

Mollusc World

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Berghia coerulescens
in the Channel Islands
Recording in the Solent
Liverpool regional meeting



The
Conchological
Society
of Great Britain & Ireland

Helping to understand, identify, record and conserve molluscs

From the Hon. Editor

Although this issue will probably reach you sometime in March, I take this opportunity to wish all our members, readers and contributors a belated very happy New Year. Hopefully you will find something of interest in this issue and can perhaps think about writing for one of our two further issues planned for 2023. As the *Journal of Conchology* takes a further step in its evolution (see opposite page) in providing high quality, peer-reviewed open access online papers, so *Mollusc World* continues to be an important vehicle for members, having its origins in the *Conchologists' Newsletter* which began 62 years ago.



Reports of Conchological Society meetings in this issue include the Liverpool Regional meeting and a marine meeting to the shores of the Solent. The front cover of this issue depicts the spectacular colours of the nudibranch *Berghia coerulescens*, featured in an article about the discovery of this species in the Channel Isles.



Since the last issue the sad news was reported of the deaths of two distinguished conchologists and past Presidents of the Conchological Society, Michael Kerney and Barry Colville, whose names (at least) will be familiar to many. It is hoped to publish tributes to both in the *Journal of Conchology* in due course. Barry is shown (left) attending the Society's regional meeting at the Leeds Museum Discovery Centre in 2009.

Peter Topley

About the Conchological Society

The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland is one of the oldest societies devoted to the study of molluscs. It was founded in 1876 and has around 280 members and subscribers worldwide. Members receive two publications: *Journal of Conchology* which specialises in Molluscan Biogeography, Taxonomy and Conservation and this magazine. New members are always welcome to attend field meetings and indoor meetings before joining.

Mollusc World

is intended as a medium for communication between Conchological Society members (and subscribers) on all aspects of molluscs, in addition to the material found on our web site where many back copies are available for viewing. *Mollusc World* will also be of interest to all those enquiring about this subject or the work of the Society. We welcome all contributions in whatever form they arrive (see page 30 for further details).



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Front Cover: *Berghia coerulescens* specimens from La Rocque & Seymour, Jersey.
(photo: Chris Isaacs/Societe Jersiaise Marine Biology Section) (see page 12).

THE JOURNAL OF CONCHOLOGY GOES ONLINE

The *Journal of Conchology* has been published continuously since 1874 (volume 1 was entitled the *Quarterly Journal of Conchology*). Publication has been in printed format, but times are changing and Council has decided that the time has come when our Journal should embrace the digital age and make articles available online. From 2024 the Journal will cease to be issued in printed format and will only be published digitally. This corresponds with the commencement of volume 45.

All future issues will be Open Access and placed on our Society's website. They will be freely accessible both to members and non-members. Council considered whether to restrict recent issues to members only, but the need for password access would make this administratively difficult and time-consuming. It was also felt that Open Access would be more attractive to potential authors who wish their submissions to be available as rapidly and to as wide a readership as possible. It is planned that articles, once accepted following the peer review process, will immediately be placed online on our website. They will be available in pdf format with illustrations either in low or high resolution; please look at the website (www.conchsoc.org) for the last two issues of the Journal.

Council accepted that by making Journal articles freely available some members, particularly overseas and Institutional members, may consider cancelling their membership. We very much hope that this will not happen as our newsletter, *Mollusc World*, will continue in printed format only and not be available online until several years after publication (currently online up to issue 49, March 2019). We also hope that members will continue to support our Society in its many other roles, particularly

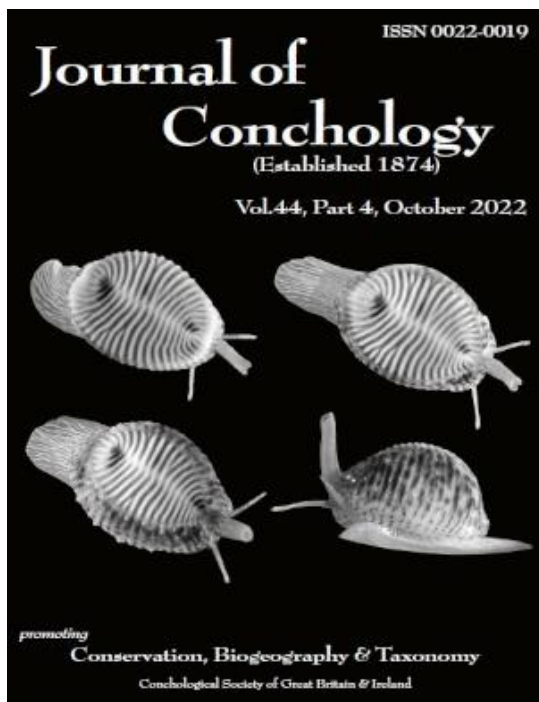
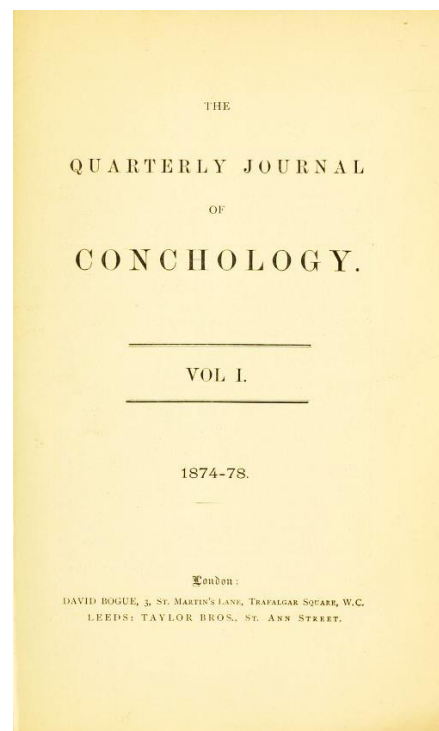
recording and conservation, both of which have a cost element. And, of course, indoor and field meetings are a very important part of the Society's activities.

In recent years relatively few of articles in the *Journal of Conchology* concern Britain and Ireland. It is very much hoped that placing the Journal online with open access will encourage more submissions from 'home' authors, particularly those associated with academic institutions who may at present feel that the lack of wide accessibility is a bar to submission. Contributions by members will continue to be free, but if non-members wish to publish in the Journal, then they will be given the option to join the Society or be charged £100 for accepted articles. As papers will be published as Open Access we consider this to be a very low cost compared with many other journals; but the 'fee' will be much less if authors choose to join the Society. Financial assistance will be available from the Cameron fund for those who are unable to meet the fee. But we do ask that those who are able to pay will do so and leave the financial aid to those who really need it.

Past issues up to volume 16 (1922) are already freely available through the Biodiversity Heritage Library website. It is planned that all back issues will be digitized in the near future and be openly accessible either on the BHL site or on our own Society website.

Some members may enquire whether annual subscriptions will be lowered now that there will be no printing and mailing costs for the Journal (although there will still be costs in preparing the pdf files for placing online). Unfortunately,

in recent years the Society's expenditure has exceeded subscription income, and we have been running annual deficits which would normally lead to an increase in subscriptions. It is anticipated that, despite ever increasing mailing costs for *Mollusc World*, there will still be overall savings when the Journal ceases to be printed, and that these savings will be sufficient to avoid any membership subscription increase for the near future. This applies both to home and overseas members, who already pay an additional sum to cover higher mailing costs both to Europe and further afield. Once we see how things work out over the next year or two, the subscription levels will be reviewed and, if at all possible, reduced.



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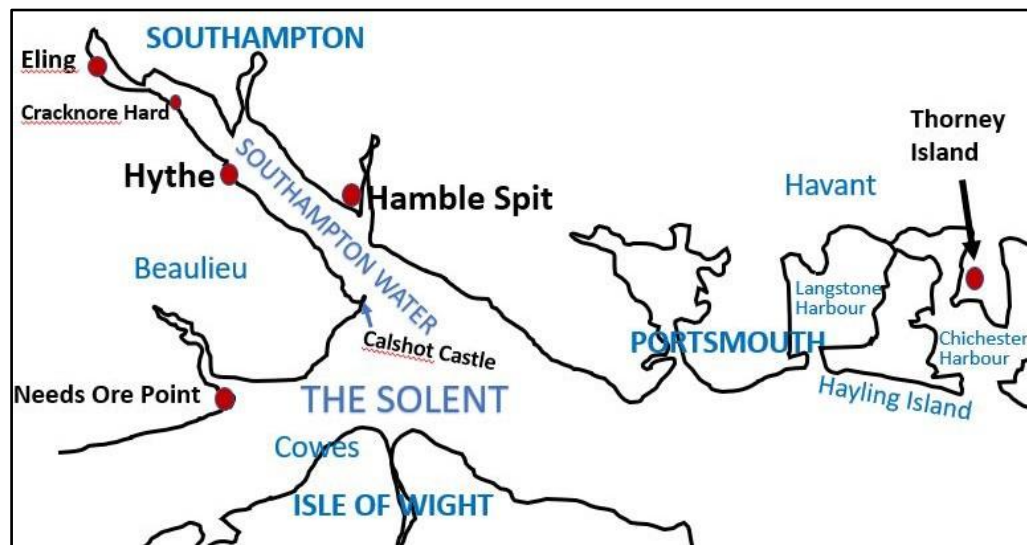


figure 1: Map showing sites visited during the field meeting.

The Solent is an interesting if slightly less inviting place for a Conchological Society (CS) marine field meeting than most of the places we visit. Its shores tend to be muddy or stony so there are no rock pools or weed for weed-washing samples, pollution and other human activities have had a strong impact, molluscan diversity is lower than usual, and several introduced species are common.

Nonetheless, CS members have not entirely neglected the Solent: taking it as the area from Hurst Castle and Yarmouth on the west to Southsea and Ryde on the east, members have contributed over 3500 records of marine molluscs to NBN and a list of around 170 species. However, about 80% of those records date from before 2000; there have been fewer than 700 records since then, of a little under 120 species, including the records made at a recent and very interesting CS field meeting at Titchfield Haven in 2019, led by Peter Barfield and mentioned in the Marine Recorder's report for 2019 (Taylor 2020).

Within the Solent, Southampton Water shores have the same characteristics to an even greater extent – muddier, more sheltered, and with even greater impacts from pollution and other human activity; unsurprisingly, it has attracted even less recording activity with 225 CS records on NBN and a list of around 55 species, again mostly dating before 2000.

So, we thought it would be interesting to organise a weekend marine field meeting concentrating on two shores in Southampton Water, one on the west side and one on the east, while realising that it might not attract many participants (figure 1). In the event there were just two of us, as Simon Taylor caught Covid and had to pull out at the last minute.

On the afternoon of Friday 7th October, the day before he joined the field meeting, Peter briefly visited the shore at Eling on the western side of the estuary of the river Test where it joins the northern end of Southampton Water. He checked the northern shore of Eling Creek where for 900 years a tide mill has been harnessing the power of the tides (figure 2). Apart from numerous shells of the peppery furrow shell (*Scrobicularia plana*), a typical inhabitant of muddy coasts



figure 2: Tide mill at Bartley Water near Eling, Southampton.

and estuaries, he was surprised at one point to find many scallop shells (*Pecten maximus*) on the mud near the bank (figure 3). These were likely to have been dumped by a local restaurant or pleasure craft, showing the wisdom of considering a possible human origin when recording shell material on the shore!



figure 3: Discarded shells of *Pecten maximus*, Eling Creek.

At nearby Goatee Beach, amongst occasional clumps of serrated wrack (*Fucus serratus*) on the mud, the only living molluscs were unattached groups of Pacific oysters (*Magallana gigas*), a single common winkle (*Littorina littorea*) (figure 4) and a Manila clam (*Ruditapes philippinarum*), although shells of both were common. Curiously, according to NBN, there are no previous records listed for any of these species from the relevant 10-km grid square.



