

In the afternoon we will visit a range of aquatic sites on the River Wear. On the Sunday we will investigate various river valley woodlands, some on limestone, in the vicinity of Barnard Castle. Bring waterproof clothing, wellingtons and water sampling equipment.

Members intending to come on this meeting should contact the leader well in advance of the meeting for further details and also for advice on where to seek accommodation.

FIELD – Saturday 18 June
Ranmore Common, Surrey
Leader: Simon Terry
(0208 453 1302)(home)

A search for Mollusca particularly active at this time of year. For meeting sites please contact Simon. Bring wellingtons, waterproofs and a packed lunch.

FIELD – Saturday 25 June and
Sunday 26 June

Thanet area, Kent
Leader: Celia Pain
(01634 261147) (home)

Two marine sites will be visited. The Margate chalk ledges are the largest in Europe. There is an interesting marine mollusc fauna. We will be particularly looking for live *Epitonium*. The famous Sandwich Bay will be our second site, looking for live sandy/muddy species. Because of the time of low tide this will be an unusual meeting.

On Saturday 25th meet at 16:00h, Sacketts Gap, off Palm Bay Avenue (B2051), Cliftonville (Grid ref. TR 373713.) Low tide: 21:48 h. Bring marine collecting gear and sandwiches for evening snack. Lunch (c.£7.00) can be taken at the Oriental Buffet, Marine Terrace, Dreamland at 14:00h.

On Sunday 26th meet at 08:00h at Princess Drive, Sandwich Bay (Grid ref. TR357591). Low tide: 10:15h. Maybe breakfast on the beach?

14.00h Optional visit to Whitstable for oyster lunch?

Public transport available. Please tell Celia if you are coming by public transport. Overnight accommodation advice available. It is essential that you tell Celia if you plan to attend (e-mail: tp006f6896@blueyonder.co.uk).

FIELD - Saturday 16 July
Bristol and North Somerset

Leader: Tony Smith
(0117 965 6566) (home)
(0796 680 7075) (mobile)

Varied sites: Old record of *Segmentina nitida* near Long Ashton, calcareous grassland on Clifton Downs, slug search, cliffs and Tickenham Hill (calcareous woodland and downland). Bring suitable clothing for the weather, stout footwear and water sampling equipment. Lunch at pub or bring packed lunch. Meet in short term car park at Temple Meads Railway Station at 10:30h to meet trains (Paddington, depart 08:30h, Gloucester, 09:14h and Exeter St Davids 08:33h). Return to Temple Meads 17:30h or 18:30h according to requirements

YCS - Saturday 3 September
Pocklington canal, 1 km recording along the canal.

Meet at 10:30h at Hagg Bridge on B1228, grid ref. SE 717451.

NHM – Saturday 10 September
14:30h in the Demonstration Room.

We welcome as Guest Speaker Georges Dussart from Canterbury on the subject of 'Effects of environmental water chemistry on shells of freshwater gastropods'.

FIELD - Saturday 1 October
Bredon Hill, Worcestershire.
Leader: Harry Green
(01386 710377) (home)

YCS - Saturday 1 October
Dalby Forest.

Meet at 10:30h at Low Dalby car park, grid ref. SE 856875.

NHM – Saturday 15 October
14:30h in the Demonstration Room.

We welcome as Guest Speaker Martin Willing from Midhurst on the subject of 'Molluscs and favourable conservation status: what does this mean?'

FIELD - Saturday 22 October
and Sunday 23 October:

Angling Spring Wood,
Buckinghamshire
Leader: Liz Biles
(01747 860146) (home)

A meeting to look for *Limax cinereoniger* and *Malacolimax tenellus*. Angling Spring Wood is predominantly an old beech wood with some mixed planting,

managed, until recently, by Chiltern District Council and now by local wildlife groups. The soil is predominantly clay with flints overlaying chalk and there are steep slopes within the wood. However, the wood is not large and after lunch the meeting may move on to a second site. There is no parking in the immediate vicinity of the wood but members, Tony and Val Marshall, have kindly offered for those arriving by car to park in their drive and overflow into the road where there is usually space. (Grid ref. SP 8785 0028 to arrive by 09:30h). There is a walk of just under a kilometre to the meeting point in the wood from here. Those arriving by train should travel to Great Missenden, the nearest toilet facilities to the wood, and walk half a kilometre to the meeting point which is in the central ride of the wood (Grid ref. SP 8861 0099 to arrive by 10:00h). Bring lunch.

NB It has been provisionally agreed that the Bucks Fungus Group will hold a foray on Sunday 23 October at another site nearby (to be decided at their AGM in May) and if so, members of the Society are invited to study alongside them. Details to follow. Stout footwear and warm/waterproof clothing recommended depending on the weather. This site is suitable for children although supervision is particularly required on the steep slopes. Please inform the leader if you plan to attend either of these meetings – site maps and more information on the species, and also B&B details, if required, will be provided in advance of the meetings to those who contact the leader.

WKSHP – Saturday 26
November

The annual workshop held in Woking offers members the opportunity to receive tuition on identifying difficult groups. Bookings to Judith Nelson (01483 761210) (home)

NHM – Saturday 10 December
14:30h in the Demonstration Room.

We welcome as Guest Speaker Trevor James from Monks Wood on the subject of 'The NBN network and wildlife recording'.

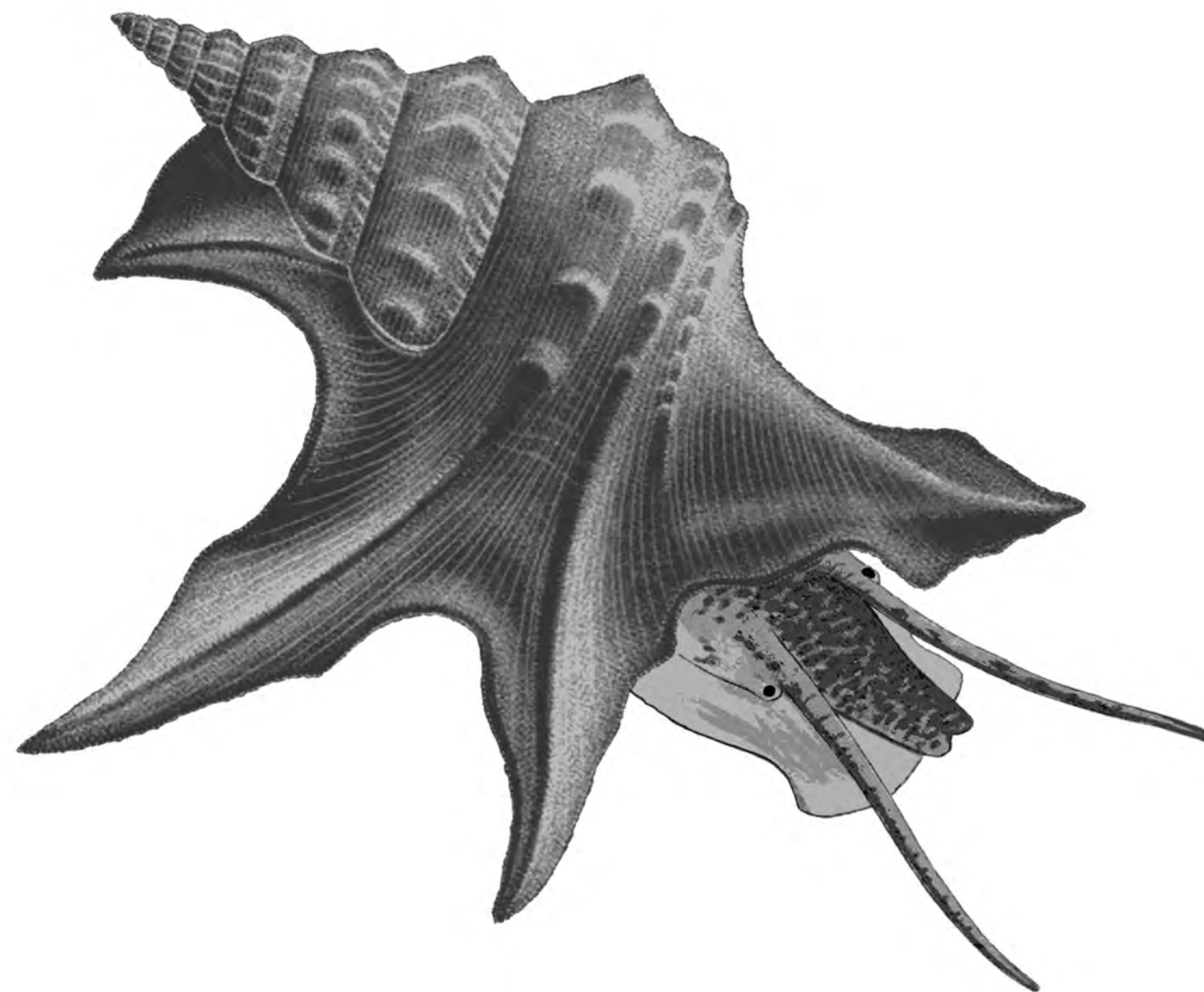
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Mollusc World

