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A publication of the Pacific Conchological Club

PACIFIC CONCHOLOGICAL CLUB

Las Conchas

President's Message

On behalf of the membership of The Pacific Conchological Club, I would like to welcome everyone back from a productive summer season of travel, relaxation, and, of course, shelling. Personally, I spent the entire summer in southern California enjoying the relatively mild climate and continuing my duties as Malacology collection manager at LACM. Therefore I suppose that this entry should be titled *How malacology spent it's summer.*

In mid May my wife Cathy (LACM Echinoderms section), LACM Malacology curator, Ángel Valdés, and I participated in a day trip aboard the R/V *Ocean Sentinel* with staff members of the LA County Sanitation Department. The LACSD makes quarterly surveys of the marine fauna of the San Pedro Channel off Palos Verdes Peninsula and report on the oceanic health of the area based on marine life identifications. Four trawls of differing depths yielded numerous species of fish, crustaceans, and echinoderms but relatively few mollusks including: five species of opisthobranchs, the turrid *Crassispira semiinflata,* and the bivalve *Cardiomya planetica.* A trawl the previous day yielded a specimen of the unusual octopod *Opisthoteuthis* sp. from nearly 1000 ft. Lisa Bartley of the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium was aboard and hoped to exhibit the rare specimen at the museum but it expired and is now in the LACM collection. Unfortunately, my contribution to the hectic pace on deck during trawl content examination was severely limited by the worst case of seasickness I have ever experienced. Therefore, my appreciation for fossils and other land-based mollusks was greatly heightened during this experience!

Neosimnea aequalis (G. B. Sowerby II, 1832) shells from San Clemente Island. For a picture of a live animal, turn to page 6.

Speaking of fossils, in late May I co-lead a museum family collecting trip with LouElla Saul (LACM Invertebrate Paleontology Research Associate) to Silverado Canyon, Santa Ana Mountains. Participants collected Late Cretaceous (Turonian) aged fossils from the Baker Canyon Member of the Ladd Formation that are approximately 89 million years old. In mid-July my German colleague Dirk Fehse visited LACM. We spent most of one day discussing fossil cowries and ovulids and an entire day collecting late Pleistocene mollusks at Isla Vista, Santa Barbara County from the Goleta terrace.

Malacology Section colleagues Jim McLean and Ángel Valdés attended the 70th annual meeting of the American Malacological Society in Sanibel Island, Florida (just before hurricane Charley wreaked havoc on the state). Ángel presented a paper entitled *What is new on the biodiversity of opisthobranch mollusks?*and Jim was bestowed with Honorary Life Membership in the AMS in recognition of his numerous malacological achievements and contributions. In late August, Ángel spent two weeks vacationing and collecting in Curaçao.

Malacology also participated in the LACM summer program *Adventures in Nature.* Ángel Valdés led students on collection tours and a tidepool walk, and also conducted a sea urchin dissection. I also led students on collection tours and demonstrated how fossils help paleontologists interpret long-gone environments.

Aloha, happy shelling, and hope to see everyone in October! Go Dodgers!

Lindsey Groves

Las Conchas is a publication of the Pacific Conchological Club

Pacific Conchological Club Officers:

President:	*Lindsey Groves*
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The Pacific Conchological Club was organized in 2003 as a result of the merger between the Pacific Shell Club and the Conchological Club of Southern California. Its mission is to further the interest in shell collecting and malacology and to provide a forum for individuals who love shells and other marine life. The Club meets on the second Sunday of each month from October through June at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles).

Fighting Back: Dealing With an Invasive Marine Mollusk

by Phil Liff-Grieff

Exotic mollusks have been a serious problem in Southern California as in other heavily populated coastal areas (*See Las Conchas vol 33, #8 5/02 for a discussion of exotic mollusk in coastal California*). If they do not prey on indigenous species, at very least they tend to compete heavily for resources and often overrun areas where they become established.

In November of 2002, I reported in Las Conchas of my encounter with the Atlantic Common Periwinkle, *Littorina littorea* (Linnaeus, 1756) in the mudflats that border the entrance to Anaheim Bay in northern Orange County. A small colony of these gastropods (30 to 40 specimens) seemed to be concentrated along a chain link fence just off to Pacific Coast Highway (see photo below), immediately north of the channel.

I reported the sighting of this East Coast exotic through Conch-L and got some inquires from the scientific staff of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center's Marine Invasions Lab regarding this population. Apparently, a similar small colony had been reported from San Francisco Bay a few months earlier and there was interest in studying the extent and viability of tour local population . I collected live and dead specimens for the Research Center and for deposition in the

Littorina littorea (Linnaeus, 1756)
Sunset Beach, Orange Co., CA mm

In 2002, the Littorinas were found next to the fence in the center of this picture. In the background is Anaheim Bay.

collection at the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum.