On Saturday 8th we had planned to look at Cracknore Hard, fairly far north along the western side of Southampton Water, but when we arrived there, a couple of hours before low water, access to the shore was limited to a small area around the slipway and although the water was going down, the shore didn't look very promising. So we decided to try further south, at Hythe, where we found good access to the shore just north of the pier. The upper shore was stony with some mud, with quite a lot of dead shells but relatively few live molluscs (figure 5).



figure 5: Accumulation of dead shells on the upper shore, Hythe.

The lower shore at Hythe was much flatter and soft enough that care was needed to avoid getting bogged in, and therefore much of the lower shore was effectively inaccessible (figure 6). A stonier ridge, probably the footings of an earlier pier just to the north of the present pier, with lots of live and dead oysters (mainly *Magallana gigas*) (figure 7), gave easier access to the lower shore and to an area of sticky mud and broken shell.

figure 4: (left) Goatee Beach, Eling with Peter on shore, where *Magallana gigas* (below left) and (below right) *Littorina littorea* were living.



figure 6: Soft mud on the lower shore, Hythe.



figure 7: A stony ridge with many oysters on the shore at Hythe.

Perhaps the most attractive shells we occasionally found on the mud were those of the cephalaspid ‘bubble snail’ seaslug, *Haminoea navicula* (figure 8). It was also interesting to find both adult and juvenile (shells as well as living) Quahog clams (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) which were introduced from the USA into Southampton Water in 1925 (figure 9). Sieving the mud was hard work (figure 10) and produced little in the way of live bivalves, but when smaller fractions were examined later under the microscope, these were found to contain dead shells of some smaller species including several *Chrysallida fenestrata* and one very small fresh pair of shells of the Asian date mussel (*Arcuatula senhousiana*). Overall, as the table sets out, we found 38 species of which 16 were found live.



figure 8: Shell of *Haminoea navicula* (h. 23 mm), Hythe.



figure 9: *Mercenaria mercenaria*, Hythe.



figure 10: Bas collecting samples for further processing at Hythe.



figure 11: Hamble Spit on the north side of the mouth of the River Hamble.

On Sunday 9th we went to Hamble Spit on the north side of the mouth of the River Hamble (figure 11). The upper shore below the car park was fairly steep, with small flint pebbles and large quantities of dead shells, mostly of a limited range of species including slipper limpets (*Crepidula fornicata*), cockles (*Cerastoderma edule*), Manila clams (*Ruditapes philippinarum*) and whelks (*Buccinum undatum*) (figure 12). As the water receded, a large peninsula of generally flat firm muddy and stony ground was exposed but, as the table shows, the species range was rather limited with a total of 27 species of which 12 were found live; attempts to sieve the muddy substrate were unproductive and there were no promising weeds to sample for weed-washing.



figure 12: Some dead shells on the shore, Hamble Spit.

Despite this, the lists in the table are not entirely without interest. The most striking feature is the relative abundance of non-natives (red crosses): seven species, including not only familiar and more widespread non-natives such as the slipper limpet (*Crepidula fornicata*) (figure 13) but also less familiar and more recent arrivals (Barfield 2017; 2018) such as

Acanthocardia paucicostata, a small species of spiny cockle (figure 14), and *Arcuatula senhousiana*, the Asian date mussel (figure 15). Equally striking is the absence of several very familiar species and groups, for instance no dog whelks (*Nucella lapillus*), no *Tritia incrassata*, no *Spisula* spp., no *Abra* spp., no *Macra* and no *Chamelea striatula*. Six of the species found are new to NBN for Southampton Water north of Calshot Castle. None is surprising or particularly uncommon: *A. paucicostata* is a recent arrival, *Chrysallida fenestrata* is a rather small species (figure 16) found only by microscopic examination of sieved material, and *Tritia nitida* has only recently been separated from *T. reticulata* in UK records. But *Gibbula magus*, *H. navicula* and *Nucula hanleyi* are larger species and more than one example of each was found. This probably reflects the all-too-frequent under-recording of molluscs on shores that are seen as less inviting. The lists would certainly be augmented by more assiduous collection, especially if good weed-washing is possible and shell-drift samples are found; but it seems clear that diversity is genuinely low and that despite this – or, perhaps, because of this – some non-native species have found this a good place to colonise.



figure 13: A group of *Crepidula fornicata* from Hamble Spit, heaped up together. Larger, older females are below and the smaller, younger males are on the top. As the heap grows, the males turn into females (i.e., they are sequential hermaphrodites).



figure 14: *Acanthocardia paucicostata*, Hamble Spit.



figure 15: *Arcuatula senhousiana*, Solent.



figure 16: *Chrysalida fenestrata* (height. c. 3.5 mm) (these specimens were dredged from off Abersoch, Wales).

Species	New NBN ¹	Non-native	Hythe	Hamble Spit
<i>Acanthocardia paucicostata</i>	•	X	O	F
<i>Acanthochitona crinita</i>				O
<i>Anomia ephippium</i>			O	O
<i>Arcuatula senhousiana</i>		X	R	R
<i>Barnea candida</i>			R	R
<i>Buccinum undatum</i>			F	C
<i>Cerastoderma edule</i>			A	A
<i>Chrysalida fenestrata</i>	•		O	
<i>Corbula gibba</i>			F	O
<i>Crepidula fornicata</i>		X	C	F
<i>Gibbula magus</i>	•		O	
<i>Haminoea navicula</i>	•		O	
<i>Lacuna parva</i>			O	
<i>Lepidochitona cinerea</i>				R
<i>Macoma balthica</i>			F	O
<i>Littorina littorea</i>			C	A
<i>Littorina obtusata</i> agg.			O	
<i>Littorina saxatilis/arcana</i>			O	
<i>Loripes orbiculatus</i>			O	O
<i>Magallana gigas</i>		X	C	A
<i>Mercenaria mercenaria</i>		X	F	F
<i>Mya arenaria</i>			F	
<i>Mytilus edulis</i>			F	F
<i>Nucula hanleyi</i>	•		O	
<i>Ocenebra erinaceus</i>			O	O
<i>Ostrea edulis</i>			F	O
<i>Pandora</i> sp.			R	
<i>Parvicardium exiguum</i>			F	F
<i>Patella vulgata</i>			O	F
<i>Peringia ulvae</i>			F	
<i>Petricolaria pholadiformis</i>		X	O	O
<i>Retusa</i> sp.			R	
<i>Rissoa membranacea</i>			O	
<i>Rissoa parva</i>			F	
<i>Ruditapes philippinarum</i>		X	C	A
<i>Scrobicularia plana</i>			O	O
<i>Solen marginatus</i>				O
<i>Steromphala cineraria</i>			F	O
<i>Steromphala umbilicalis</i>			F	A
<i>Tritia nitida</i>	•		R	
<i>Tritia reticulata</i> s. str.			F	C
<i>Venerupis corrugata</i>			F	
TOTALS	6		39 (16L)	27 (12L)

table: List of species found at Hythe and at Hamble Spit.

- Species names are shown **bold** if live individuals were found.
- **Green highlights** indicate species found live at that locality.
- Frequency was estimated using the familiar CS ACFOR scale (**R**are, **O**ccasional, **F**requent, **C**ommon, **A**bundant).
- ¹ Species previously not recorded on NBN for Southampton Water north of Calshot Castle.



figure 22: Great Deep, Thorney Island.

As low tides were in the afternoon, we spent the mornings checking out two possible sites for the lagoon cockle (*Cerastoderma glaucum*). Both were outside Southampton Water (see figure 1).

On Saturday morning we explored Needs Ore Point at the mouth of the Beaulieu River (figure 20). Rather surprisingly, as it is a National Nature Reserve, NBN has almost no mollusc records and we soon found the likely reason: the long saline lagoon we had hoped to check out was firmly out of bounds behind barbed wire and Keep Out notices, and the end of Needs Ore Point was also behind a row of Keep Out notices. Being used to marine sites with the usual permitted access along the foreshore, we had been naïve and should perhaps have expected access problems. Nonetheless, we found five terrestrial and 18 marine species, including, slightly unexpectedly, an internal shell of *Lamellaria perspicua* (figure 21) – clearly this is a site worth revisiting if better access can be arranged and when the tide is lower.



figure 20: Bas and Peter searching for molluscs at Needs Ore Point.

On Sunday morning we went further east, to Thorney Island to investigate the Great Deep (figure 22), a wide forking saline channel across the middle of the island with inlets at the east end allowing salt water to flow in at high tide, where NBN has



figure 21: Shell of *Lamellaria perspicua*, Needs Ore Point.

a 1997 CS record of *Cerastoderma glaucum*. Close to the inlets to the Great Deep, on the west side of the island, salinity was high (around 36-37 ppt) (figure 23) and we found a limited range of fully marine species, including abundant live laver spire snails (*Peringia ulvae*) (figure 24) and occasional live *Abra tenuis*, *Littorina littorea*, *Ruditapes philippinarum* and flat top shells (*Steromphala umbilicalis*); dead shells included a few *Parvicardium exiguum* and *Cerastoderma edule*. To the north, at the end of Little Deep, salinity was much lower (8 ppt) and access to the water was limited by a thick *Phragmites* margin; here we found live ventrose spire snails (*Ecrobia ventrosa*) and nothing else (figure 25). No sign yet of *C. glaucum*, but the Great Deep is over a mile long and we were not able to access the place where *C. glaucum* was found in 1997, on land behind the MoD boundary where a bridge crosses the Great Deep. Again, this would be worth another visit if access can be arranged.



figure 23: Bas measuring water salinity with a refractometer.



figure 24: *Peringia ulvae*, Great Deep, Thorney Island.

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figure 25: Looking for molluscs at the *Phragmites*-covered margin of Little Deep, Thorney Island.

Photographs

All photos and map (figure 1) are by Peter Topley.

Azorean limpets

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The Macaronesian islands, comprising the Azores, Madeira, the Canaries and the Cape Verde islands, are a group of volcanic islands thought to be of Miocene origin (Briggs 1970; Schmincke 1973). The Azores are the most isolated of the Macaronesian islands and the Azores archipelago comprises nine islands located in the North-East Atlantic. Fishing is one of the main activities related to coastal economies, including harvesting invertebrates. Tide fishing is a manual fishing method, usually practiced day and night at low tide on rocky shores, using simple tools such as knives, hooks with handles, bait handles, etc.

Azorean limpets (*Patella aspera* and *Patella candei*) are a local delicacy and are used as an important protein source for human consumption. *P. aspera* is one of two species consumed in this way. Until 1970 the limpet harvest was moderate because they were mainly collected by hand during low tide and for self-consumption (Ferraz *et al.* 2001; Pham *et*

al. 2013). The proliferation of snorkelling equipment in the 1970s, together with refrigeration methods, boosted the commercial harvesting of limpets. Landings increased significantly in the mid-1980s and limpet harvesting became the sixth most profitable fishery in the region, with high socioeconomic importance (Santos *et al.* 1995). However, intertidal limpets can be particularly vulnerable to harvesting, partly due to their low mobility (Martins *et al.* 2011).

Patella aspera (figure 1) has a sub-pentagonal flattened shell with numerous regular furrows and is imbricated with an apex situated above. Internally, the shell is white to blue delimited by a brown band (Christiaens 1973). The foot has an orange or yellow colour, and the mantle is surrounded by translucent tentacles (Neal & Skewes 2004).

