of Marginella.

by D.H. Kennelly.

Marginella keenii Marrat, 1871. (Type locality?)

A small shell, well-known to Border collectors. Four pleats on the columella. Range from Port Alfred to Umzamba, and is common at East London.

Marginella electrina Sowerby, 1892. (Type locality Port Elizabeth).

Very similar in size and colour to M. keenii, normally with a more acute spire and a narrower base than keenii. Three pleats on the columella. Range Table Bay to East London.

These two species overlap in the area Port Alfred to East London.

M. electrina has been listed as occurring in Natal (Cook 1967), but this is probably a mis-identification. There are no records of this species occurring further north than East London.

References:- Barnard, Dr. K.H. 1969. Annals S.African Museum, Vol. XLVII, Part IV. Cont. .... to S.A.Mollusca, Part VI, Supplement.

Cook, B.L. 1967. Marine Shells of the Natal and Zululand Coast. Additional List.

Sowerby, G.B. 1892. Marine Shells of South Africa.

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A Note on Two More Species of Marginella.

by R.O. Carlsson.

Marginella cylindrica Sowerby 1846. (Type Locality ?)

A small shell (my specimen is 7 x 3.5 mm.). Three pleats on the columella. Ground colour white with chestnut brown cylindrical lines. No information can be found about this shell except that it is recorded as living in False Bay and that it appears to have no radula. My specimen was found at Millers Point in False Bay in the intertidal Zone on a rocky base. Can any member add further to these notes?

Persicula alborubida Barnard 19? (Holotype S.A. Museum. Type Locality Kommetjie, Cape Peninsula).

A very small shell (2 x 1.3 mm.). Three pleats on the columella with sometimes a trace of a fourth. The shell is translucent white. When seen in the water it appears to be black and orange but this is because the mantle within the shell is black and the proboscis is orange-red. My specimens were found at Melkbosstrand on the west coast of the Cape Peninsula in the intertidal zone on a rocky base. It appears that this is a cold water species.

References:- Barnard, Dr. K.H., 1969. Annals S.African Museum, Vol. XLVII, Part IV. Contr. .... to S.Af. Mollusca, Part VI, Supplement.

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Early Conchologists (Part I)

by the late Percy Elston.

In the following short history of some of the more prominent Conchologists of by-gone days the writer is indebted to S. Peter Dance, Esq. for permission to use his recent publication "Shell Collecting - An Illustrated History" in places the writer has departed from the strict text so as to shorten the series to a more suitable size appropriate to our journal in an endeavour to interest members in the manner in which the science has advanced and is still doing so, to this day.

The book is of great interest to serious students and the illustrations of lasting value from an historical point of view.

Early Conchologists:

Prior to the latter half of the Eighteenth Century saw the end of an era of the collection of Marine, Terrestrial and Freshwater Mollusca. It was the fashion with Royalty and other high personages to collect specimens and display these in cabinets in no scientific or systematic manner. At this time when armchair shell collecting continued to amuse an ever growing number of the dilettanti, the foundations of the modern science were laid by an Italian, an Englishman and a Dutchman. They provided the earliest practical, illustrated guides for collectors and students of molluscs.

The Italian, Filippo Buonanni (or Bonanni) (1638-1725) Jesuit, wrote the first of these. As it was probably the first book of any size to be restricted to molluscs Buonanni's "Ricreatione dell' occhio e della mente...", first published in Rome in 1681 contains many illustrations of shells which though reversed, are reasonably accurate and the majority of them were referred to subsequently by Linnaeus.

It was in the publications of the English physician, Martin Lister (1639-1712) that we first observe a scientific approach to the study of molluscs. Lister's professional eminence was such that he became one of the physicians to Queen Anne (1665-1714) but he is now chiefly remembered for his natural history studies, the most significant of which were directed towards Conchology. His first paper on molluscs, published in 1669, dealt with the "odd turn of some shell-snails" and this unpretentious beginning was followed in 1678, by a more ambitious work on the spiders and molluscs of the British Isles illustrated by accurate figures of Recent and fossil shells. In 1685 he issued a thin octavo volume of copper-plate engravings of land shells mostly foreign to the British Isles, entitled "De Cochleis", which he distributed privately amongst his friends.