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

Editorial

Editorials are very difficult things to write. I started off in *Mollusc World* 1 leaving this much space so that I could introduce the magazine, invite members to write articles and so on. However, now that this much space is set aside (enough for c. 250 words), there is the problem of filling it. This is particularly problematic when one feels that one doesn't have a great deal to

say. I could write all the usual stuff like thanking all of you who have sent contributions for MW7 and grumbling about being so short of copy that we have had to produce another thin issue with less colour. However, that would be all very predictable. I could produce a few sentences of philosophical ramblings on various esoteric aspects of conchology, but that sounds like hard work, besides which I only have a few minutes to get this off to

the designer. This is the last piece to go in as I have already proof-read the rest of the magazine. I could say isn't it great that spring is now here and that there is no excuse for not going out and doing something molluscan and taking pictures and then writing about it and sending it to me. Oops....I seem to have written an editorial. Have fun!!

Ian Killeen

Mollusc World

Mollusc World is published 3 times a year by the Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland at the end of March, July and November, and is issued free of charge to members.

We invite all members to contribute to *Mollusc World*. In addition to the traditional articles, field meeting reports, diary of events and so on, we will be including features, profiles, news from recorders, and identification keys. Do not feel that you have to write long or full page articles. We would particularly welcome short pieces, snippets, pictures, observations, new records, book reviews, mollusc recipes, cartoons, requests for information - anything on molluscs! *Mollusc World* will become an important means of staying in touch with the membership and communicating information to the conservation agencies and promoting molluscs to the wider biological community. So, please contribute!

Copy is acceptable in any format - electronic, typed or legible hand-written. When sending copy by email, please ensure that you include *Mollusc World* in the email title and also include a few lines of text in your message as well as an attachment. Unidentified attachments may not be opened! Please do not include diagrams or pictures embedded in the text - send them as separate attachments. To enable the best reproduction and resolution, any original artwork, diagrams, colour prints or slides should also be sent by 'snail' mail. All will be treated with care and returned. At the present time, we are unable to give precise copy deadlines until we are up and running, but contributors should assume that copy date is a minimum of 8 weeks before publication date.

Neither the Hon. Editor nor the Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland accept responsibility for any opinions expressed by contributors.

Please send articles to:

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Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 Ireland.
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Society Notes

Founded in 1876 the Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland is one of the oldest existing societies devoted to the study of molluscs. The Society promotes the study of molluscs and their conservation through meetings, publications and distribution recording schemes. The Society publishes *Journal of Conchology* (twice a year) and *Mollusc World* (three times per year).

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The Society's Web Site is at:
<http://www.conchsoc.org>

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Ordinary Membership	£23.00
Family/joint membership (open to two people living at the same address)	£25.00
Institutional Membership (GB and Ireland)	£32.00
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Student (in full-time education)	£10.00
Entrance Fee for new members	£1.00

Early payment discount (Ordinary, Family and Student Members) for paying the correct amount before 31 March £1.00

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Sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank and made out to "The Conchological Society" to Honorary Membership Secretary: Mike Weideli, 35 Bartlemy Road, Newbury, Berks., RG14 6LD. Tel: 01635 42190, email: membership@conchsoc.org

Eurocheques are no longer accepted by UK banks.

Sterling direct transfer in favour of "The Conchological Society" to National Westminster Bank plc, Bolton Branch, PO Box 2, 24 Deansgate, Bolton, Lancs., BL1 1BN (IBAN: GB12 NWBK 0130 9906 5238 46, BIC: NWBK GB2L);

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Hunting molluscs on Les Ecrehou Jan Light

'They are fragments of France which fell into the sea to be gathered up by England' Victor Hugo 1802-1885.



1. Wild oyster in situ
2. Crawling individual of *Haliotis tuberculata* showing the edge of the foot, mantle and head region of the animal.
3. View of the exposed rock platform with Marmotière in the distance
4. Two specimens of *Acanthochitona fascicularis* Ca.

5. Tapping wild oysters off the rocks with a knife and stone hammer
6. *Ocenebra erinacea*
7. Cluster of stone huts on Marmotière
8. Shallow lagoon at low tide below Marmotière

Lying in the crook of the west Cotentin and north Brittany coasts, the principal Channel Islands consist of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Sark and Herm with their satellite isles of Brechou, Lihou, Burhou, and Jethou. There are also four island clusters: Les Minquiers, Les Casquets, Les Ecrehou and Iles Chausey, of which only the latter cluster belongs to France.

A week of sailing with friends in late summer, plying between the Channel Isles and the north coast of France, gave me the opportunity to visit one of these island clusters. Les Ecrehou is a mini archipelago of islets, under the Bailiwick of Jersey, which form a plateau of reefs midway between Jersey, and Carteret on the west coast of the Cotentin peninsula. The central islet, Marmotière, harbours a cluster of stone cottages once used by fishermen and now leased by a band of local yachtsmen as summer retreats. At high tide this frail-looking settlement is an isolated huddle of small vulnerable buildings as the rock platform becomes submerged.

We sailed from Carteret to Les Ecrehou in balmy, calm conditions with a sea surface which was so smooth the water appeared oily. However, in any conditions, the final approach needs extreme care in negotiating a route through channels of deeper water amongst seabed rock outcrop and the shallow gravelly sands. On the final approach to Marmotière a sheltered sound opened up and revealed a handful of yachts moored within an idyllic vista. Anchoring in 3m of water the vessel was in no time stranded on a sand bank, as the tide ebbed away before our eyes. The rise and fall extend over a range of 9.5m at mean springs.

With few other yachts at anchor in the sound, all of which were under French ownership, and no sight of others within the vista of islets

making up this tiny archipelago, the place was very peaceful and perhaps the more so because it is predictably ephemeral. You can count on an hour and a half either side of low water springs before streamlets of water start to trickle back between the reefs. These channels widen and spill over to link small pools with larger pools and the larger pools become sounds. While some of the crew went ashore to explore the larger islets and the old settlement, we struck off across the platform with a basic shoreworking kit: a rucksack, some polythene bags of varying sizes, a few collecting tubes, a trowel, a knife, cameras. Lacking any space to truly call your own on a yacht, where you live cheek by jowl, I didn't think I would be popular if I collected any samples of weed or sediments for later processing. However I had a quest. Having argued to convince my companions that "there be abalones on those there isles", I was hopeful of finding *Haliotis tuberculata* living at low water mark.