The taxonomic status of *Patella aspera* has some uncertainty, but a study suggests that the Azorean species, previously



figure 1: Dorsal and ventral views of *Patella aspera* (Azorean limpet), locally known as 'lapa brava'.

considered a subspecies, *Patella ulyssiponensis aspera*, is, in fact, a valid and well-differentiated endemic of the Macaronesian region (Hawkins *et al.* 2000). Its distribution in the OSPAR Maritime Area [see <https://www.ospar.org/about>] is limited to the islands of the Azores where it occurs on rocky substrates in the intertidal and shallow sublittoral zones (Christiaens 1973; Titselaar 1998). In the Azores, this species is one, if not the most, important grazer in the superior subtidal zone. It inhabits the lower intertidal and subtidal zones to a depth of 6 m below mean sea level. The breeding season occurs year-round and peaks during the winter months from January to April. The species is protandric, i.e. the individual is born male and often becomes female with age. The loss of individuals that can grow large enough to become female leaves the population without enough breeding females (Faria *et al.* 2015).

Limpets are known to have an important influence on the structure and function of rocky shore communities. They are dominant grazers that have a major influence on the community composition of rocky shores and can be considered keystone species (Raffaelli & Hawkins 1996). These keystone species play an important role in regulating the ecological balance of their niche and have often been used as biological indicators in studying the consequences of anthropogenic impacts on this ecosystem (Lima *et al.* 2007).

In heavily exploited populations the average size of *Patella aspera* decreases and therefore the number of large females is affected. This may lead to an increased likelihood of recruitment failure due to lowered reproductive output. Easy accessibility to the shoreline has made intertidal resources extremely vulnerable to cumulative impacts caused by human harvesting and other activities in the Azores. The over-exploitation of limpet populations can have a large impact on the ecosystem. The overfishing of limpets in the Azores has caused the intertidal ecosystem to change to a different state where turf-forming algae have replaced barnacles as the dominant organisms, thus changing the structure and functioning of the ecosystem (Martins *et al.* 2008). When there are fewer limpets present, algal sporelings and germlings can opportunistically grow until they are large enough to evade grazing and create mature algal patches that can endure for a long time, changing the dynamics and energy flow within the community (Coleman *et al.* 2006).

In 1993, a law was passed to protect the Patellidae species by establishing seasonal fishing closures, minimum legal catch sizes and limpet protection zones (LPZs) (Martins *et al.* 2008). LPZs comprise a network of coastal sections of a few kilometres banning exclusively the collection of limpets throughout the year. Typically, three to four LPZs were implemented on each island. Additionally, limpet harvesting was divided into two components: (i) the collection of a maximum of 1 kg of limpets by hand in the intertidal zone during the weekends and on holidays was allowed, for fun or recreational activities, and (ii) commercial harvesters were permitted to operate by snorkelling in the infralittoral zone (Pham *et al.* 2010). These regulations were first adopted in 2012 and 2014. Further limpet-protected zones were established on each island, prohibiting recreational and commercial harvesting throughout the year. The regional government is currently testing the implementation of new

technologies as auxiliary surveillance methods, such as drones and monitoring cameras, that could improve the management measures for resource protection and fisheries sustainability.

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The first records of the sea slug *Berghia coerulescens* from the British Isles

Nicolas Jouault*



figure 1: 1904 Admiralty chart showing Les Écréhous reef some 6 miles [9.7 km] north-east of Jersey. Soundings in fathoms.

Berghia coerulescens is a small nudibranch measuring from 4 to 7 cm, originally described from the French Mediterranean coast. The species is also known from different localities along the central and western Mediterranean (including the Adriatic Sea) and the Atlantic Ocean, from the Brittany coasts to the Canary Islands (Carmona *et al.* 2014) but has not been recorded previously from the British Isles. Some further information and images relating to this discovery can be found on the website of the Marine Biological Association at <https://www.mba.ac.uk/first-sighting-in-british-isles-of-nudibranch-species/>.

Easily recognised with its blue and yellow tipped cerata which act as respiratory and defence mechanisms, *B. coerulescens* (as with other members of the family Aeolidiidae) feeds on anemones (figure 2). Anemone venom passes through the nudibranch and collects in the tips of the cerata, making it venomous. Nudibranchs have both sex organs and it is the most dominant male which will fertilise the female. After mating some nudibranchs drop their male appendage as retracting it takes up energy. The species is named after Danish doctor Rudolph Bergh (1824–1909) and *coerulescens* is Latin for blue. The French and Italian common name for the species is *berghia azurée*.

Sightings on Les Écréhous

Les Écréhous is a Crown-owned group of islands and rocks within the territorial waters of Jersey, part of the Parish of St Martin (figure 1). It consists of an offshore reef of around 25 km² at low water (a fraction of this at high water) located about 6 miles [9.7 km] north-east of Jersey. It is noted for a 12-m tidal range plus its diversity of marine and bird life. The reef is a Ramsar site, a Marine Protected Area (MPA) and part of Jersey National Park. The approximate area of the sightings of *B. coerulescens* recorded here are marked in figures 3 and 4.



figure 2: *B. coerulescens* feeding on an anemone, Les Écréhous.

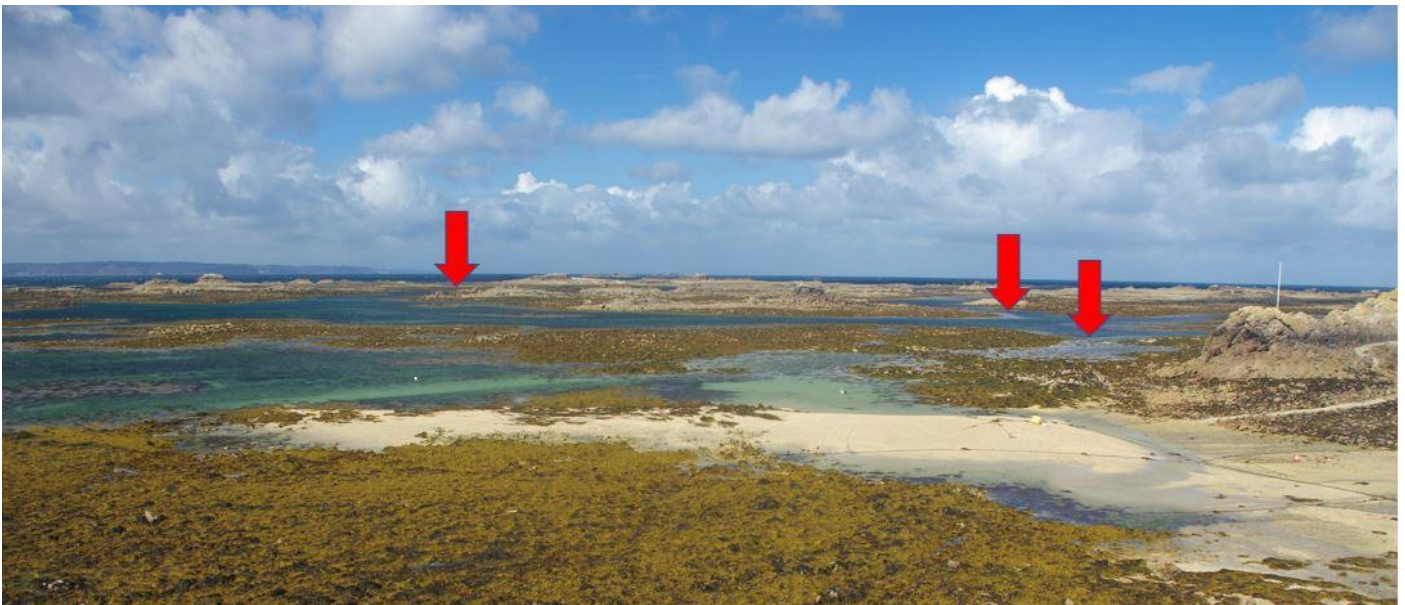


figure 3: Les Écréhous: red arrows mark approximate locations of the three observations.



figure 4: 1904 Admiralty chart of Les Écréhous with approximate areas of sightings marked in red.

B. coerulescens was first found at 9.33 am on 8th August 2022 at La Mathe Pallot, which is the southern part of a large gully running through the reef (N 49 17 395 W 001 56 321; sea temperature 19.1°C (St Helier, Jersey) [since the first of January 2022 sea temperatures had been above average]; air temperature 20.4°C; low water 9.36 am, 3.76 m) (figures 5 to 7). The gully mostly dries out on low water spring tides, apart from areas of pools. At the lowest part, there is an old line of stones used historically for setting nets.

The northern end of the gully is banked by a ridge of stones and is part of the area known as the Grande Mathe. The

gully consists of sand, fine gravel and small boulders and there are two small beds of eelgrass at either end of the gully. The gully contains a number of seaweeds, with the invasive wireweed (*Sargassum muticum*) being the prominent one; this grows to several metres in length and restricts the flow and drainage from the gullies within the reef, and the water temperature within the pools increases at low water during warm periods. At the end of July wireweed dies back, this was especially noticeable in 2022 with other seaweeds within the gully also losing their colour generally and becoming a dull brown. *B. coerulescens* was found just below the exposed reef on the right in figure 5, below the apex of the gully which goes onto to become Grande Mathe.



figure 5: Gully at La Mathe Pallot, Les Écréhous, which goes onto to become Grande Mathe, showing the site of the first specimen of *B. coerulescens* recorded, just below the exposed reef on the right.

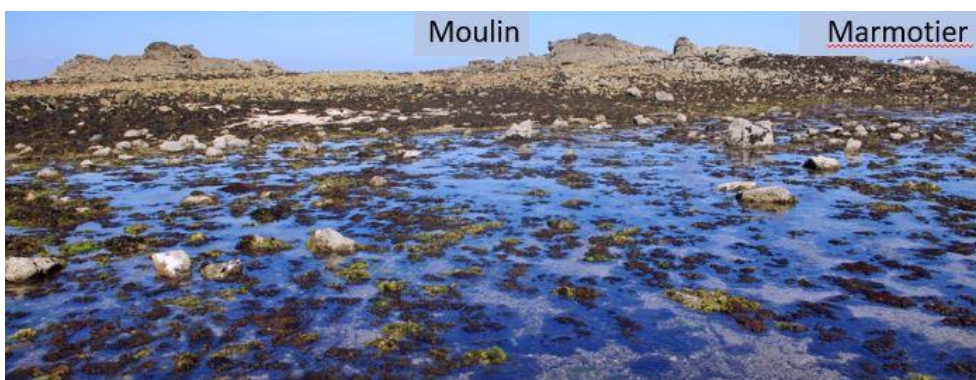


figure 6: The first specimen was found near the tide line in the left of this picture. Mill Rock (Moulin) is the low-lying distant rock near where the second observation occurred. The photos in figures 5 and 6 were both taken on a similar tide to that when the specimen was discovered.



figure 7: First observation of *B. coerulescens* at La Mathe Pallot, Les Écréhous, 8th August 2022 (below, with eggs).

The second observation of *B. coerulescens* was below a large pool-like area north of Mill Rock (figures 8 and 9), in an area where the pool drains from a narrowed gully, and the specimen was in the lee of the tide there (6th September 2022 at 9:28 am; N 49 17 517 W 001 56 107; low water 9.28 am, 4.2 m; sea temperature 19.6°C). Brittany specimens are also found in areas of strong tidal flow.



figure 8: Second observation of *B. coerulescens* below a large pool-like area north of Mill Rock, Les Écréhous.



figure 9: Mill rock (Moulin) gully, Les Écréhous, looking South East.

The third observation was on Monday 3rd October 2022, of a small specimen of *B. coerulescens* not far from the location of the second sighting (N 49 17 496, W 00 55 962; low water 18.55 pm, 4 m; sea temperature 17.3°C) (figures 10 and 11).



figure 10: Small specimen of *B. coerulescens* 1 to 2 cm in length.



figure 11: The third observation was found under the stone in the left foreground with Mill Rock to the left (the second sighting was in the gully below the light-coloured rock at centre horizon).