At least two copies exist in folio, one in the British Museum (Natural History) and another in the library of the Linnean Society of London. Realizing what a large amount of material was available he embarked on a much larger work, on the lines of the De Cochleis, which was to include figures of all Recent and fossil shells then known. Thus the first of the major shell iconographies was born.

The first edition of Lister's greatest work, the *Historia Conchyliorum* appeared at intervals from 1685 to 1692 and consists of nearly a thousand unnumbered plates with one or more figures per plate. There is no actual text but the sectional headings and frugal descriptions are engraved on the individual plates with the figures. The species figured are nearly all recognizable and none are reversed; and their scientific value is enhanced still further by numerous indications of locality. Lacking both text and index the *Historia Conchyliorum* is difficult to use but the arrangement is haphazard, the work being divided into homogeneous sections. Section 9 of book 4 is devoted almost exclusively to *Cypraea* and *Trivia*; ... These divisions are subdivided further so that, in Section 9, Lister gives the following arrangement of the "Conchae Veneris", i.e. with one or two exceptions. (Appended is a specific example of each of Lister's categories):

1. unicolorous e.g. *Cypraea onyx* L.
2. black streaked, e.g. *C. isabella* L.
3. transversely waved, e.g. *C. ziczac* L.
4. ringed or banded, e.g. *C. talpa* L.
5. black spotted, e.g. *C. pantherina* Lightfoot.
6. white spotted, e.g. *C. cribraria* L.
7. transversely ribbed, e.g. *Trivia pediculus* L.
8. granulated, e.g. *C. staphylaea* L.
9. smooth mouthed or not toothed, e.g. *Ovula ovum* L.
10. umbilicated, e.g. *Bulla ampulla* L.

Lister/...

Lister also divides the Pectinidae into groups based on the equality or inequality of the valves and "ears" and further differentiates the species by reference to the varying characters of shell sculpture and to the number of ribs. Despite his extremely artificial system Lister was far ahead of his time in segregating species into apparently discrete groups; and his arrangement of the cowries is reminiscent of several twentieth-century attempts to partition what had in the meantime become of the Linnæan genus Cypræa. Lister's studies of molluscan anatomy were expounded chiefly in three remarkable dissertations, the Exercitationes and led him to develop some ideas about a systematic arrangement of the Mollusca. He had intended to follow the plates of the Historia with anatomical descriptions of every "family" in a systematic order, undoubtedly, this would have improved the arrangement. Unfortunately the Historia was not completed and most of the illustrations of molluscan anatomy added to the second and subsequent editions were those previously published in the Exercitationes. The Historia Conchyliorum, nevertheless, represents the first attempt at a systematic arrangement of the Mollusca. Linnaeus cited figures from it and students used it as a reference work for many years. In his production of the Historia Lister was greatly assisted by his two daughters, Susanna and Anna (At least that is the belief of many commentators, Susanna (or Susannah) was certainly a daughter, but Mr. Dance says "I cannot trace a daughter Anna. (Possibly Anna is a variant of Hannah (d. 1695) Martin's first wife.)

With acknowledgement to the author of "Shell Collecting - An Illustrated History" S.P. Dance Esq. and the publishers Messrs. Faber & Faber Limited, London:

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Minutes of the Meeting Held in the S.A. Museum : 28.10.1969:

Mr. Freeman in the Chair, welcomed members, friends and visitors.

Apologies were received from Mr. and Mrs. J. Ackerman, Mrs. Gaynam, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Prior.