Crossing the current-rippled sand and gravel banks which had dried out, I noted abundant dead shells, including the suite of bivalves associated with shell gravels:

Glycymeris glycymeris, *Clausinella fasciata*, *Arcopagia crassa*, *Gari tellinella*, *Circomphalus casina*, *Tapes rhomboides* and other showy species such as *Gari depressa* and *Laevicardium crassum*. There were cockle-raking activities being carried out by some of the French visitors (I trowelled some air holes and depressions in the sands to look for these species living but only succeeded in finding polychaetes. The 'usual suspects' were evident on the upper shore rocks: limpets, winkles, top shells but not a sign of *Mytilus* species. On the top of the platform there were low-lying areas forming extensive shallow lagoons. This habitat is always a worthwhile area to search. Lifting some of the larger rocks and slabs the undersides were richly colonised with ascidians, sponges, polychaetes and *Calliostoma zizyphinum* and *Chlamys varia* were common. Finding these species in plenty is often a good indicator of molluscan diversity. I



9. Lower shore sands with cockle raking traces
10. Frenchman gathering oysters high on the shore
11. Raking for cockles at low tide

also saw a number of bristly chitons, *Acanthochitona fascicularis*, a species which reaches considerably larger sizes on the French side of the Channel than on the English coast. Persistence was eventually rewarded with the finding of two adult *Haliotis tuberculata*. Ormer harvesting is subject to regulation in the Channel Islands although there is no bag limit in Jersey or Guernsey. Harvesting can take place between 1 October and 30th April on Jersey and in that season ormers can be collected on the first day of each new or full moon and the three following days. Frozen ormers may be possessed at any time in Jersey (it is illegal to freeze ormers in Guernsey.)

Two ormers is barely a mouthful for a boat's crew and in any event it was the closed season. However it is worth noting here that to cook ormers most sources suggest tenderising - 30 seconds beating with a mallet! (Davidson 2003) - before light frying. I have eaten them in France and was surprised to find that they don't taste remotely sheilfishy! However we were able to return to the boat with a contribution to the evening's fare in the shape of some extremely unshapely oysters. Wild *Crassostrea gigas* were ubiquitous on the rocks in the intertidal and were being collected by a couple of Frenchmen. They assured me the oysters were good to eat and so they were. When we opened our oysters they formed a motley collection of misshapen valves, some still attached to pebbles, small cobbles and old shell. However a bed of seaweed gave the platter an authentic air and, flushed with lemon juice, a fresh juicy oyster takes some beating. It truly is a taste of the sea. In fact I have a friend who says she cannot eat oysters because she feels she is drowning! As the rising tide lapped at the side of the boat, soon to refloat her, we supped our oysters with 'un coup de blanc' and enjoyed a taste of the best that the sea has to offer. In the hour and a half we had been allotted to stay ashore we put together a very respectable species list of molluscs (40n). I have no doubt the weeds and undersides of rocks would yield a diverse list of microspecies. It would be a great place to spend a few days' shore recording not just for the pleasure of working there, but also because it has potential as an 'island' of molluscan distributional data in the drive to get ever better coverage in mapping the molluscs of the English Channel. But does anyone fancy being abandoned to the elements and the isolation?!

Reference

Davidson, A. 2003. North Atlantic Seafood. Prospect Books, Totnes. 512pp. This book is a must for all seafood lovers!

Field meeting for British whorl snail *Truncatellina callicratis*

Branscombe area,
south-east
Devon,
22 May 2004

Keith Alexander



1. Keith and the vacuum 2. Sorting the litter 3. *Truncatellina* habitat
All photos © Ron Boyce

A rather small but select party gathered in the car park at Branscombe Mouth for what proved to be an enjoyable and interesting day investigating the local habitat for the British whorl snail *Truncatellina callicratis*. This tiny whorl snail has a mainly Mediterranean and southern Alpine range but has a few relict populations further north, most notably along the limestone sea-cliffs from south-east Devon to the Isle of Wight. Most British specimens differ considerably from typical *T. callicratis* from southern Europe in their much weaker apertural dentition - this distinction probably reflecting their long genetic isolation. It has been found in just 11 hectads since 1965 (Kerney, 1999, *Atlas of the Land and Freshwater Molluscs of Britain and Ireland*, Harley Books) and has been given *British Red Data Book* (Rare) status (M.P. Kerney, 1999, in: J.H. Bratton, ed., *British Red Data Books: 3. Invertebrates other than insects*, JNCC). Its British populations are regarded, however, as being relatively secure.

The snail is said to live amongst short dry calcareous grassland in exposed places and amongst rocks and screes on the cliff slopes of the south-facing seacliffs of the Cretaceous Chalk and Jurassic Limestone. The Branscombe area has some of the most westerly exposures of chalk within Britain. We were lucky to have Barry Colville with us and he was able to point out areas where he had previously found the species and where he had been told other members had found it in the past. One locality on the east side of Branscombe Mouth where he had found several in 1970 had subsequently ceased to be productive for the species - whether or not it still survives there is not known.

The field party started searching high on the brow of Branscombe West Cliff (SY2088). The sward varied from dense matted grasslands through finer herb-rich typical chalk grassland, into sparsely-vegetated therophyte vegetation along the cliff edges. A blower-vac machine with two-stroke engine was used to draw up loose debris from the cliff-top grasslands into a collecting bag. The debris was then passed through 2.5 and 0.5mm sieves to remove both coarse material and fine dust, and then examined in a white plastic tray. Little was found in the denser swards but the shorter, more open areas were found to contain large numbers of *Pupilla muscorum* together with *Candidula interseca*, *Ceruella virgata* and *Vertigo pygmaea*. *Abida secale* was also locally frequent on steeper slopes with open friable areas. This is a very characteristic assemblage for long-established, fine and sparsely-vegetated, calcareous grasslands in southern Britain. At the time it was thought that no *T. callicratis* had been found but we each took away plastic packets with samples of the debris for microscopic examination. Both my own and Barry's samples from this area were, however, later found to contain one full grown and one juvenile shell each - unrecognised success at our first spot! Barry's also held a live *Pupilla* of sinistral form - there are very few references to this form in the literature.

We moved on to Berry Cliff (SY1988) and later to Lower Dunscombe Cliff (SY160881), continuing searching using the blower-vac machine as well as searching by hand. We did manage to spot a few old *T. callicratis* shells in the debris from the last site and so confirmed a successful expedition at the time. This last area is a site known to Martin Willing to hold the

snail. Branscombe West Cliff may however be a previously unknown locality.

The day was finished off by the leader demonstrating how to knock *Balea perversa* snails from gorse foliage, where it presumably grazes the epiphytes which cover the spiny foliage. It can be found in great abundance amongst gorse all around the south-west coasts. Barry Colville drew the group's attention to a paper by R.C. Preece and E. Gittenberger (Systematics, distribution and ecology of *Balea* (= *Tristania*) (Pulmonata: Clausiliidae) in the islands of the Tristan-Gough group. *Journal of Molluscan Studies* 69 (4): 329-348) in which the authors accept

the view of H. Nordsieck and T.E.J. Ripken that *Balea heydeni* is a separate species that sometimes occurs sympatrically with *B. perversa*. British conchologists need to follow this up and clarify the status of our *Balea* snails.

These cliffs are mostly owned by the National Trust and form part of the Sidmouth to Beer Cliffs SSSI and the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. We would like to record our thanks to John Channon (NT Property Manager), Matt Boydell (NT Warden) and Amanda Newsome (English Nature Conservation Officer for East Devon & Exeter) for their help in enabling this field meeting to take place.