Sightings on the coast of Jersey

Two sightings of *B. coerulescens* were made by Chris Isaacs on the Jersey coast in December 2022 (figures 12 and 13):

- a) 4th December 2022, La Rocque; N 49 16 246 W 02 02 850; sea temperature 13.3°C (satellite).
- b) 27th December 2022, Seymour; N 49 09 508 W 02 00 785; sea temperature 10.3°C (satellite).



figure 12: *B. coerulescens*, La Rocque, Jersey (see also front cover).
(photo: Chris Isaacs)



figure 13: La Rocque with Seymour tower on horizon at top right.

Sightings on the adjacent Brittany coast

Historically there have been occasional sightings of *B. coerulescens* in this area since the early 1900s. There were no sightings following the building of the Rance tidal barrage to the west of St Malo (1960s) until recent times. The following four sightings were by Pierre Corbrion:

- a) 17th October 2020, Plage des Corbières (outside of the Rance tidal barrage; sightings b-d below were within the barrage).
- b) 6th February 2022, Jouvente, Rance.
- c) 20th September 2022, Grainfollet, Rance.
- d) 2nd December 2022, Grainfollet, Rance.

Sighting by Gaël Kervarec:

24th November 2022, Plage Saint-Enogat near Dinard.

Other sightings of note

The author observed a number of *Pruvotfolia pselliotes* in 2021 and 2022 in numerous places across the Écréhous reef, nearly all in areas that are not exposed at low water (figures 14 and 15). The species was identified for the author by Bernard Picton as one that has only recently been recorded on the south coast of England and is thought to be a warmer water species moving north. It has also been observed on the coast of Jersey by Chris Isaacs.

Records

All records have been submitted to the British official databases and the Société Jersiaise, and on iNaturalistUK (<https://uk.inaturalist.org>).



figure 14: A strawberry worm (*Eupolymnia nebulosa*) with two *Pruvotfolia pselliotes* below, August 2022.



figure 15: *Pruvotfolia pselliotes* at the Écréhous reef, September 2021.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his gratitude to Miss Cynthia Binet and the Sarre family, who have enabled and supported him in his research at the Écréhous reef.

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***Nicolas Jouault** is a 62-year-old health care worker, amateur marine biologist, and former chair of the Société Jersiaise marine biology section, who has been studying the reef for some 30 years. Having purchased an Olympus TG6 compact camera with housing just over two years ago, he has undertaken to record the underwater life of Jersey and more specifically Les Écréhous, where he stays on a regular basis.

An unplanned journey: *Hyalinia helvetica* – as was – or perhaps not – and finally?

Brian Goodwin

Firstly, a confession. My knowledge of land snails and their taxonomy is, how shall I put it ... 'fragmentary'? I did not therefore immediately recognise what was portrayed in figure 1 below.

I am a little more knowledgeable when it comes to art (at least I know what I like) and that includes the rather attractive little sketch under consideration from the J. Wilfrid Jackson Archive at Buxton Museum & Art Gallery. The artist is unknown to me but was enough of a conchologist to have included both aspects of the shell and the live animal. Perhaps other members know who T. Wrigley was?



figure 1: *Hyalinia helvetica* (Jackson Archive, courtesy of Buxton Museum & Art Gallery).

Unaware of the identity of both artist and subject, I set out to at least name the beast. It soon transpired that T. Wrigley in 1911 was a little behind the times, for in the April 1903 issue of the *Journal of Conchology*, Bernard Barham Woodward had synonymised *Hyalinia helvetica* with *Vitrea rogersi* (figure 2).

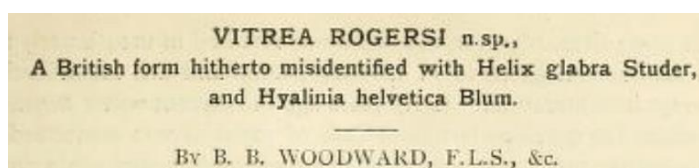


figure 2: *Journal of Conchology* 10: 309 (April 1903).

The article began as follows:

'That a well-known and recognised species of British land mollusc should be wanting a name sounds, at first, extraordinary; such, however, appears to be the case.'

BBW went on to add that:

'It seems generally to have been confused with V. alliararia, and frequently is at the present day by observers who should know better.'

I started to feel a little better about my ignorance! After some more taxonomic technicalities, Woodward gave a formal description and some comparisons, accompanied by a nicely rendered plate from which I have extracted the depictions of *Vitrea helvetica* and *Vitrea rogersi* (figures 3 and 4).

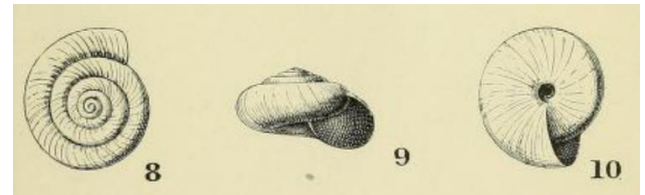


figure 3: *Vitrea helvetica*. Detail from Plate VI, *Journal of Conchology* 10 (April 1903).



figure 4: *Vitrea rogersi*. Detail from Plate VI, *Journal of Conchology* 10 (April 1903).

The differences looked minimal to me but, hey, *Hyalinia helvetica* 'was no more' and instead we had *Vitrea rogersi*. But then I thought I would check it in MolluscaBase, and *Vitrea rogersi* wasn't there!

So, BBW's 1903 opinion had not stood the test of time and this snail was perhaps not *that* 'well-known and recognised'?

I still did not know what the little beast was, so I checked in Kennard & Woodward (1926) to see if BBW had later come to a different conclusion, and indeed things had moved on: *Vitrea rogersi* was listed as a synonym of *Helicella* (*s.s.*) *rogersi*. The only problem was, when I checked in MolluscaBase to confirm the name, *Helicella rogersi* wasn't there either!

Finally, after a bit more detective work, I think I found what I had been looking for, namely *Oxychilus* (*Ortizius*) *navarricus helveticus* (Blum, 1881) (Bank & Neubert 2017: 114). What I really needed was a photograph (or two) so, rather belatedly you would be correct in thinking, I turned to the CSGBI/Malacological Society shell guide (Naggs *et al.* 2021) (figure 5).



figure 5. *Oxychilus navarricus helveticus* in Naggs *et al.* (2021).

Now why didn't I think of that before? And it turned out that Wrigley's painting was a pretty good match to the photographs. Mystery solved. Well, maybe, but perhaps a

conchologist looking back in years to come will think ‘ah yes, but now we know it as ...’!

In searching for an appropriate aphorism to conclude this malacological morsel, I was tempted to go with the well-known (in some circles) rap artist Drake who concluded that often in life, ‘it’s the journey that teaches you a lot about your destination’. On the other hand, Ralph Waldo Emerson’s ‘Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead, where there is no path and leave a trail’ seemed rather apt, especially for a snail.

However, after mature consideration and harking back to my title, I settled on some words from someone I have long admired as a writer and as an observer of nature, John Steinbeck:

‘A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us’.

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A 5600-year-old *Charonia seguenzae* from the west coast of Cyprus

Janet Ridout Sharpe

The recent article by Aydin Örstan and Panayotis Ovalis (2022) recalled to me a large *Charonia* shell that was included in a molluscan assemblage that I examined some years ago from the Early Chalcolithic site of Mylouthkia (c. 3600 cal BC), about 8 km north of Paphos harbour on the west coast of Cyprus (figure 1).

In its present state the shell is 246 mm high, but it is missing at least four apical whorls and the tip of the siphonal canal so originally it may have been close to 300 mm, the maximum height given for this species by Tornaritis (1987). The apical break appears to be natural and the apex is imperforate, so this shell cannot have been blown as a trumpet. The shell is badly damaged: much of the body whorl and the dorsal sides of the two previous whorls are missing. Whether this breakage was deliberate or accidental cannot be ascertained, although the edge of the shell adjacent to the last varix shows some evidence of regular chipping. The umbilicus-like slit illustrated by Aydin and Panayotis is clearly visible, as are the tiny pits and holes caused by the boring sponge *Cliona celata*.

Special significance appears to have been accorded to these large shells, which have been found in ritual contexts in archaeological sites throughout the eastern Mediterranean from the Chalcolithic period onwards (Reese 1990). Some were deliberately holed at the apex for use as trumpets. One pristine unmodified shell from the neighbouring site of Kissonerga was found in a special deposit containing a stack of pottery bowls, pottery and stone figurines and heat-cracked stones associated with birthing rituals. The shell from Mylouthkia, by contrast, was the least fragmentary of the remains of 12 *Charonia* shells found at this site. All of them were recovered from pits with domestic debris including limpets and *Phorcus* topshells and it is possible that these giants also formed part of the diet: it is still occasionally eaten today (Man and Mollusc 2001).

When I referred to my hand-written notes, I was intrigued to see that I had originally identified this shell as *Charonia seguenzae*, following both Tornaritis (1987) and Reese (1990), but when it came to publication (Ridout Sharpe 2003) I opted for the then-favoured *Charonia variegata*. Swings and roundabouts!



figure 1: *Charonia seguenzae* from Chalcolithic Mylouthkia (height 246 mm). Note the chipped edge adjacent to the varix, the umbilicus-like slit and the borings caused by *Cliona celata*.

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Regional meeting at World Museum, Liverpool, 19th November 2022

Rosemary Hill



figure 1: Participants at the regional meeting, World Museum, Liverpool.

(photo: Ben Rowson)



figure 2: The World Museum, Liverpool. (photo: Ben Rowson)

Nine members of the Society met at the museum (figures 1 and 2) and were joined by four of its staff for a very interesting day meeting of talks, demonstrations and discussions. Tony Hunter, Assistant Curator of Invertebrates, welcomed the group to the museum and showed us to the library.

Ian Wallace, an Honorary Researcher and retired Curator of Mollusca and other invertebrates, gave the first talk, explaining that the museum is funded by the Department for Digital Media, Culture and Sport, and began with a bequest from Lord Derby in 1860. Unfortunately, the museum was firebombed during WW2. Many of the pillars holding up the roof were hollow and the fire debris fell down inside the pillars to the basement. Nora McMillan (Mrs Mac) was very concerned about the loss of material from the Winckworth Collection that was in the building at the time. The collections were rebuilt on the basis of what was held before the bombing to provide representatives of world shells and local shells. A refurbishment of the museum took place in 2005 and its holdings of mollusc type specimens are now available online (<https://gbmolluscatypes.ac.uk/>). The world shell collection came into its own when the Clore Natural History Centre was established. The Tanyptera Project at the museum provides training in invertebrate recording. There is

also an excellent laboratory facility with microscopes. The library and collections may be visited by appointment.

Some specimens from the collection were placed under a computer microscope which displays on a large monitor. These included a large specimen of *Pleurotomaria (Entemnotrochus) adansonianus* (Crosse & Fischer, 1861) (Adanson's slit shell) (figure 3) from Tobago; *Chamberlainia hainesiana* (Lea, 1856), a large freshwater mussel from Malaysia (from A. E. Salisbury's collection which was dispersed in 1965); and *Skenea serpuloides* (Montagu, 1808) which demonstrated the capability of the equipment to display very small species magnified.



figure 3: *Pleurotomaria adansonianus*. (photo: Rosemary Hill)

Bootle Museum was more fortunate during WW2 and its mollusc collection was transferred to Liverpool Museum when it closed. Nora McMillan was chiefly interested in the local mollusc fauna but spent 13 years sorting out material from the collection of John Wilfrid Jackson. Fred

Woodward was an Assistant Curator at the museum at one time. Ian Wallace was responsible for sorting out the type specimens so that these could be made available online, and for developing guides to the identification of molluscs from the extensive beaches of the region.