In 2003, I had the opportunity to visit the site twice and found no clear evidence of spread of this species; it seemed confined to the small area noted above.

This past May, I was contacted by Andy Chang, a graduate student at the University of California, Davis who was interested in studying this population. Two weeks later, we did a quick survey of the site and found that, to my surprise, the population had spread dramatically during the past year. The edge of the mudflats that border PCH south of the Anaheim Bay Channel (picture, right) was now completely infested with Littorina littorea. In fact, Andy counted almost 2,300 specimens in a 52-meter stretch of rock and silt that bordered these mudflats!

The site along Pacific Coast Highway south of the channel where *Littorina littorea* was found in June, 2004. They were concentrated in the area directly in front of the small tree (right side of the picture).
(This spot is visible in the background of the photo on page 2)

It was determined that two steps had to be taken:

1) survey more fully for other colonies of this invader and
2) remove manually as many of the Littorinas as possible to try and control their impact on the resident species.

On August 29, I participated with other volunteers in the removal efforts led by Andy Chang and Greg Ruiz of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. The process involved surveying the density of *Littorina littorea* poulation as they were being removed. We accomplished this by recording the numbers of specimens found in 1– meter square quadrants along a grid laid down on the target section of beach. Although we got caught in the rising tide, we were able to remove 1,828 *Littorina littorea* from a stretch of beach approximately 70 meters in length. Needless to say, it became increasingly difficult to follow the survey protocol as our collecting area became submerged by the rising tide.

Future monitoring of this site will help to establish whether this effort will be ultimately successful in reversing the expansion of this colony and, if so, what impact that will have on the indigenous species that inhabit the area. Of course, it is likely that *Littorina littorea* will crop up elsewhere in the Bay and considerable surveying work still has to be done to determine the full extent of this marine invasion.

It will be interesting to see if a process as simple as monitoring and hand-removal of specimens will suffice to keep this population under control. If so, it speaks to a clear and important role for amateur shell collectors. We are the ones who spend time in these habitats and are most likely to notice foreign mollusks early in their incursions into our local marine environments. By reporting these sightings, we can help stem these invasions when they are still manageable.

Stay tuned.....

Andy Chang recording the number of Littorinas collected in one square meter section. The tape running through the picture was the baseline for the grid.

California Shells: A California Collection — Part I

Terry Rutkas

Earlier this year, Dave Bridgnell brought in a glass-covered tray of California specimens that I might have dismissed if it wasn't for the labels. The meticulous old-style hand lettering caught my attention but what was written really puzzled me. There were some familiar California species with names I'd never seen before. "These were collected in the '40s," Dave announced, and it became clear that this was a snap-shot-in-time of shell collecting 60 years ago. "Our neighbors are looking for someone who can appreciate them," Dave continued, "and give them a new home." As it turns out, Dave's neighbors, Dr. and Mrs. Summit, had inherited this collection from Mrs. Summit's mother, Lillian Johnson. Lillian Johnson was a member of the Long Beach Shell Club at some time in the '40s and had left five or six, apparently home-made, Riker type mounts, systematically and artistically laid-out with her self-collected shells.

A book published by the Long Beach Shell Club came with the shells. It was undated but the individual articles referred to dates between 1937 and 1947, so I assume it was produced sometime in 1947. Lillian Johnson had contributed one of the articles.

This is about all I know about Lillian Johnson, but I can imagine the dedication it took to collect and organize her shells. The article she wrote for the LBSC was about shell collecting for the Girl Scouts, so perhaps she conducted scouting field trips. This was before SCUBA and snorkeling gear was available, so these are the types of shells that can be taken by scouring beach and rock at low tide.

Where she collected is conspicuously absent from her "data sheets", but I assume it was between San Pedro and Alamitos Bay near Seal Beach; nothing to indicate collecting in Mexico, the Pacific Northwest, Hawaii or elsewhere. As I mentioned earlier, the labels had some names unfamiliar to me, but as we know shells are often re-classified and re-named according to the latest scientific thought. Many of the labels indicate forms that I am unable to find in my references. Lillian Johnson evidently went to some trouble to research her collection and differentiate the species. **I present the shells as she knew them and I leave it as an exercise for the reader to determine the latest names.**

References:

Mollusks: Second Edition, Common and Scientific Names of Aquatic Invertebrates from the United States and Canada. American Fisheries Society