Molluscs from Four Holes Swamp, South Carolina

by Peter Topley

Four Holes Swamp is located 35 miles west of Charleston, South Carolina, USA. It is nearly 60 miles long, encompasses over 40,000 acres and is a major tributary of the Edisto River. Part of this area near Harleyville, known as the Francis Beidler Forest, is managed as a wildlife sanctuary by the National Audubon Society, the aim of which is to protect the largest virgin stand of cypress-tupelo backwater swamp in the world. A 1.5 mile long boardwalk takes visitors into the heart of the swamp, past 1000 year old cypress trees. I was lucky to have a few hours to visit this area on my way to catch a flight home following a business trip. The Director of the visitor centre, Norman Brunswig, kindly allowed me to carry out a brief survey of the edge of the swamp area for molluscs. The area consisted of boggy cypress forest, the floor of which was covered in leaf litter with occasional moss-covered decaying branches. What Norman had failed to point out was the additional presence of a large population of highly venomous cottonmouth pit vipers, several of which I encountered but which luckily kept their distance! The numbers of snails found was small yet interesting for anyone (like me) who is less familiar with the fauna of this area and I list them here. I would recommend

this part of South Carolina for anyone planning a "conchological holiday", both for its non-marine and marine interest.

Mesodon thyroidus Say (Common White-Lipped Forest Snail) c.28mm. This is probably the commonest and most widespread pulmonate in the eastern USA with a range from Canada and Maine to Florida and west to Oklahoma and Texas. Individuals were found under damp leaf litter.

Triodopsis hopetonensis Shuttleworth (Hopeton Forest Snail) c.13mm. This is a coastal plain species found from Virginia to Florida. Under dead wood on drier parts of the boardwalk trail.

Triodopsis sp. Damaged shell - unidentifiable but possibly different from *T. hopetonensis*.

Anguispira alternata Say (Striped Forest Snail) Endodonts in the US are characterised by having depressed brownish shells with a strong surface sculpture of axial ribs and riblets. The animals are frequently found in large colonies. The animal of *A. alternata* is distinctive because it is rather brightly coloured and the animal produces an orange slime trail. Under leaf litter and debris in the drier part of trail.

Haplotrema concavum Say (Disc

Cannibal Snail)(c.18mm) This species has a huge umbilicus and a pale yellow flat shell. The animal is a predator, feeding on other molluscs and worms. The animal is long and slender and can aggressively enter the aperture of its prey and is able to consume its victim to its entirety into the topmost whorl. It is also possible that *Haplotrema* feeds as a cannibal on juveniles of its own species. Found under decaying wood under the boardwalk. Also found: small snail (c.5mm diameter) with sharp keel, small umbilicus and no teeth in aperture (could be a juvenile).

Freshwater: I found two specimens of possibly *Pisidium dubium* or small *Sphaerium* by sampling from a platform next to a hollow cypress tree, but identification has yet to be confirmed. I was also briefly shown a freshwater gastropod collected earlier by the wardens. I recommended that it should be checked that this was not the introduced *Bithynia tentaculata* which it seemed to resemble. *B. tentaculata* has been implicated as having a negative effect on native populations of Pleurocerid snails, which can quickly suffer from the strong competition, contributing to local extinction.

Bequests

Although a member I am not able to get to the Society meetings in London. I thus miss out on the camaraderie, support and friendship of many other members. I have also missed out when items are offered for sale during such meetings. Jan Light's short piece in *Mollusc World*, No. 6, concerning a bequest from the former member Jennifer Crowley appeared as a ray of hope. I followed the advice in the article and was delighted to be able to purchase a number of the books. So, it is possible to gain some of the benefits of membership without getting to London meetings.

Having bought the books, with which I am delighted, I started to think about my own situation. There will come a time when both my books and shells will become a problematic issue concerning disposal. None of my family has an interest in natural history, so at best my books would probably end up in charity shop and my shells in the dustbin. Jennifer's bequest to the Society has made me think again. I will be talking to my adult children as to whether or not I need to change my will to ensure that the Society can sell on my books and benefit from the income. My shells would go to any member of the Society who would be willing to collect them - with no charge. I am interested in beach-worn shells so there are no prime, high value specimens. However, the eventual recipient of my collection might be rewarded with some fine examples of Tertiary molluscs from around the Mediterranean, a few shells from Reunion Island and a variety of other, interesting oddments that have come my way.

I then thought that, perhaps, other members of the Society might want/need/like to consider similar options.

David Harfield

Jan Light replies for Council:

David has brought several issues to the fore that are likely to be common concerns with many members, especially those living some distance from meetings. With regard to the disposal of Jennifer Crowley's shells and books this was specifically

organised so that the whole membership might benefit. Where possible we will try to continue this practice. David's letter is a personal statement but we welcome it. Bequests are an important income source and as a registered charity, we have been very grateful to Jennifer Crowley and other members who have remembered us in their will. However bequests are not just valuable sources of income, they also allow members to benefit from the redistribution of books and shells, this being very much in line with the Society's Conservation policy of recycling shells from old collections. The disposal of a collection that has been lovingly amassed, can prove a headache for one's relatives but it is worth thinking about it in good time. Talk to your families and make sure they appreciate the value of your collection. It may be that a local natural history society or museum might be considered to be the appropriate repository for a collection but this option should be explored beforehand. Often, museums either refuse 'ordinary' collections, or will accept them only on the basis that the material be incorporated in their main collection; and regrettably, many provincial museums no longer have the staff to guarantee adequate curation of biological materials. Under the umbrella of 'collections' we should include archival documents such as field notebooks and recording cards, indexes, catalogues - all sources of ancillary information to enhance the interpretation and value of the main collection, but which might so easily be destroyed. Advice on all these matters is contained in Norris, A. 1988. Being of Sound Mind. *Conchologists' Newsletter* 105. 98-101.

The other issue David raises is the regrettable fact that it is a minority of members who attend indoor meetings. These take place in London, not just for historical reasons but because at the present time the Society's membership is heavily focused in southern England and it would be disproportionate to arrange more than one annual indoor meeting elsewhere. Nevertheless we value our more widely dispersed members and Council is open to practicable suggestions as to how we might redress the balance and bring a Society meeting to members who may feel isolated from the Society's hub. A start might be to follow David Harfield's example and use *Mollusc World* as a forum for exchange of ideas and suggestions. and don't forget the Society's electronic bulletin board - conchology-uk@smartgroups.com. To join the list email Sarah Longrigg at slongrigg@hotmail.com for details.

Where are all the virgin conchologists?

Not quite sure of the location, I arrived, so I thought, bright and early. I'd just opened my flask for a welcome cup of coffee when up rolled the veteran 'snailers'. It was a very picturesque site, Pocklington Canal, and well-maintained

with useful display boards giving a brief history of the area. Not wasting any time, we made a start. Well, I say "we"; I stood uselessly on the bank whilst these very experienced guys trawled the canal with their high-tech equipment i.e. a sieve on a stick. They then reeled off a long list of Latin names, in quick fire succession, whilst the rain began.

We then moved to another couple of sites, still along the canal. The wind and rain began with a vengeance. I was really

beginning to wonder what I was doing there. Apparently oblivious to this atrocious weather, my companions bravely carried on with vast enthusiasm, despite being nearly blown into the water!

Despite the constant lashing rain and howling gale (it was like something out of an old black and white horror movie), I learnt quite a bit about both snailing and snailers. So much so, I even turned up to the next field meeting in the North Yorkshire Moors to learn from these great

naturalists. This time, the weather was much more favourable and the scenery stunning. We travelled up the wonderful scar of Levisham and set to, with the noise of the occasional steam train in the background. Adrian and David identified some promising flushes (a term David patiently explained to me, that's how green I am) and off we went in search of all things molluscan. Again, the rest of the company enthusiastically got onto hands and knees, immediately picking up tiny molluscs and rattling off yet more Latin names. Feeling baffled again, I pottered around, found one or two species I thought I could identify and got stuck in.