Ben Rowson showed some specimens of the freshwater mollusc *Marstoniopsis insubrica* (Kuester, 1853) (figure 4) from the H. E. Quick Collection (now in the National Museum Wales / Amgueddfa Cymru Cardiff but previously held at Juniper Hall Field Centre). This species was once common in north-west England and is found in mud at the bottom of canals. It is smaller than *Potamopyrgus antipodarum* (J. E. Gray, 1953) and is probably under-recorded from the area. A closely-related recent arrival in the Thames docklands, *Heleobia charruana* (d'Orbigny, 1841), was also shown. Ian Wallace noted that *Assiminea grayana* (Fleming, 1828) and *Ensis leei* (M. Huber, 2015) both arrived suddenly in the Liverpool area at the same time – possibly as a result of water warming.



figure 4: *Marstoniopsis insubrica* from the H. E. Quick Collection. (photo: Rosemary Hill)

June Chatfield then gave a talk on Nora McMillan, who visited her at Selborne, which led to an exchange of information between members and the museum staff. The museum has a list of Nora McMillan's publications which June had been unable to trace adequately, and this should enable the completion of her obituary. Ian Wallace knew that Nora McMillan's papers were deposited at the Natural History Museum with a 20-year embargo which is due to expire next year, and this may provide further useful information. Simon Taylor brought Nora McMillan's portable dredge to show to the meeting (figure 5).

Brian Goodwin then gave a talk on his research on J. Wilfrid Jackson at Buxton Museum which has his papers although most of his collections (geology and conchology) are at World Museum Liverpool. This will be the subject of a separate article.

Anna Holmes provided an update on the Small Marine Bivalve Project and the Transatlantic Rafting Molluscs Citizen Science Project, and Ben Rowson gave a talk on the history of non-marine mollusc distribution mapping by the Conchological Society.



figure 5: Simon Taylor with Nora McMillan's portable dredge. (photo: Ben Rowson)

Deborah Kent, Senior Lecturer on the History of Mathematics from the University of St Andrews, gave a talk entitled 'Molluscs and mathematics – the collaboration of Ronald Winckworth and D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson', describing her search for the letters and specimens relating to Thompson's book 'On growth and form' which was first published in 1917. This will be the subject of a separate article.

Bas Payne concluded the talks by describing his efforts to find a reliable method of separating *Cerastoderma edule* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *C. glaucum* (Bruguère, 1789) using relative shell weight as a proxy for shell thickness. DNA analyses of six thick-shelled cockles from three intertidal populations in southern England and Wales thought to be *C. edule*, and eight thin-shelled cockles from four lagoon populations in southern England and Wales thought to be *C. glaucum* confirmed these identifications very clearly. However, DNA analyses of 12 specimens from three populations from the same area that looked intermediate showed that they were all *C. glaucum*, whose shell thickness is clearly rather variable, overlapping with that of *C. edule*. DNA is a useful although expensive tool for separating the species in the UK, and so far provides no evidence for interbreeding. Shell thickness is clearly of limited value in separating the species and other criteria need to be investigated.

Thanks are due to Steve Judd for inviting the Conchological Society to meet at World Museum; Gary Hedges for making the practical arrangements; Tony Hunter for looking after us during the meeting (and again on the Sunday for the Conservation and Recording Committee meeting); Ian Wallace for his introduction to the museum, the demonstration of specimens via the microscope facility and the provision of many interesting nuggets of information; Deborah Kent for sharing her CS grant-funded project and coming all the way from St Andrews; and to all the speakers and attendees at the meeting.



figure 1: Group photo, World Congress of Malacology, Munich, 2022. (photo: WCM2022 (www.wcm2022.bio.lmu.de/program/index.html))



figure 2: Malacologists assemble outside the conference venue.

The 21st World Congress of Malacology was held in Munich, Germany, from 1st–7th August 2022. Over 320 participants attended from over 40 countries (figures 1 and 2) in a notable return to a pre-pandemic style of scientific conference (the triennial WCM is one of rather few conference series not to have missed or delayed a year). This conference was given the theme of ‘Meeting of generations’. On the one hand it featured retrospectives for three retiring malacologists: Gerhard Haszprunar (Munich), Phillipe Bouchet (Paris) and Winston Ponder (Sydney). On the other, numerous students and young researchers made their first contributions. Prof. Haszprunar and the organising team did an outstanding job of making this complicated congress a success.

Each of the symposia gave a tantalising glimpse into the state of the art in a different aspect of malacology. These included sessions on molluscan systematics, ecology, conservation, development, genetics, fossils and parasites. A symposium on ‘Volunteers in malacology’ arranged by staff from the National Museum of Wales (Anna Holmes, Ben Rowson and Harriet Wood) included talks on rafting molluscs on British shores, the recent work of the Conchological Society’s Non-Marine Recording Scheme and a poster on the work of volunteers in digitising the

Tomlin correspondence archive. The invited talk for the session was by Imogen Cavadino (figure 3), who outlined her PhD work on slugs with the Royal Horticultural Society, prompting an interesting discussion on citizen science.

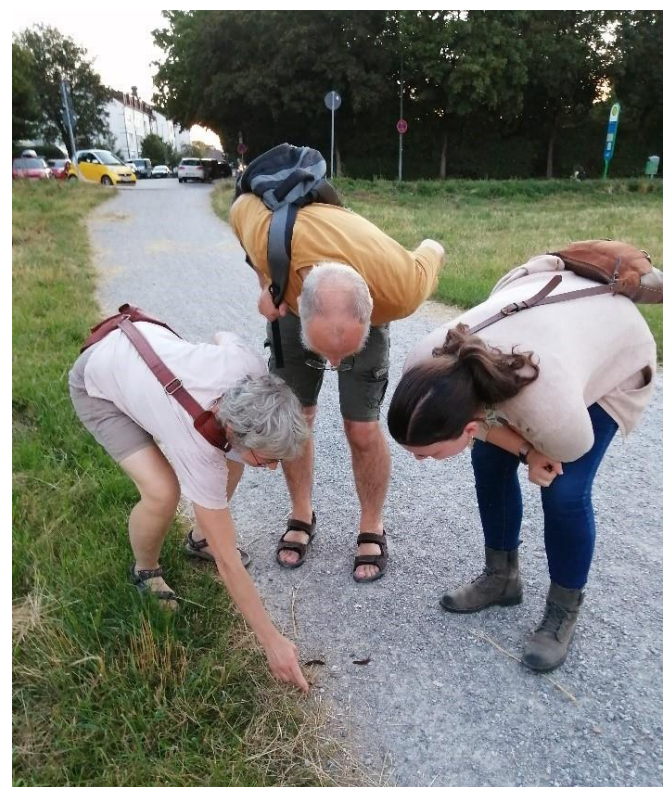


figure 3: Heike Reise, John Hutchinson and Imogen Cavadino encounter *Arion vulgaris* on campus.

A pleasing observation from the Conchological Society’s perspective was the large number of talks that included citations or other material from papers published in the *Journal of Conchology* over its long history. Other Society members attending included Ruud Bank (Amsterdam), Bernhard Hausdorf (Hamburg), Dai Herbert (UK), John Hutchinson (Görlitz), Mary Seddon (UK) and Ted von Proschwitz (Stockholm). The week also included an

entertaining fund-raising auction, a ‘Science slam’ session, a field trip to the Danube floodplains, guided tours of the purpose-built building housing the Bavarian State Zoology Collection (figure 4) and other opportunities to explore Bavaria (figures 5 and 6). The congress concluded, naturally, with a dinner at a traditional Munich beer hall (figure 7). Prizes for student presentations were awarded, among others, by UNITAS Malacologica and the Malacological Society of London. Further details, including a free PDF containing the abstracts of all the talks and posters, are available online at www.wcm2022.bio.lmu.de/.



figure 4: Bastian Brenzinger gives a tour of the Mollusca section of the Bavarian State Zoology Collection.



figure 5: A selection of land snails found on limestone crags in forest near Kelheim.



figure 6: An introduced population of the Croatian clausiliid *Medora almissana* (Küster, 1847) on limestone cliffs outside Weltenburg Abbey, known to be present at this location since 1974.



figure 7: A fountain with shells (mainly unionids) at Augustiner Stammhaus, a classic Bavarian beer hall.

In his book of conchological miscellanea, Peter Dance included a short section about bookplates (or ‘Ex Libris’) (Dance 2005). Having acquired, probably like a number of us, second-hand conchological books and papers, etc from multiple sources over many years, the presence of a bookplate or perhaps personalised book stamps may not always add to their value but almost always adds to their interest.

As Peter mentioned, until the late 19th century ‘bookplates tended to be stylised, often taking the form of armorial crests’. Yet even these can sometimes be of interest. In my copy of Volume four of the pioneer Welsh traveller and naturalist Thomas Pennant’s *British Zoology* (Pennant 1777), which covers ‘Crustacea and Mollusca’ (partly the result of his experiences while collecting marine molluscs in Anglesey (Chatfield 1979)), there is such a bookplate (figure 1).



figure 1: Bookplate of Joseph Pyrke in Volume four of *British Zoology* (Pennant 1777).

This bookplate is of historical interest because of the book’s association with Littledean Hall, Littledean, Gloucestershire (Baggs & Jurica 1996). Joseph Watts changed his surname to Pyrke when he inherited the hall from his great uncle, Thomas Pyrke, in 1764. According to Wikipedia¹ and other sources, the house itself ‘has been described as one of the most haunted houses in England and is thought to be the oldest house in the United Kingdom which is still occupied’. Some of Joseph’s immediate ancestors also had a dubious reputation, which included rape and murder!² Despite the book probably having spent around 150 years in such a place, I haven’t noticed anything strange...

The second edition of Lionel Adams’s book on British land and freshwater shells (Adams 1896) features a photographic frontispiece of species of *Pisidium* (now mostly *Euglesa*). This may be the reason why my copy was once owned by Edmund A. Robins, who was later to become president of the (now Royal) Photographic Society*. I have found two articles by him in the same issue of the *Optical Magic Lantern Journal* (Robins 1897), both on the early development of moving pictures. Although the bookplate itself does not have a conchological subject, it is an interesting example relating to the science of the time. It features what looks like a developing tray, a retort flask, measuring cylinder, beaker and rod (figure 2).

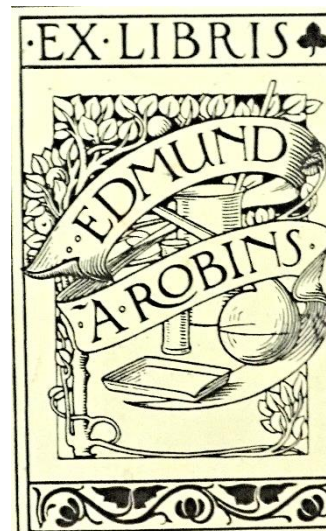


figure 2: Bookplate of Edmund A. Robins.

The French-Algerian conchologist Paul Pallary (1869–1942) is well known for his work on the molluscs of North Africa, particularly north-east Algeria and the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. He described many new species and varieties (not all of which are now accepted) and sold shells to collectors. He is also known for his work on the prehistory of North Africa. The National Museum of Wales, for example, holds specimens from Pallary as part of the Tomlin collection³. I have a few papers which bear a stamp indicating that they were once part of his library (figure 3). The stamp shows a sinistral snail, which it may or may not be possible to identify – suggestions welcome! There is, of course, no idea of scale. Pallary described a couple of freshwater snails from the ampullariid genus *Lanistes* and the image resembles a form of *Lanistes ovum* (Troschel, 1845) (figure 4), but could equally be a sinistral land snail such as *Amphidromus*, a genus with a wide distribution from India through the Philippines and Indonesia to northern Australia (there is no operculum shown). Pallary also used a small stamp in the shape of a scallop (figure 5).