Shaggy Slipper-shell,
Crepidula onyx rugosa
Nuttall R


Wrinkled Slipper-shell,
Crepidula lingulata
Gould R


Hooked Slipper-shell,
Crepidula adunca
Sowerby R


Seaweed Limpet,
Acmaea incessa
Hinds R S


Plate Limpet,
Acmaea patina
Erchscholtz R

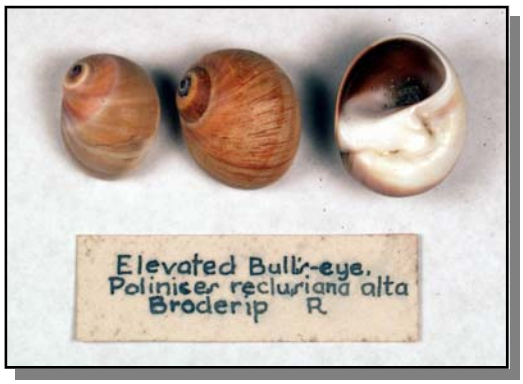

Fingered Limpet,
Acmaea digitalis
Erchscholtz R


Rough Limpet,
Acmaea scabra
Gould R


Great Owl-shell,
Lottia gigantea
Gray R


File Limpet
Acmaea limatula
Carpenter R


Recluz's Bull's eye,
Polinices reclusiana
Deshayes S T


Elevated Bull's-eye,
Polinices reclusiana alta
Broderip R


Imperforate Bull's-eye,
Polinices reclusiana
imperforata Dall R

Live from Paul's Tank:
Photos of Living Southern California Mollusks

In the corner of his garage, PCC member Paul Kanner maintains a remarkable cold-water aquarium that is home to an impressive collection of Southern California mollusks. Starting this month, Paul's skills as an aquarist and as a photographer are combined in a series of photographs of live animals that currently reside in his tank.
We begin with this fantastic shot of a local Ovulid, *Neosimnea aequalis*. Found from Monterey Bay south to northern Baja California, this beautiful pink-shelled animal lives on red gorgonians between 30 and 100 feet depths.
For a photograph of the shell, turn back to page 1.

Neosimnea aequalis (G. B. Sowerby II, 1832) *(syn. Neosimnea vidleri)*
Live in Paul Kanner's aquarium

Low tides provide great conditions for observing mollusks and other marine life on Southern Californian shores. Listed below are some extremely low tides that occur during daylight hours:

(Please be sure that you are familiar with the CA Dept. of Fish and Game regulations regarding the collecting of live mollusks.)

October, 2004

Date	Time	Ht.
Friday, October 1	05:59 pm	0.5
Tuesday, October 12	03:00 pm	0.7
Wednesday, October 13	03:36 pm	0.3
Thursday, October 14	04:16 pm	-0.1
Friday, October 15	05:00 pm	-0.3
Saturday, October 16	05:50 pm	-0.3
Sunday, October 17	06:51 pm	-0.2
Monday, October 25	02:32 pm	0.6
Tuesday, October 26	03:11 pm	0.2
Wednesday, October 27	03:47 pm	-0.1
Thursday, October 28	04:23 pm	-0.2
Friday, October 29	05:00 pm	-0.2
Saturday, October 30	05:40 pm	0.0
Sunday, October 31	05:25 pm	0.3

November, 2004

Date	Time	Ht.
Monday, November 01	06:20 pm	0.5
Tuesday, November 09	01:08 pm	0.7
Wednesday, November 10	01:45 pm	0.0
Thursday, November 11	02:25 pm	-0.6
Friday, November 12	03:08 pm	-0.9
Saturday, November 13	03:55 pm	-1.1
Sunday, November 14	04:48 pm	-1.1
Monday, November 15	05:47 pm	-0.9
Monday, November 22	12:47 pm	0.7
Tuesday, November 23	01:29 pm	0.2
Wednesday, November 24	02:06 pm	-0.2
Thursday, November 25	02:41 pm	-0.4
Friday, November 26	03:16 pm	-0.5
Saturday, November 27	03:51 pm	-0.5
Sunday, November 28	04:28 pm	-0.4
Monday, November 29	05:09 pm	-0.2
Tuesday, November 30	05:54 pm	0.1

PCC Member Profile— Glen Russell

Since the mid 1940's I had been going to Exposition Park to visit the museums. The Science and Industry portion was my favorite, with its great dioramas of Hoover Dam and the Redwoods, etc. There were also many lectures and movies dealing with nature and travel.

I first met Dr. Hill (*Dr. Leonard Hill of the LACMNH was the first sponsor of the shell club, ed.*)when attending the Saturday lectures given by all the curators, primarily for high school students. We attended all the lectures, but I most favored those of Dr. Hill's on marine life.