For me, a lot of the enjoyment also came from the many other creatures I got the chance to see at close quarters: dragonflies, newts, grasshoppers, beetles (I knew the name of that one!) and, best of all, a slow worm. Most of these other beasties were of course found and identified by the walking wildlife encyclopaedias that were my snailing companions.

Both these field visits brought forth a question that's been bubbling away in my brain for quite some time: Why do there seem to be no intermediate mollusc people? They appear to be either very experienced (i.e. everyone except me) or complete beginners, who feel a bit confused by it all (i.e. me). Am I the only one?

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News from Ireland

Evelyn Moorkens

The arctic-alpine pea mussel *Pisidium conventus* is one of the rarest bivalves in Ireland. It has been recorded only from three localities: Brandon Mountain in County Kerry, Lough Barra in Donegal, and Lough Aquire, County Fermanagh. The Donegal record dates from 1967 (by Mary Pugh) but the others are by A.W. Stelfox between 1909 and the 1920s. Stelfox visited Brandon Mountain and collected *Pisidium* on three occasions between 1910 and 1914, the first time in the company of Robert Welch. They collected specimens that they could not assign to any species known to them although B.B. Woodward named them as *P. pusillum* (= *nitidum*). Subsequently Chas Oldham collected the same species in Snowdonia. It was not until the late 1920s that these were recognised as *P. conventus* although Stelfox originally held the view that *P. conventus* "was but a degenerate race of *P. casertanum*"; but the evidence produced by Dr Jules Favre has forced me – at least temporarily – to abandon this view" (Stelfox 1929). Thus his earlier works on the molluscs of Ireland (Stelfox 1911) and the molluscs of Dingle (Stelfox 1915) do not include this species. The full history of the recognition of *P. conventus* is given by Oldham (1932).

There are no recent records in the Irish National database for Brandon Mountain, so last August Ian Killeen and I decided to see whether it was still there. At least ten "Pater noster" lakes are present in the glaciated valley running south-east from the summit of Brandon Mountain (alt 891m) - the lowest, Loch Cruite lies at an altitude of 194m. Stelfox (1929) notes that *P. conventus* was confined to the highest tarns at an altitude of 2000 to 2300 feet (c.710m). There is no easy access up the valley from Loch Cruite, therefore one has to walk several kilometres along the path

from west of Cloghane and along the eastern slopes of the valley below the summit of Dún Cinn Tire. Once you reach the right area you realise that the tarns you want to sample are some 150m below you at the bottom of very steep boulder scree. It is also at this point that the weather deteriorates and the cloud descends. Having got this far with all the sampling gear one is not going to give up, so off down the scree in the cloud and drizzle to the nearest tarn lying at an altitude of c. 600m (but not the two highest ones referred to by Stelfox – which are not so easy to get to). Surely our chosen tarn would be OK, after all, there is a stream flowing out of the higher tarns into the one we are proposing to sample – wouldn't the *P. conventus* flow downhill? Having reached the tarn, by now obliterated by cloud we quickly sampled the muddy ledges vegetated by *Littorella*. A quick look revealed that there were *Pisidium* in the sample so what more could be done? Needless-to-say, by the time the footpath was reached and we had descended back towards Cloghane, the sun came out. Should one go back and try to sample the higher lakes, or keep convincing oneself that *Pisidium* really do flow downhill? The latter argument won. It was then another 3 days of angst before we returned to Dublin and were able to examine the sample. Well – *P. conventus* does still live on Brandon Mountain – the sample contained about 200 specimens of which at least half were *P. conventus*. The other species were *P. nitidum*, *P. obtusale* and *P. milium*. We are grateful to Eugene Ross for directions for our route, and for the use of his photograph of the *Pater noster* lakes on a much better day than ours!

I reported in *Mollusc World* 2 on a wide-ranging mollusc survey of the Grand and Royal Canals carried out in 2003. An

examination of additional material collected during this survey has led to the discovery of *Sphaerium nucleus* (Studer, 1870) – the first records for Ireland. The species was collected at two locations on the Royal Canal in County Longford, between Ballymahon and Killashee. The western end of the Royal Canal has not been used for either commercial or leisure traffic for forty years or more. The lack of management since that time has resulted in the canal gradually drying out such that much of it is ponded up and given rise to swamp habitat. Indeed some sections near Longford have virtually dried out to the extent whereby they support fen vegetation with *Vertigo moulinsiana*. The habitat at the sites comprised swampy pools, densely vegetated with *Glyceria maxima*, *Carex riparia*, *Equisetum vulgare*, *Typha angustifolia*, *Alisma plantago aquatica*,

Mentha aquatica, *Myriophyllum* spp. and *Potamogeton* spp. The associated mollusc fauna at the two sites was low diversity with: *Valvata cristata*, *Physa fontinalis*, *Lymnaea stagnalis*, *Stagnicola fuscus*, *Planorbarius corneus*, *Planorbis planorbis*, *Hippeutis complanatus*, *Pisidium milium* and *P. obtusale*.

Sphaerium nucleus may be separated from *S. corneum* on the basis of its smaller, very tumid shell with the area of greatest tumidity between the centre of the shell and the ventral margin, the sloping anterior-dorsal margin and the dense pores on the shell surface (see descriptions and illustrations in Killeen, Aldridge & Oliver 2004). In England it has so far been reported from richly-vegetated ditches on grazing marsh systems in south-east England and East Anglia (Killeen *et al.* 2004).

Proposed Subscription Increase from 2006

The Society's Council considers that it is necessary for the annual subscription to be increased with effect from 1st January 2006 and a Rule change to this effect will be put to the Annual General Meeting which is to be held on 16th April 2005 at the Natural History Museum. The reasons behind the decision to propose an increase are as follows.

The Marine Biological Association has been advised by the Charity Commission that the level of benefits received by its members is significantly higher than is appropriate for the fees they pay, and that this compromises the status of the M.B.A. as a charity. The fundamental principle of charitable giving, within the current law, is that members of a charity should not receive more in benefits than they pay in donations or subscriptions. The Conchological Society is in a similar position. The cost of publications (Journal, Mollusc World and Members Guide) in the year 1 January to 31 December 2003 was £18,504, and income from fees and subscriptions was £10,411. If the Charity Commission were to consider Meetings as also constituting a benefit to members (as well they might), then benefits would exceed subscriptions by another £1,705, so that the benefit to each member would be nearly double the subscription they presently pay. (The costs for the year ended 31 December

2004 are similar, but audited figures are not available at the time of writing)

If the Society were to implement immediately the principle of charitable giving in relation to benefits received, it would mean doubling the present subscription.

Council is reluctant to double the subscription, although such action would completely forestall all possible criticism from the Charity Commission. To date we have not received any comments from the Charity Commission, but now that the legal position regarding charitable giving has been brought to our notice, we are sure members will agree that we cannot ignore it.

It is over 10 years since the last increase and costs (particularly those associated with printing and with publishing to modern standards) have escalated in that time. Over the past few years, donations have helped to mitigate any deficit, but the Society cannot count on sporadic pieces of good fortune such as these.

Council recommends an increase which will reduce the ratio between the subscriptions and the benefits, and proposes to review the position again in a few years. If every member were to try to recruit a new member, that would also help to reduce the ratio of benefits to subscriptions, because the cost of publications is not directly proportional to the number printed.

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If the Charity Commission were to criticise us later and insist on our fees and donations covering all the benefits, the increase at that later time would not be as large as it would have to be if we were to do it all now. Alternatively, we would have to consider giving up our charitable status which Council does not recommend.