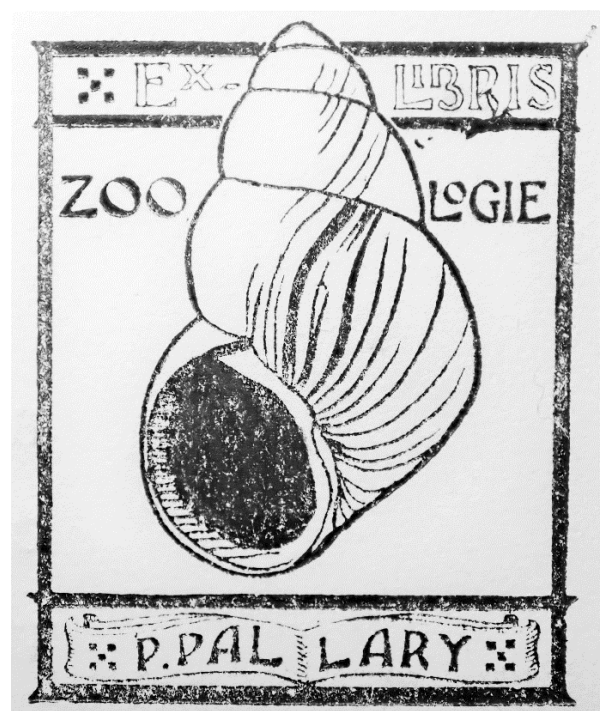


figure 3: Book stamp of Paul Pallary.



figure 4: *Lanistes ovum* (form?) from Tanzania (h = 61 mm).



figure 5: Paul Pallary's scallop stamp.

Probably one of the most familiar bookplates of 20th century British conchologists is that of Bernard Verdcourt (1925–2011) (for his obituary see Rowson *et al.* 2011) (figure 6). Bernard's bookplate combines two of his natural history areas of expertise, botany and conchology. As with the Pallary stamp, was the sinistral shell intentional or a result of reversal from the original? Sinistral *Helix* individuals are known but are very rare. In what I assume is an earlier acquisition for his library (although the number may indicate that it was already quite large), Bernard inserted a handwritten 'bookplate' which used the large V that was to feature in the later printed version (figure 7).



figure 6: Bernard Verdcourt's bookplate.

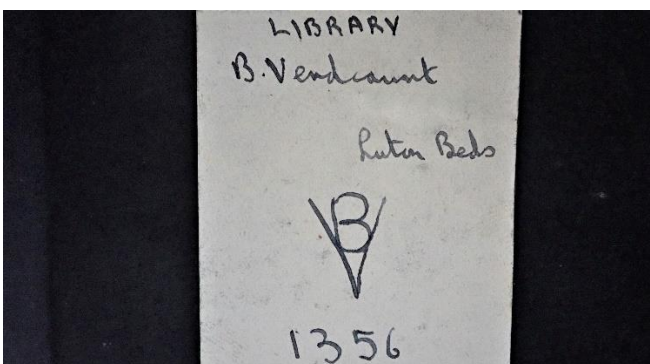


figure 7: Bernard Verdcourt's earlier handwritten 'bookplate'.

Another past president of the Conchological Society who also specialised in African land snails, Terry Crowley (1915–1999) (for his obituary see Pain & Pain 2000) perhaps surprisingly used a bookplate based on a photograph of a cross section through a nautilus, signing each with his name (figure 8).

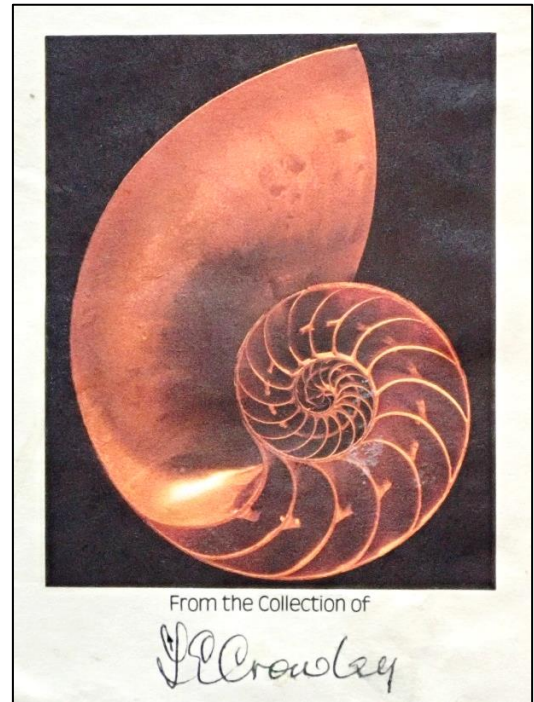


figure 8: Terry Crowley's bookplate.

The molluscan focus of Dr David Heppell (1937–2004) was more on marine molluscs but, while at the Royal Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, he also became particularly involved with the intricacies of zoological nomenclature. Other subjects also interested him, including cryptozoology and the early history of malacology (Dance 2004). David and Janet Heppell's bookplate (figure 9) depicts species including *Cardium costatum* (Linnaeus, 1758) (figure 10), *Harpago arthriticus* (formerly *Lambis arthritica*) (Röding, 1798), a feather star and a sea horse.

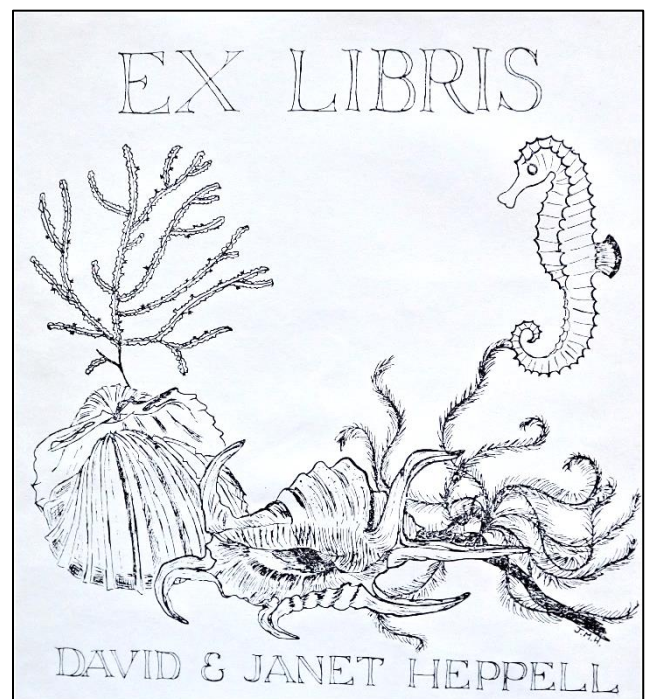


figure 9: Bookplate of David and Janet Heppell.



figure 10: *Cardium costatum*, Senegal (length = 91 mm).

Finally, coming further up to date, drawings and articles by our member Gordon Collett have featured previously in the pages of this magazine. I was therefore pleased that he gave me permission to include a design for his own bookplate that features shells (figure 11). Gordon writes:

‘In the 30-odd years of doing Ex Libris, the only shell one is mine from 1989!

Like most of my plates it is biographical ... I was a marine biologist and still an amateur conchologist. Also there is reference to my art, and my fencing career. The faun character figured a lot in my early art works.

When I was three years old I wanted either to be an artist or a Musketeer!

My process is quite simple, I do a traditional pen and ink drawing. Scan and digitally clean it (stray dots, bad edges, etc are removed). The plates themselves are then either digitally printed onto pretty much any paper you want, or the digital files are used to create a block for traditional letterpress printing.’



figure 11: Bookplate by Gordon Collett.

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- ²<https://occult-world.com/littledean-hall/>.
- ³<https://museum.wales/curatorial/biosyb/mollusca/collections/sources/pallary/>.
- * Janet Ridout Sharpe owns an identical bookplate in a copy of J.E. Gray's 1840 edition of Turton's *Manual of the land and freshwater shells of the British Islands*, suggesting that Edmund Robins' interest in molluscs was not only connected to photography.

British Shell Collectors' Club



Saturday 29th April 2023

Shell Convention

An opportunity to meet other members and to seek advice from experienced collectors. The event is well attended by dealers, and there may be members' exhibits and exchange tables, and sometimes an auction of fine specimens and books.

Saturday 28th October 2023

Shell Show

- shells for sale • prize competitions • dealers' tables
- all welcome – beginners to experts

Both are open 9am to 4pm
Open to the public Admission free

Theydon Bois Community Centre,
Coppice Row, Theydon Bois, CM16 7ER.

Please check web site for updates and further information: www.britishshellclub.org



figure 1: Under the Sea exhibition, Haslemere Educational Museum (photo: Robert Neller)

This was the title of a summer family-friendly exhibition at the Haslemere Educational Museum in 2022, an in-house interactive display put on by the museum staff. As well as cases with marine creatures from the reserve collections, there were seashells for handling. These were unprovenanced specimens in the education collection. Also, there were some duplicated outlines of shells, crabs, turtles, seahorses, fish and whales for colouring in. The coloured images were cut out and pasted on to a wall panel with the seashells and crabs in the yellow zone of sea bed below and the fish swimming above (figure 2). Contributions were made by a wide age range from 1 year to 80 years of age with children, parents and grandparents taking part as family groups (figures 3–6). The gallery was a hive of activity during the summer holiday period.

In addition, a video showing the under the sea environment was running and there were marine-themed cushions sourced off the internet by Education Officer Kay Topping to inspire design (figure 7).



figure 2: Detail of wall panel.



figures 3–6: Children with the results of their ‘under the sea’ craft activity. (photos: Kay Topping; used with permission)

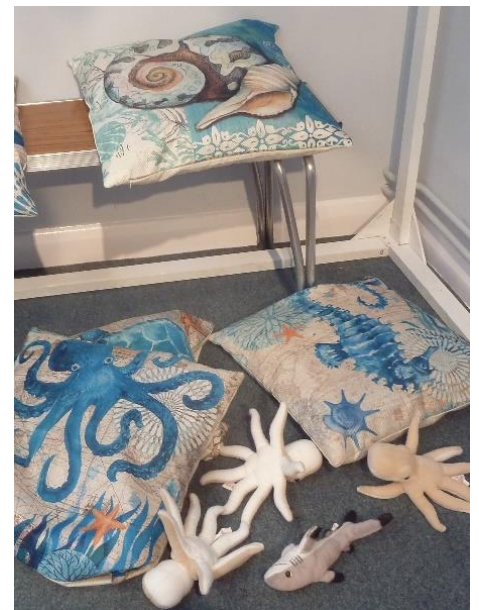


figure 7: Marine-themed cushions.

Geomitra delphinuloides: is it there?

Laurence Cook¹

Many land snail species on the Madeiran islands have extremely limited ranges, including some of the most morphologically distinct. *Discula turricula* is known only from the Ilhéu de Cima, Porto Santo; *Actinella laciniosa* from part of the Ilhéu Chão in the Desertas; and the extinct *Geomitra* (*Craspedaria*) *delphinula* from the sand bed on the Ponta de São Lourenço of Madeira (figure 1). On Porto Santo, *Lampadia webbiana* comes only from the Pico do Concelho and fossil deposits nearby (Cameron *et al.* 2006).



figure 1: Quaternary fossils of the extinct *Geomitra delphinula*, from the Ponta de São Lourenço, Madeira (width c. 19.5 mm).
(photo: Peter Topley)

Some species are rare wherever they have been found. This is true of *Discus guerinianus*, recorded in the 19th century from Ribeiro Frio in damp forest under stones and in decaying vegetation (Wollaston 1878). Other records are from the Ribeiras de S. Jorge and Faial, not far away (Paiva in Nobre 1931). Since then it is unreported, although in 1997 something like it was discovered at the western extremity of the island (Cameron and Cook 1999; Teixeira *et al.* 2017). Small and uncommon species can easily be overlooked but a number undoubtedly have sporadic distributions, for example *Leiostylia* species in the Madeiran high laurel forest.