I joined the Pacific Shell Club, (and also the Conchological Club of So. Calif.) around 1947. We met in a small annex in the front of the museum right next to the Rose Garden.

It was a great time then for those interested in shells. John Q. Burch had his very good book and shell shop on Vernon and Van Ness. I spent a lot of time there, as he was very generous with his time and knowledge. His wife Rose was very "into" Cypraea and I was lucky enough to visit their home to see her collection.

Low tides in the winter months were a great time. My favorite area was Pt. Fermin and Whites Point. The tide pools there were great, and there were not a lot of people. The pools in the 40's and 50's were still very pristine.

Also, at that time, the Cabrillo Marine Museum was in its original form with a great collection of preserved marine animal and plant life. There was also a very comprehensive shell collection. There were some marine environment dioramas, and upstairs a very fine ship model collection, as well as many ship relics.

Dr. Hill loved his work, and he wanted everyone to have a chance to experience the marine world. He of course was the sponsor of the Pacific Shell Club, but he wanted everyone to participate in club activities, such as field trips and the meetings.

I had my turn as "President" in 1948. I put president in quotes as I was 16 at the time, and Dr. Hill still really ran the meeting. But that was his plan to have everyone get involved.

I was interested in many of the shell families, but through my association with Mr. and Mrs. Burch, Crawford Cate, Lloyd Berry and others I started to concentrate on the Cowries. Developing a collection in those days was not easy. You could buy from dealers like John Q. Burch or Walter Webb. But I found it more interesting and rewarding to correspond with collectors around the world.

So I spent a lot of energy and time doing just that. The only problem with that is the waiting for mail and packages.

The most interesting contact that I had was corresponding with a man in the Cook Islands named R. Julian Dashwood. He was an Englishman, son of a minister, who had decided after several adventures to chuck it all and set sail. He ended up, in about 1929, in the Cook Islands running a small trading post on one of the smaller islands, named Mauke.

He became interested in the shell life on the island, and began to sell and trade some of his finds. We corresponded for about 20 years. He died in 1970 and is buried, along with his native wife, in front of the home he built there in Mauke.

I was fortunate enough to be able to visit Mauke in 1994, and to see the home he had built. Amazingly, after over 20 years, most of the interior still contained his furnishings including his books, linens, china, family pictures, etc.

A friend and I have visited the Cooks Islands several times now, and have collected on all of the several smaller islands of the southern group.
We have also collected on most of the French Polynesian islands, Fiji, S. Africa and even Easter Island.

I remained a member of the Pacific Shell Club until about 1953, when I went north to Humboldt State College. Received my degree in 1956, then spent 3 years in military service, in Germany, until 1959/60.

In 1960 I went to work for North American Aviation (now Rockwell International). I retired in 1993. Over the years I maintained my interest in shells and sporadically was a member of the PSC. My last meeting was in April 1995 just before we moved to Arizona.

I currently belong to the Southwestern Malacological Society in Phoenix.

I miss Southern California and its beaches and tidepools.

GLEN RUSSELL
SUN CITY, ARIZONA

Send your personal profile and picture to Phil Liff-Grieff, pliffgrieff@sbcglobal.net or the Club's return address.

Hold the Date
2004 –2005
PCC meeting dates

October 10, 2004

November 14

December 12

January 9, 2005

February 13

March 13

April 10

May 15

June 12

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings begin at 1:30 pm

October Program: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2004
1:30 pm — 4:00 pm

Dr Inga Behr, **Operation Hailstone: Diving Into History**
Dr. Behr will present a slide program on diving the wrecks in Truk, Micronesia and the history that they represent.

During World War II, this site was a critical Japanese anchorage and was considered to be the most formidable Japanese stronghold in the Pacific . It was attacked by US bombers in February of 1944, resulting in the destruction of a fleet of 45 ships and 275 aircraft. By the end of the war, Truk was home to over 70 wrecked Japanese battleships and 400 aircraft. As you would imagine, today Truk is one of the world's greatest wreck diving locations.

Location: Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
900 Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles (Exposition exit from the 110 Freeway–follow the signs). Park in the west parking lot or, if it is filled, in the pay lot immediately west of the museum (the pay lot will cost $5).

Enter at the staff entrance which is located at the bottom level of the museum, on the left side of the main Museum entrance on Exposition Boulevard. The security guard can direct you to the Times-Mirror Room.

Refreshments are potluck. Please bring a snack item to share with others.

Pacific
Conchological
Club

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DATED MATERIAL