Minutes of the meeting of 30.9.1969 having been published in Circular 112, were taken as read and were adopted subject to the following amendments:

Under "The Following were Proposed as New Members" for Mr. C.F.C. Witte read Mr. C.F.C. Witte-Vermeulen and add Mrs. R.L. Weeks proposed by T. Carlsson and seconded by D. Freeman.

The Following Were Elected:

Mrs. J.M. Harvey, P.O. Pennington, S. Coast, Natal.  
 Mr. C. Woodhouse, 77 Fanniscowles Road, Umbilo, Natal.  
 Mrs. M.A. de Jong, P.O. Box 105, Somerset West, C.P.  
 Mrs. I.M. Lindenbergh, 4 Jeffron Court, 101 Prairie Street, Rosettenville,  
 j Johannesburg, Transvaal.  
 Mr. L. Heyman, 4 Rontyn Court, 75 Ascot Road, Judith's Paarl, Johannesburg, Tvl.  
 Mrs. M. van der Spuy, 14, 3rd Street, Lambton, Germiston, Transvaal.  
 Mr. R.D. Coale, 45, Sue Avenue, Blairgowrie, Randburg, Transvaal.  
 Mr. C.F.C. Witte-Vermeulen, 22a, 13th Avenue, Park Town North, Johannesburg.  
 S Master K. Needham, 4 Cross Road, Glen Hazel Gardens, Johannesburg, Transvaal.  
 Natal Museum, Loop Street, Pietermaritzburg, Natal.  
 Mr. E.B. Clayton, 71, Woodside Avenue, Cowies Hill, Natal.  
 Mrs. R.L. Weeks, 12, Robindale, Pinelands, Cape.

The following were Proposed as New Members:

Mrs. M.S. Rattey, proposed by T.J. Carlsson, seconded by R.O. Carlsson.  
 Mrs. E.M.D. Roscoe, " " E. Dee, " " V. Neill.  
 S Master G.L. Vowles, " " P. Ogilvie, " " E.H. Ralph.  
 C Mr. E. Garcia, " " R.O. Carlsson, " " T.J. Carlsson.  
 Mr. M.E. Lohr, " " A.B. Jenner, " " P. Ogilvie.  
 Mrs. M.E. Lohr, " " A.B. Jenner, " " P. Ogilvie.

The Field/...

The Field Day held at Jacobs Cove on the farm Ganzekraal, was well attended. Those members who were present, had a most successful trip. Shells collected were brought in for display.

The next Field Day will be held on Sunday, 23rd November, 1969 at Buffels Bay in the Cape Point Reserve. Low tide is 8.45 a.m. Meet at Buffels Bay as early as you like.

It has been decided that there will be NO December meeting but that we would meet in January instead.

The first cupboard for the Reference Collection is almost complete and will be in the Museum by the next meeting.

Mr. L. Kapp brought a live specimen of Mitra aerumosa Melvill, found at St. James in two foot of water amongst sand and rubble.

After tea we heard a very interesting talk on "Water Temperatures Along the South African Coast" by Prof. Mallory.

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NATAL NOTES:

Meeting on the 18th October was well attended and the final arrangements were made for the trip to Cape Vidal in Zululand. Maps were handed out showing the roads to be followed to get to Mr. Hawkins' Shack. After the tea break Mr. Dee gave a talk and showed examples of the Cypraea found in the Cape waters. Members were also given detail drawings of the Cowry shell.

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EXCHANGE WANTED:

Mr. E. Garcia, 135, Oak Crest Drive, Lafayette, La 70501, U.S.A.

Mr. L. Margulis, 1233, East Barringer Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
19119, U.S.A.

Mr. F. Casas, c/Pedro Antonio de Alarcón 24, Barcelona 16, España, Spain.

Mr. T. Hage, van Swietenstraat 3, Gouda, Z.H., Nederland.  
Dutch and Mediterranean shells available in exchange for South African shells.

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Please address all correspondence to -

The Secretary,  
The Conchological Society of Southern Africa,  
18, Tecoma Way,  
Pinelands, C.P.

SECRETARY/LIBRARIAN

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