Geomitra delphinuloides is a species with a uniquely limited distribution. It is listed online as extinct by Wikipedia [based on Fontaine *et al.* 2007: 173] and, more optimistically, as critically endangered (Seddon 2011). At about 15 mm in diameter it is relatively large for Madeira, very different from other modern species, but similar to the fossil *G. delphinula*. It was found once only in 1859 by R.T. Lowe, who by that time had named many of the Madeiran species (Lowe 1854). He obtained numerous living individuals of *G. delphinuloides*, distributed as shells to museums in Europe and elsewhere. Nobre (1931) provided an illustration (figure 2). It has never since been found. The full description of the location runs as follows (Lowe 1860):

‘... It was found alive, on the 17th and 18th of April last, in a single spot, on the surface of the somewhat moist, loose, friable, black vegetable mould, amongst tufts of grasses, ferns, &c., on a steep, dry, sunny bank clothed with shrubs of *Vaccinium* and Heath (*Erica arborea*, L.), mixed with a few scattered trees of *Laurus*, at the foot of perpendicular crags, along the new Levada called the Levada da Fajã dos Vinhaticos, about three miles below its source in the bed or stream of the Ribêiro do Fayal, a little below the top or ridge on the S. W. slope of the great

lateral spur or buttress through which the principle or longest tunnel has been perforated. Searching here for common sylvan species with my Portuguese attendants, the first example was discerned by one of them, José Rodriguez of Machico, whose good fortune was almost simultaneously shared by the rest of us; for, though apparently quite local, and confined here to a short and narrow band of a few yards wide, reaching down the mountain-side some fifty yards or more, it seemed tolerably abundant on the spot; and a reward of at first a pistreen (10*d.*), and then a bit (5*d.*) for each example, soon procured a fair supply of living specimens.’

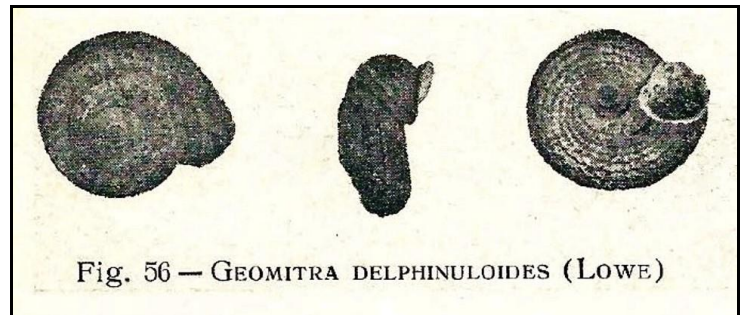


figure 2: *Geomitra delphinuloides* from Nobre (1931).

If *G. delphinuloides* still exists it is not necessarily in the same place, but it would be of great interest to know where Lowe found it. As Seddon (2008) points out, several attempts at location have been made but so far without success. The 1/50000 map published in 1971 by the Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral is a revision of one first prepared in 1915. It records Cabeço da Fajã dos Vinháticos, near Achada da Cagucha, on the north-west side of the valley of the Ribeira Seca, which runs northwards to Faial. This is probably the area to which Lowe refers (figure 3). A levada [irrigation channel] is marked on the map, but it is the one running from the head of the Ribeira Seca towards Fajã da Nogueira. The 1993 revision of the 1/50000 map does not refer to Fajã dos Vinháticos but extends a levada along the left side of the valley from the presently existing one as the Levadinha João de Dios. At present the levada running to Fajã da Nogueira curves round the top of the Ribeira Seca valley, where it is connected by tunnel to the Caldeirão Verde. Eastwards it extends a short distance along the valley side and stops at a small pool. The remains of an old disused, empty and decayed levada lie about 20 m below it. It runs along the valley until it passes into a collapsed tunnel leading it away from the valley in a more northerly direction. Figure 4 shows another depiction, probably dating from 1914 (Power 1951). The most likely place for “a steep, dry, sunny bank” is the further end of the levada just before it passes into its long tunnel (see figure 5). The Google Earth location is lat. 32.7603, long. 16.9108. At present this seems the best place to explore for evidence of *Geomitra delphinuloides*. It can be accessed most easily by walking along the ridge from Achada do Teixeira. The site would then have to be examined by descent from the ridge, using appropriate safeguards such as top ropes and belays. Rewards of pistreens or bits cannot be guaranteed.



figure 3: (above) Upper part of Ribeira Seca valley and (below) distant view of the valley of Ribeira da Metade to left and Ribeira Seca to right. In both views the section shown in figure 5 is in shadow.



figure 4: Map of the area 'constructed by Charles A. Le Poer Power in 1914, but greatly improved, corrected, and brought up to date in 1950'.



figure 5: The disused levada at the end of its course in the Ribeira Seca valley seen from the maintenance hut on the right bank. It enters a tunnel at right. This exposure could be the 'steep, dry, sunny bank clothed with shrubs of *Vaccinium* and Heath (*Erica arborea*, L.), mixed with a few scattered trees of *Laurus*, at the foot of perpendicular crags'.

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figure 1: Lunchbreak for the mollusc recorders at Morgan’s Hill Reserve, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, May 2022.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust successfully bid for a grant from the Green Challenge Fund to run a project called ‘Action for Insects’ which supports management of their reserves to improve the habitats for invertebrates and to increase awareness and recording. Michael New, the Ecological Officer coordinating work with the volunteer recorders, had the presence of mind to include all invertebrates including molluscs, not just insects, in the project and in November 2021 he contacted the Conchological Society via the website for assistance in recording this lesser-known group.

Michael’s request for assistance came at an opportune moment shortly after the Conchological Society meetings coordinator asked Council to put forward some locations and dates for field meetings. The result was a programme of three field meetings and two online training sessions so that the participants had several opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, to improve their skills and knowledge in mollusc identification, ecology and habitat preferences, and the importance of Wiltshire river systems for *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin’s whorl snail) in particular.

The programme commenced on 15th May 2022 with an introduction to molluscs held online which was open to all, but was mostly attended by the Wiltshire Action for Insects volunteer recorders. The level of interest in molluscs was admirable amongst these naturalists, who were already proficient in recording other invertebrate groups and just needed a little guidance on where to start with identification, understanding, surveying and recording this group.

The introductory online session prepared the recorders for the first mollusc recording visit two weeks later to Morgan’s Hill Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest for the species-rich chalk downland with associated scrub and woodland (figure 1). This site offered a great training opportunity with a good variety of molluscs for the recorders to practice their skills in finding and identifying them. The volunteers were dispatched to search and between them found 16 different species which were keenly observed, with time spent discussing lookalike species and habitat adaptations and requirements. Some time was also spent practicing using the FSC field key to land snails (Cameron 2008). The species that provoked particular interest and admiration were the distinctive aroma of

Oxychilus alliarius (garlic snail), the small size and beauty of *Vallonia cf. excentrica* (eccentric grass snail), the sheer abundance of *Monacha cantiana* (Kentish snail) and *Xeroplexa intersecta* (wrinkled snail), and, on moving from the grassland down-slope to the rocky scrub, *Abida secale* (large chrysalis snail) with an aperture crowded with ‘teeth’. Progressing back through the woodlands we had the opportunity to observe the very different forms and habits of species found on the trees: *Clausilia bidentata* (two-toothed door snail), *Merdigera obscura* (lesser bulin) and *Balea sarsii* (tree snail).

The second meeting was to introduce a suite of wetland and freshwater species to the Action for Insects volunteer recorders so we met again in September at Lower Moor Farm complex, which includes many lakes and associated habitats created by gravel extraction in the 1970s. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust manages four reserves there and we visited two of them, recording 34 species in Sandpool Farm Reserve and Lower Farm Reserve. Tom Walker also joined this session and helped greatly with finding a good mollusc fauna in these base-rich waters, and helping with training the group and identifying the small pea mussels. We encountered more slugs on this field meeting, including *Boettgerilla pallens* (worm slug) (figure 2) in damp woodland, and were able to raise awareness of the range of molluscs in wetland and aquatic habitats that most of the time go unnoticed, even the large and widespread *Anodonta cygnea* (swan mussel). A good range of aquatic species was



figure 2: *Boettgerilla pallens* in damp woodland at Sandpool Farm Reserve, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, September 2022.

found and brought the variety to the groups' attention, and we spent time using the excellent identification resources for bivalves (Killeen *et al.* 2004) and freshwater snails (Rowson *et al.* 2021). The pleasing variety of ram's-horn-shaped species was a source of wonder to the group, including *Planorbis planorbis* and *P. carinatus* (margined and keeled ram's-horn respectively), the more familiar *Planorbarius corneus* (greater ram's-horn, some of which had reached a very good size here), plus the contrastingly smaller *Anisus leucostoma* (white ram's-horn), *Gyraulus laevis* (smooth ram's-horn), *Gyraulus albus* (white ram's-horn) and the tiny *Hippeutis complanatus* (flat ram's-horn).

The mollusc training sessions in Wiltshire would not have been complete without a more detailed look at *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's whorl snail), a European protected species (Annex II Habitats Directive), for which the River Avon and its tributaries were considered a stronghold. I provided another online training session at the beginning of October on the identification, ecology, conservation importance and survey techniques for this species, which was recorded and added to the portfolio for the project on the website (<https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/webinar-recordings>). This second online session was a prelude to the last mollusc-focused field meeting for the Action for Insects project in 2022, which was held one week later at Jones's Mill SSSI, the Vera Jeans Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Reserve, specifically for practice in field survey and identification of *V. moulinsiana*.

The Vera Jeans Reserve is near the head of the River Avon system, and a small stream runs through a sedge-rich valley fen and carr woodland. It has been surveyed in the past for *V. moulinsiana* by Martin Willing and the extent of easily accessible habitat and previous reliability of finding the snail made the site ideal for training in field survey techniques for this species. I have to admire the tenacity of the group as all molluscs were hard to find in October 2022, perhaps due to the prolonged hot, dry summer, and it took several hours for eight people to find just two adult specimens of *V. moulinsiana* in the far eastern part of the reserve. This is very concerning, perhaps an indication of a dramatic decline here as in other parts of the River Avon system. In 2014 approximately 228 individuals per m² were recorded at SU1693361327 in the western area of open fen (Willing 2014). In this locality in 2019, when I held a previous training session for Natural England, the number of *V. moulinsiana* found in this part of the reserve was just 24 adults and four juveniles from eight different sample points, but even more worrying in 2022 we found none at all in this part of the reserve, even in litter samples taken home, dried and examined in the lab. The two adult Desmoulin's that were found on this field meeting were close to the stream at the eastern side of the reserve (figure 3), perhaps because the stream provided some consistent humidity enabling a small number to survive the drought. At least the two found were live specimens and one can only hope that more favourable climatic conditions will enable the species to bounce back. Unfortunately population declines may not be restricted to Desmoulin's as we only found one specimen of *Vertigo antivertigo* (marsh whorl snail), which often co-occurs with *V. moulinsiana* in slightly drier fen.

The spread of meetings in different habitats across the year were about building the knowledge and field skills of the Action for Insects group, equipping more naturalists to record molluscs rather than attempting comprehensive site lists. All the sites are bound to yield many more species and

hopefully this enthusiastic group will continue to build their skills and records of molluscs in Wiltshire and elsewhere. There will be a further field meeting in Wiltshire in 2023 to continue the momentum, which will of course be open to all recorders, members and non-members of the Conchological Society.



figure 3: Tom Walker and Mags Cousins searching the stream and fen at the Vera Jean's Reserve, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, October 2022. (photo: Michael New)

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Alderney beach wedding

John Glasgow



I visited Alderney (where I was born) early last September and came across this preparation for a beach wedding at Saye Bay (pronounced Soay). This beach has a tunnel from it, under the road to the present-day leisure campsite. Following the evacuation of Alderney in 1940 and the total occupation by the German forces, there was much slave labour used in the construction of fortifications. The present-day campsite was called Lager Norderny and housed those in forced slave labour under brutal conditions.