Council therefore recommends that with effect from 1st January 2006:

- 1 The early payment discount should be abolished; presently this is £1.
- 2 The entrance fee for new members should be abolished; presently £1.
- 4 Subscriptions should be increased to:
 - (a) Ordinary membership: £33 (presently £23)
 - (b) Family/Joint membership: £35 (presently £25)
 - (c) Institutional Membership (receive both Journal and Mollusc World): to addresses in UK – £47 (presently £32); to addresses overseas – £50 (£37)
 - (d) Student (in full-time education): £15 (presently £10)

Council trusts that the information given above is sufficient to enable a considered decision to be made regarding the proposed changes and that members will support us by voting in favour of the resolution at the A.G.M.

Pryce Buckle (Honorary Treasurer)



Adrian Fowles



Evelyn Moorkens



Eugene Ross



Jan Light



Jan Light



Solaropsis paravicinii Ancy, 1897

Melville-Tomlin Collection
NMW.1955.158.01458

NMGW archive

The Countryside Council for Wales is putting up sculptures at the entrance to all of its NNR's. At Whiteford Burrows they have decided to commemorate *Vertigo angustior* - albeit in a somewhat abstract manner (Thanks to Adrian Fowles for this).



Ron Boyce

These images relate to specific articles within the magazine.

- 1. Royal Canal habitat for *Sphaerium nucleus*. Page 8
- 2. The lakes on Brandon Mountain. Page 8
- 3. *Truncatellina* habitat. Page 5
- 4. Sampling with the vacuum. Page 5
- 5. Wild oyster *in situ*. Page 2
- 6. Two specimens of *Chiamys varia* attached to rock underside. Page 2
- 7. *Solaropsis paravicinii* Ancy. Page 16
- 8. *Mesodon thyroidus* Say. Page 6
- 9. *Triodopsis hopetonensis* Shuttleworth. Page 6
- 10. *Haplotrema concavum* Say. Page 6
- 11. *Haplotrema concavum* Say. Page 6



Ron Boyce



Peter Topley



Peter Topley



Peter Topley



Peter Topley

Documenting the Past: Further insights into the Tomlin Archive

Jennifer Gallichan
(NMGW, Cardiff)

In follow up to the article I wrote for the November 2003 issue concerning some of the letters held in Tomlin archive of correspondence (held at the National Museum and Galleries of Wales), I would like to tell you a little about some of the other letters from the collection. This time I wish to focus on those of Yoichiro Hirase and his son Shintaro Hirase.

Yoichiro Hirase was undoubtedly a great contributor to conchology. He devoted his life to the study of shells and shell collecting, exchanging with collectors worldwide, accumulating nearly 3,500 shells, hundreds of which were new to science. His wide ranging expeditions and investigations resulted in the increase in scientific knowledge of the fauna of Japan and many areas of the Far East including Korea, China and groups of islands such as the Bonins and Loochoos. His work is perhaps best reflected in the production of his most famous book “*Kai sen shu-One Thousand kinds of shell existing in Japan*”. This beautiful book comprises of four silk bound volumes containing traditional hand coloured illustrations produced from woodcuts. All of the illustrations are painted onto a single long sheet folded concertina style, each one sheet making up one whole volume. He felt his work was important not only to the scientific community, but also to the art and technological world.

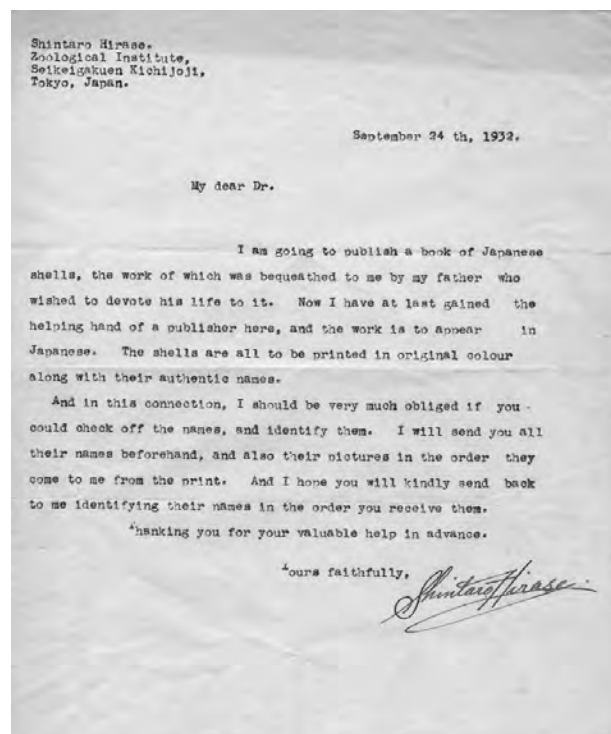
One of his great passions was to bring the study of shells to the wider audience. It is said that he was not satisfied to merely accumulate shells into large



collections, stating that it was like ‘burying treasures underground’. He was frustrated by the lack of natural history specimens displayed at the Tokyo Imperial Museum, feeling that too little space was dedicated to the education of the public in this area of natural history. To rectify this, he opened the Hirase Conchological Museum in June 1913, located near to Kyoto Zoo. The museum contained vast displays of Japanese and ‘foreign’ molluscs, exhibits on mollusc cultivation, shell button factories, mollusc habitats, collection, and the use of shells by native tribes. Unfortunately this unique institution had to close six years later due to the continued poor health of Hirase combined with strained financial circumstances.

It is to this closure that the first letter addresses, written to Tomlin in June 1919. Hirase appears to have suffered greatly from a reoccurring illness that left him bed ridden for long periods. Here he describes the symptoms:

“I often feel a severe pain in the abdomen, and have an attack of fever. A complete rest is of the greatest importance to... The doctor advised me that if I were not patient enough to take the greatest care of myself in a slow

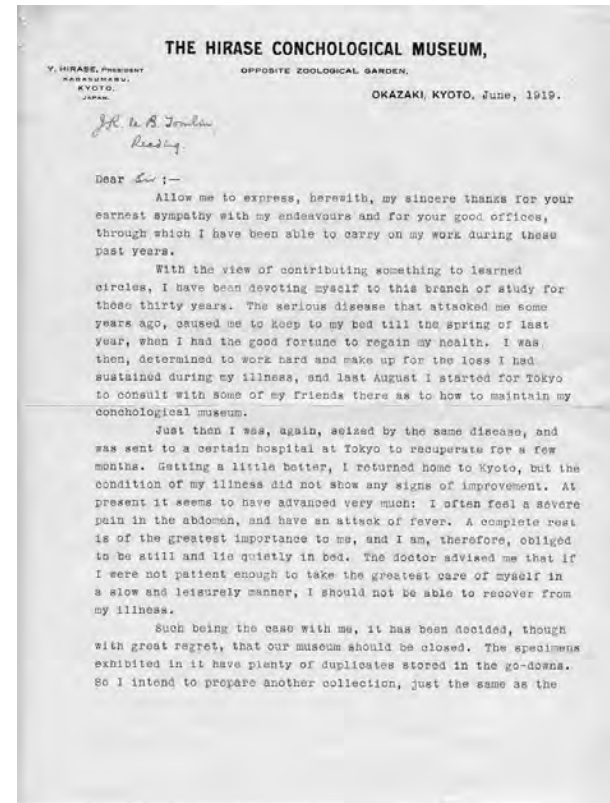


and leisurely manner, I should not be able to recover from my illness”

He goes on to say:

“The serious disease that attacked me some years ago, caused me to keep to my bed till the spring of last year, when I had the good fortune to regain my health. I was then, determined to work hard and make up for the loss I had sustained during my illness, and last August I started for Tokyo to consult with some of my friends there as to how to maintain my conchological museum”