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Subscriptions are payable in January each year, and run for the period 1st January to 31st December. Members joining later in the year will receive all publications issued during the relevant calendar year. • Ordinary membership £33 • Family/Joint membership £35

• Under 18 (receiving Mollusc World only) £5 • Student membership £15 • Institutional subscriptions £47

In view of the high cost of postage for distribution from the UK, members living in the Republic of Ireland and Europe will be asked to pay an additional postage charge of £8, and members living in the Rest of the World an additional postage charge of £17.

See website for further details. Payments in sterling only, to Catherine Jagger, CIRCA Subscriptions, 14 St Barnabas Court, Cambridge CB1 2BZ, (shellmember@gmail.com). For UK residents we suggest payment by standing order, and if a UK tax payer, please sign a short statement indicating that you wish the subscription to be treated as Gift Aid. Another simple and secure way of paying for both UK and overseas members is by credit card online via PayPal from <http://www.conchsoc.org/join>. Overseas members may also pay using Western Union, but a named person has to be nominated, so please use the Hon Treasurer's name, Brian Goodwin.

How to submit articles to Mollusc World

Copy (via e mail, typed or handwritten) should be sent to the Hon. Magazine Editor (contact details above). If sending copy using e-mail please include a subject line 'Mollusc World submission'. When emailing several large file attachments, such as photos, please divide your submission up into separate emails referencing the original article to ensure receipt. Electronic submission is preferred in Microsoft Word. Images and Artwork may be digitised, but we recommend that a digital image size 200Kb- 1Mb (JPEG preferred) be sent with your submission. All originals will be treated with care and returned by post if requested. Authors should note that issues of the magazine may be posted retrospectively on the Conchological Society's web site. Please aim for **copy intended for the July 2023 issue to be sent to him before 20th May 2023**; inclusion in a particular issue is at the Hon. Editor's discretion and depends upon the space available but contributions are always welcome at any time.

Membership update

The following Conchological Society members have not previously been included in either this column of Mollusc World or in the latest edition of the Members' Guide (2022). Please note that to be included here members must sign a data protection consent form. If you have not been included and now wish to be please contact Catherine Jagger at CIRCA subscriptions (details above).

Codes in italics after a member's contact details indicate their interests:

A – Applied conchology (shell artefacts/money, cooking, art etc);

C – Conservation *E* – Ecology and pollution; *F* – Fossils

Mb – British marine; *Mf* – Foreign marine;

Nb – British non-marine; *W* – Conchological poetry and prose.

New members

Eirwen Edwards 16 Ferndale Road, Enfield, EN3 6DH
eye0wild@gmail.com *A C E F Mb Nb W*

Helen Preece helen.preece@yahoo.co.uk *C Nb*

Changes of address/email etc

Dr K.N.A. Alexander keith.n.a.alexander@outlook.com

Ms B. Eastabrook, 2 St George's Drive, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL51 8NX

Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Diary of Meetings (continued from back cover)



Please check website (www.conchsoc.org) for further details/updates, including other meetings arranged at shorter notice.

Field meetings (continued from back cover)

Saturday 10th June 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Knotting Green, near Bedford, Bedfordshire.

Leader: Peter Topley (molluscworld@ntlworld.com; 01462 615499)

The Bedfordshire Invertebrate Group are joining a Bioblitz at Strawberry Hill Farm, a rewilding project north of Bedford (see <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/strawberry-hill>). Further meeting details will follow on the Society website.

Saturday 17th June 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Somerset region.

Leader: Keith Alexander (keith.n.a.alexander@outlook.com; 01872 271186)

A meeting focussing on survey for *Ena montana*; all meeting details to follow on Society website.

Saturday 22nd July 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Whiteknights, University of Reading, Berkshire.

Leader: Tom Walker (tom@tmwalker.co.uk; 07488-231574;)

Molluscs are under-documented on the University grounds (only eight species on CS/NBN databases), which consists of woodland, grassland and a lake. We will explore all areas, including dipping in the lake. The findings will be presented at the regional meeting due to be held at the University on 11th November. Meet at 10.30am in Car Park 4 on the University campus (by the Students' Union: RG6 6EH; grid ref SU735719; contact the organiser for details of how to find this car park). Bus 21/21a runs from Reading railway station every half-hour directly to the University Campus (15-minute journey time).

Sunday 6th August 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Hook-a-Gate woods, near Shrewsbury

Leader: Mags Cousins (shropshiremolluscs@gmail.com; 07873 532681).

A small woodland with tufa-depositing streams, grid ref. SJ462093. There is no parking at the wood itself, so we'll park in the village of Hook-a-Gate and walk a short distance across fields. Meet at 10.30 am.

Saturday 12th August OR Saturday 9th September 2023 (date to be confirmed).

FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Bookham Common, north Surrey. Joint with the London Natural History Society.

Leader: June Chatfield (drjunechatfield@gmail.com; 01420 82214). The London Natural History Society has been surveying this (National Trust owned) site since 1941 when Conch. Soc. past Presidents C. P. Castell and A. E. Ellis were involved as well as member Col. Bensley, but the molluscs have not been looked at for many years and the common has changed.

The final date and further meeting details will follow on the Society website and/or in the July issue of this magazine..

Saturday 21st October 2023. FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Wyre Forest, Worcestershire.

Leaders: Rosemary Hill* & Rosemary Winnall (*rosemaryhi@lineone.net; 0121 4431459).

This will be a joint meeting with the Wyre Forest Study Group (WFSG). Arrangements in progress: further details will appear on the Society website.

Further field meetings are currently being planned, (including some opportunistically, often at short notice) the details of which will be posted onto the Conchological Society website. Society members are encouraged to check this regularly for notification of such meetings as well for updates on the other fixed dates.

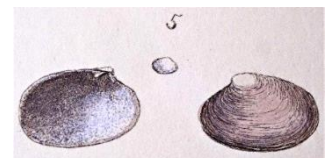
We are always happy to receive any suggestions for speakers for indoor meetings, or offers to lead field meetings, and also any suggestions about Society participation in the meetings of local and other societies.

Meeting Programme compiled by Martin Willing. Contacts for meetings related matters are either Martin Willing (martinjwilling@gmail.com) OR Rosemary Hill (secretary@conchsoc.org).

100 years ago: from the *Journal of Conchology* (1923, vol. 17, p. 86)

Prior to *Conchologists' Newsletter*, the *Journal* featured items that today might have been included in the pages of *Mollusc World*.

Montacuta bidentata (Montagu). [now *Kurtiella bidentata*] – This animal is interesting from the variety of its habitats. It appears to be sometimes free living, and sometimes markedly commensal. The type locality is Salcombe, where Montagu describes it as burrowing in old oyster shells. It is certainly abundant there, and under guidance of Dr. Orton, I have seen it in the burrows of *Neries*, and also in the tubes of the Gephyrean *Phascolosoma* with *Lepton clarkiae* Clark: on the east side of Salcombe it is reported as commensal with the brittle star *Ophiocnida brachiata*. In Lock Alsh I found it associated with a similar starfish *Amphiura filiformis*. On the other hand, I have found it living at low water at Stromness, ploughing its way through the sand, with *Akera nana* Jeffreys. At Glengariff I dredged it in company with *Akera bullata* Muller. At Brighton I once took it in the roots of *Corallina officinalis*. If it can live freely in the sand, why does it adopt so different a habit in the mud at Salcombe and elsewhere? – R. WINKWORTH



[from Tom Walker]

[figure: *Mya bidentata* from Montagu, G. (1808) Supplement to *Testacea Britannica*. J.S. Hollis, London.]

Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Diary of Meetings

Please check website (www.conchsoc.org) for further details/updates, including other meetings arranged at shorter notice.



Indoor meetings

Details of whether a meeting is 'live' plus Zoom or Zoom only, will be circulated to members prior to each meeting, together with instructions on how to access the NHM and /or the online Zoom.

News updates will also appear on the Society's website.

Attending by Zoom: It is ESSENTIAL to let Catherine Jagger at CIRCA (shellmember@gmail.com) know of your intentions to attend by Zoom before each meeting. She will then send you joining instructions and an agenda.

If you do not respond on time, it may not be possible to make the necessary access arrangements.

Zoom meetings will open from 13.45. Please ensure that you join before the 14.00 start as late admissions may be impossible.

Saturday 15th April 2023: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ADDRESS (NHM with Zoom link)

Guest speaker: Martin Willing. 'Things are not always what they seem; the first appearance deceives many...'

Does recent work on *Vertigo* species in Wales amount to a paradigm shift in assessing habitat parameters?'

14.00 – 17.30 (13.45 Zoom sign in - pre-register with Circa):

Angela Marmont Centre, Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD

(Council members please note that there will NOT be a Council meeting before this meeting)

Saturday 23rd July 2023: ZOOM MEETING with online exhibits and lecture

Guest speaker: Dave Mackay. 'The role of serendipity in shell collecting.'

14.00 – 16.00 approx. (13.45 Zoom sign in - pre-register with Circa)

(Council members please note that there will be a Council meeting before this meeting (Zoom))

Saturday 14th October 2023: INDOOR MEETING with exhibits and lecture (NHM with Zoom link)

Guest speaker: Robert Cameron. 'Snails in the mind: symbolism, superstition and imagery'.

14.00 – 17.00 (13.45 Zoom sign in - pre-register with Circa):

Angela Marmont Centre, Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD

(Council members please note that there will be a Council meeting before this meeting (Live and Zoom))

Saturday 11th November 2023. REGIONAL MEETING in Reading.

Organiser: Tom Walker (tom@tmwalker.co.uk). The meeting will be held in the Department of Zoology, University of Reading, Berkshire. The meeting will consist of short papers and a tour of the mollusc collections within the department. Contributions of presentations (up to 20/25 minutes) will be welcomed. Please contact the organiser for more details.

Saturday 9th December 2023: INDOOR MEETING with exhibits and lecture (NHM with Zoom link)

Guest speaker: Richard Preece. 'William Benson and the Golden Age of Malacology'.

A talk following the publication in 2023 of a monograph on Benson's pioneering work in India.

14.00 – 17.00 (13.45 Zoom sign in - pre-register with Circa):

Angela Marmont Centre, Natural History Museum, London SW 7 5BD.

(Council members please note that there will be a Council meeting before this meeting (Live and Zoom))

Field meetings

Specific meeting arrangements and any changes will appear on the Society website which Society Members are advised to visit regularly. It is essential for those wishing to attend ANY of the field meetings, to contact the leader in advance (ideally at least a few days before) to book a place and obtain further details.

Saturday 13th May 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine): Semley Woods and Oysters Coppice Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Reserves, near Shaftesbury, Salisbury.

Leader: Mags Cousins (shropshiremolluscs@gmail.com; 07873 532681)

Semley Woods and Oysters Coppice (OS map 118, Grid ref: ST896258) comprise damp flower rich ancient coppice woodlands, with streams and pond and very few recent mollusc records. (SP7 9AZ, What3Words: ///allies.spoil.liberty). Meet at 10.30 am.

Parking at the reserve entrance is limited so we will park in the village of Gutch Common at ST8954425771; there is then a short walk to the reserve.

Saturday 3rd June 2023: FIELD MEETING (non-marine) Warburg Nature Reserve, Oxfordshire.

Leader: Tom Walker (tom@tmwalker.co.uk; 07488-231574;)

Warburg is a nature reserve owned by Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust with areas of ancient woodland. We will be surveying much of the reserve for molluscs, in particular *Ena montana*, which has good populations here. Meet at 10.30am in the reserve car park (RG9 6BJ – continue from this hamlet to the end of the lane; grid ref: SU721878); toilets on site, but no cafe.