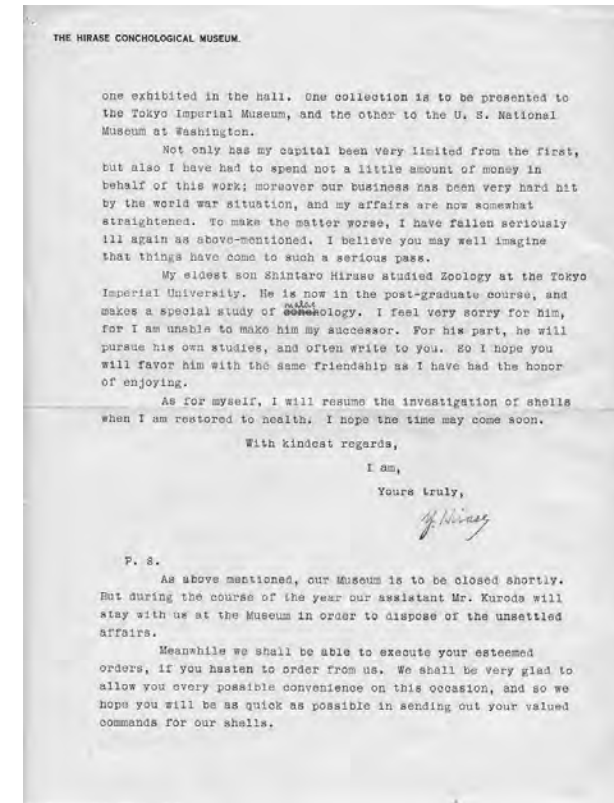
However it seems that the illness returned and the situation took a turn for the worse:



“Not only has my capital been very limited from the first, but also I have had to spend not a little amount of money in behalf of this work; moreover our business has been hard hit by the world war situation”

It is thus with regret that he states he must close the museum. The collections were donated to the Tokyo Imperial Museum and to the U. S. National Museum at Washington. He finishes by stating that it is also his profound regret not to make his son, Shintaro, his successor.

Shintaro Hirase followed in his father's footsteps, devoting most of his life in the same line on work. He possessed his



father's passion for the education of the public, spending much of his time in teaching the younger generation, giving courses in natural sciences at the Meiji, Hosei and Sensyu Universities. He was present at the opening of his father's museum and made a brief

address to those present, following in a line of distinguished speakers. In 1934 he published “*A collection of Japanese Shells*”. The book includes more than 1360 species and is accompanied by many colour plates. It is to this work that he refers to in a letter to Tomlin, dated September 24th, 1932:

“I am going to publish a book of Japanese shells, the work of which was bequeathed to me by my father who wished to devote his life to it. Now I have at last gained the helping hand of a publisher here, and the work is to appear in Japanese. The shells are to be printed in original colour along with their authentic names.”

He goes on to request Tomlin's help in the identification of various specimens, this assistance is cordially acknowledged in the preface to the book. It seems that his father had planned to produce a comprehensive book on Japanese conchology, however, the book “*Sho-Kairuigaku-Small Treatise on Conchology*” was never published due to Yoichiro's death. Shintaro went on to produce his father's final work under the new title. It seems fitting that in some way Shintaro did actually become his father's successor after all.

Yoichiro and Shintaro Hirase did much for Japanese conchology, helping to place their country on the map. The Japan of today has become a haven for conchological research and collection, with a continued reputation for the production of beautifully illustrated books. In conclusion I quote Peter Dance from “*Shell Collecting-An illustrated history*” who states:

“Hirase may not be responsible for the flowering of Japanese conchology but he sowed and nourished the seed”

All images taken from NMGW archive.

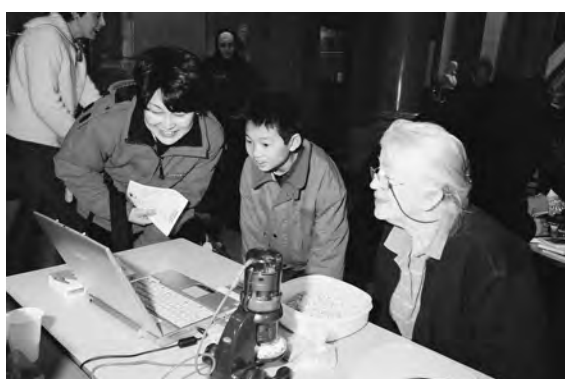
Wales: National Science Week 2004

John Llewellyn-Jones and Celia Pain

National Science Week was organised to promote hands-on science, especially for children. The National Museum and Gallery, Cardiff took part, putting on open days, Friday 12 – Sunday 14 March, with special exhibits in the Grand Hall. Most of the displays were provided by the Biological Sciences Group, Malacological Section with the assistance of the Conchological Society. This was a conscious-raising exercise for molluscs. The three hectic days were voted a success by everyone.

John Llewellyn-Jones, Christine Street and Celia Pain travelled to Cardiff to participate. Friday the 12th March was Schools Day, but when we woke there was a thick layer of snow. Most schools were closed, and the Museum visits were cancelled but we were kept busy because lots of parents bought their youngsters anyway. The displays and activities were busy all day on Saturday and Sunday, an estimated 1900 visitors attended Science Week. We were available to tell visitors about the shells and help with activities. They include:

- A display of large interesting and colourful shells and identification books, which could be picked up and examined by visitors. This was very popular; nearly everyone wanted to know why they could hear the sea when they put the shells to their ear! They were provided by the Malacological Section
- Christine Street joined us on the Saturday and did a wonderful job enthusing youngsters and their parents who were able to use a digital microscope and screen to look at minute marine shells. Many small visitors came back several times during the day
- Feelies: an opaque box filled with sand and a dozen shells, which youngsters had to identify by feel from examples on the wall behind. A great success with the younger children, especially as they were given a small bag of shells as a prize. The idea was suggested by Adrian Rundle.
- A quiz, devised by Harriet Wood, which could be answered in the Museum's Mollusc Gallery. 'Goody Bags' were given as prizes: 50 of these attractive bags were produced. They contained marine and non-marine shells and a booklet to aid identification, and information about the Museum and Society. The aim of the bags was to encourage children to identify the shells and then find out more about them
- Activity table: with Wordsearch, crayons and colouring sheets to make stand-up snails, octopus and snails which could be made to roll along with a marble in them. It became the focus for families as parents helped



All photos © Celia Pain

younger children to cut and colour

- A large tray of foreign sea shells that the visitors were allowed to choose one to take away. A very difficult choice for many! All the shells had gone by the end of the weekend
- A number of short videos on molluscs were available
- Display of Society history, literature and publications

The Museum's activities:

- Get to know a mollusc, in which visitors were able to handle large living *Achatina* – Ugh!! But they loved it!
- Made beautiful coloured models in Fimo with Ben Rowson's expert help
- A garden snail survey which people of any age could join
- Using a microscope to draw tiny shells and insects
- Display illustrating the Museum's historical collections
- Printing badges with snails and other beasts
- Matching shells with shaped holes

Before we even got to Wales there was a great deal to organise. We would like to thank Barry Colville, Adrian Sumner, Jane Reynolds and Pryce Buckle for sending us land and freshwater shells for inclusion in the 'goody bags'. The design and production of the bags were done by Celia and John. A very big thank you must go to Harriet Wood and Jennifer Gallichan, who put in many hours before and during the Science Week. It would not have been the great success it was without their unstinting help. Also: Ciara Charnley, Ben Rowson and Chris Meecham; Terry Wimbleton who organised the Society display boards.

We feel that we can honestly say that although the weekend was extremely tiring, it was a great success. The adults and children who visited during the three days had a great time and learned much more about molluscs than they could have imagined.



Notes on a French Conchologist

By Harriet Wood (NMGW, Cardiff)

The Mollusca Section of the National Museum and Galleries of Wales has a reputation for its production of New Names lists. The first was the New Names of James Cosmo Melvill, produced by Alison Trew in 1987. This was followed by three more over the following decade; those of Tomlin, Smith and the Adams brothers. All have since become standard reference texts by curators and enthusiasts worldwide. To continue this tradition Jennifer Gallichan and myself started work a year ago on researching the French conchologist César-Marie-Felix Ancey. Although his entire collection does not reside at Cardiff a good proportion does and so trawling the Melvill-Tomlin collection for his material seemed a good place to start. Through reading his obituaries and other references we have also been able to find out a lot about Ancey as a collector and the great contribution to science he provided in his short life.

Ancey was born in Marseille, France on 15th November 1860. He showed a keen interest in natural history and by the time he was 23 he was appointed conservator of the Oberthur entomological collections at Rennes. Shortly afterwards he returned to Marseille to study the diverse mix of law, literature and science and successfully obtained his diploma in 1885. Two years on he entered the government in Algeria and after 13 years hard work he was promoted to acting administrator at Mascara in Western Algeria.

Even before Ancey started his diploma studies he was writing and publishing conchological papers and began to amass his own collection. From 1881 to the year he died he published some 140 papers and introduced over 500 new taxa names. Many of his papers can be found in the prominent French journals such as the Journal de Conchyliologie, Bulletins de la Société Zoologique de France and La Naturaliste. His interest was very much focused on the smaller land snails and through exchange and purchase he collected from worldwide localities. The Pacific and Asia are particularly strong in his collection but it also covers Europe, N & S America and Africa. It was Ancey's great desire to have made a scientific journey to the Cape Verde Islands or South America but sadly this dream was never realised as Ancey died of a fever at the young age of 46.

After Ancey's death Fischer (1908) published a list of his many small publications on Mollusca and Geret (1909) published a list of Ancey's new species names. However, neither of these lists are complete. Since we started the project a year ago we have identified over 800 taxa names introduced by Ancey, nearly 300 more than Geret listed in 1909. We have also identified many more of his publications than those listed by Fischer.

After Ancey died his collection went to Paul Geret who later sold it in 1919 and 1923. It was at this point the collection became fragmented - the great private collectors, Tomlin, Dautzenberg and Connolly all competing for a part of Ancey's excellent collection. The specimens now mainly reside in Cardiff (Melvill-Tomlin collection), Brussels (Dautzenberg collection), BMNH (Connolly collection), Paris, and Honolulu. Having trawled the Melvill-Tomlin collection we now know that 300 of these taxa are represented in our collection - we are currently

researching these to ascertain how many of them are types. As we are aware that a lot of Ancey's material is also in Brussels we wish to go there to continue our research and image as much of his type material as possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland for awarding us a grant which will allow us to make this trip in the coming months. We hope that our final publication will be taken to a higher level than the previous lists with the inclusion of high quality images of the types and by researching the material from the other collections. We also hope it will reflect the true extent of Ancey's contribution to conchology and help to make his collection more accessible to the scientific community worldwide.



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Diary of Meetings Conchological Society

Programme Secretary: *Ron Boyce, 447c Wokingham Road, Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 7EL*

IMPORTANT: Please remember to inform the leader if you are attending a field meeting. If you are held up in traffic or your public transport is delayed, it may be possible to ring the Programme Secretary on 07941 094395 on the day of the meeting for information on the location of the field site being surveyed.

Indoor meetings at the Natural History Museum will again be taking place in the Palaeontology Demonstration Room at the end of Gallery 30.

Key to meetings:

NHM	= Natural History Museum, London, indoor meeting
FIELD	= Field Meeting at outdoor location
WKSHP	= Workshop on molluscan topics
YCS	= Yorkshire Conch. Soc. Events

FIELD – Saturday 2 April
Wyre Forest, Worcestershire
Contact: Ron Boyce or Rosemary Hill (0118 935 1413 or 0118 966 5160) (home)

A further opportunity to explore this extensive area of semi-natural ancient woodland straddling the Worcestershire-Shropshire border with the central Dowles Brook valley separating the two counties. Several deep stream valleys run into Dowles Brook from the N and S. The Forest is situated on the Upper Carboniferous Coal Measures and the soils are very variable with marls, conglomerates and small sandstone outcrops. There is a scattering of basic seepages, deposition of tufa and a variety of small bogs and pools. Acidic and basic soils occur in close proximity to each other. Thanks to English Nature, Forestry Commission and private landowners we shall be able to drive along forest tracks to various locations. Meet at the rear of the Forestry Commission Visitors Centre at 10:30h. This is situated on the S. side of the A456 running west from Bewdley and about 3 km from the town centre.

Meet at 10:00h at the car park above Cayton Sands, grid ref. TA 069841. Low tide is at 10:30h.

FIELD – Saturday 21 May
Treswell Wood & Clarborough Tunnel nature reserves, Nottinghamshire.
Leader: Chris du Feu (01427 848400) (home)

A one day meeting to record molluscs in these two very different habitats. Both are SSSIs managed by Notts. Wildlife Trust and, although relatively close are in different 10 km squares in this relatively poorly recorded part of the country. Treswell Wood is ancient woodland, managed since 1973 by NWT and is coppiced hazel with, mainly, ash standards. Mollusc recording in the wood has been limited to slugs. Clarborough Tunnel is an area of limestone grassland with some scrub woodland. No mollusc recording has been carried out here.

YCS – Saturday 9 April 2005
Coverdale
Meet at 10:30h at the parking area at Pinkers Pond on the Coverdale road from Middleham, grid ref. SE 113868.
NHM – Saturday 16 April 2005
14:30h in the Demonstration Room.
Meet at Treswell Wood main entrance at 10:00h (SK762789 on the minor road between Grove and Treswell to the south of Retford). Afternoon session, at about 14:00h will be at Clarborough (SK756826). Approach from the unclassified Retford to Leverton road, turning down the unmetalled Rathole Lane at SK752815).

Alehouses, sandwich bars etc. are limited in this rural area. Bring your own food and drink. Some parts of Treswell Wood are muddy – bring walking boots or wellingtons.

Members are welcome to join for all or part of the day. For more details contact the leader.

FIELD – Saturday 4 June and Sunday 5 June:
County Durham.

Leader: Rosemary Hill (0118 966 5160) (answerphone) (home)

A two-day meeting to a diverse range of sites in County Durham.

Meet on Saturday 4 June 2005 at 10:30h at Rowley picnic area (grid ref. NZ 087479) which is on the Wakerley Way on the west side of the A68 immediately south of Rowley village. The first site to be visited is the alder carr in the valley between Castleside and Knitsley.

Participants should enter the second gate (shortly after the main sign-posted entrance) when travelling from Bewdley at SO 750739 to park behind the main Visitors Centre where they will be met and guided into the Forest.

YCS – Saturday 9 April 2005
Coverdale

Meet at 10:30h at the parking area at Pinkers Pond on the Coverdale road from Middleham, grid ref. SE 113868.

NHM – Saturday 16 April 2005
14:30h in the Demonstration Room.

Annual General Meeting
Presidential Address by Dr Jan Light on the subject of 'Molluscs as major contributors to the Recent biogenic carbonates of the West Shetland Shelf'.

Abstract
Cold water carbonate deposits are entirely biogenic and a Northeast Atlantic Carbonate Province (NEACP) extends from the western entrance of the Mediterranean Sea (36°N) to Spitsbergen in the Arctic Circle (80°N). In favourable areas, where input from land sediments to the seabed is low, sediments rich in the shelly remains of at least 12 major groups of calcareous organisms accumulate, and molluscs are the dominant contributors. An analysis of a dataset of sublittoral sediments and associated benthos from the West Shetland Shelf (WSS) showed that certain species and associations of species play an important role in the carbonate system. Three distinctive carbonate-producing biotas give rise to recurring facies (groups of similar sediment types), both on the WSS and elsewhere in the NEACP and can be characterised as three carbonate 'factories'. The calcareous faunas which power these factories, especially the molluscs, will form the basis of the presentation.

YCS – Saturday 7 May
Cayton Bay