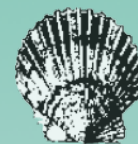




Shell and Tell



The Newsletter of the Gulf Coast Shell Club

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I enjoyed attending this year's Conchologists of America (COA) convention in Corpus Christi, Texas. The only other members of our club to attend were Kathy O'Brian, Brant Holman, and although of course, the Brunners. The field trips before the convention actually started were to the Texas State Aquarium, and to the preserved aircraft carrier *Lexington*, whose history goes back to WWII, when it was damaged by a kamikaze attack and a number of sailors were killed.

These conventions always include a number of presentations. I particularly enjoyed the ones this year. None were overly technically; topics ranged from research on oysters in Texas, to shell collecting in Fiji. There were three silent auctions for shells which typically result in very good deals. The big oral auction which occurs on the night of the convention's banquet, raised about \$14,000 for COA, which is a 501c non-profit organization. These funds are used to support research grants the COA gives annually to graduate students who are working in the field of malacology (study of mollusks). The last two days of the convention are devoted to the "bourse" in which shell dealers from all over the world set up displays of shells for sale. This is extremely impressive; imagine Donald Dan times 20, or a better display of shells than you will see in any museum. I thought I wouldn't spend much purchasing shells this year, but of course I was wrong and brought back many. Where to display them in my house?

This was the third COA that I have attended. I am concerned by the very old demographic of the COA attendees. The average age had to be well over 70 and many were over 80, even older than the demographic of our club. In another 10 years I don't know how many will be left unless new blood comes in.

The 2026 COA Convention will be in Bradenton FL, June 9-13. This location is within a day's drive for us, so I hope more of us can attend. For 2027, COA is already planning to hold the convention in Pensacola Beach in mid-August. I expect we will have to be involved with this since we are nearest club to this location.



- Club Meeting
August 12th
- Entry Forms Due
October 1st
- Pool Gathering
October 31st
- Awards Banquet
November 1st
- GCSC's 26th Shell Show
November 1st - 2nd

CLUB OFFICERS:

President - Dave Clausen
Vice President - Leanne Shell
Secretary - Angela Cummings
Correspondence - DJ Moore
Treasurer - Janis Laycock
Tides - Don Kotval
Membership - Gerry Lowther
Librarian - Kathy Dilbeck
Newsletter - Angela Cummings

PROGRAMS AND REFRESHMENTS



"Ways to expand your mind and waistline simultaneously!"

Month	Program	Refreshments
August	To Be Determined	Ice Cream Social

EVENTS

GULF COAST SHELL CLUB MEETING

August 12th. Mix and Mingle 6:30 PM. Meeting starts @ 7PM.

LAST DAY FOR SHELL SHOW ENTRY FORMS

October 1st, 2025. Point of contact: Kathy Dilbeck

WORKED OUR SHELLS OFF

Evening by the pool to unwind after the days work.
October, 31st @ 5:30PM

GULF COAST SHELL CLUB'S AWARD BANQUET

November 1st @ 5:30PM

GULF COAST SHELL CLUB'S 26TH SHELL SHOW

November 1st - 2nd



Happy Birthday!

AUGUST

BOB, PHYLLIS, & CHARYL!



Tongue River Reservoir - Decker, Montana

On the Sunday morning following Memorial Day weekend, our daughter and her husband were camping and fishing from their boat on the Tongue River Reservoir near Decker, Montana. This reservoir lies on the border of Montana and Wyoming, just north of Sheridan, Wyoming.

They were fishing for crappie, bass, and walleye using worms as bait. At one point, our daughter dropped her line - hook, worm, and sinker included - down to the bottom of the reservoir. As she began to reel it back in, she felt something heavy on the line. It turned out that the hook and worm had fallen right into an open freshwater clam, which then closed up on it. She reeled it into the boat, surprised by the unusual catch.

A game warden happened to be passing through their campground, so they asked him whether the clam was an invasive species. He told them it was not, and that they could do whatever they liked with it. They chose to return it to the reservoir.

Our daughter is an X-ray technician at the local hospital in Worland, Wyoming, specializing in mammograms. She and her husband have lived in Worland for over 30 years, raising two daughters - our granddaughters. One is now married, and the other lives and works in Casper, Wyoming.

Regards,
Walter Baldwin



SUMMERTIME BEACHCOMBER'S LOG

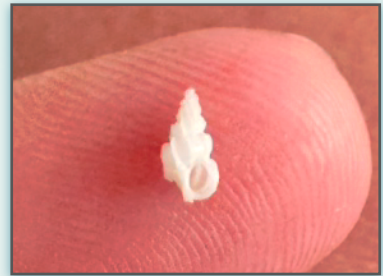
ST. ANDREW'S STATE PARK



Turkey Wing
Arca zebra (Swainson, 1833)



Dwarf Arrow Triton
Tritonoharpa lanceolata
(Menke, 1828)



Wentletrap
Epitonium humphreysii
(Kiener, 1838)



Mossy Ark
Arca imbricata
(Bruguiere, 1789)



McGinty's Cyphoma
Cyphoma mcgintyi
(Pilsbry, 1939)



Cabrit's Murex
Vokesimurex cabritii
(Bernardi, 1859)



Junonia
Scaphella junonia
(Lamarck, 1804)



Embedded shells.



Large Lettered Olive
Amerioliva sayana
(Ravenel, 1834)



Club member DJ Moore on the hunt.



Hairy Triton
Monoplex parthenopeus
(von Salis, 1793)



Remembering to check the cell while digging for shells.

SUMMERTIME BEACHCOMBER'S LOG

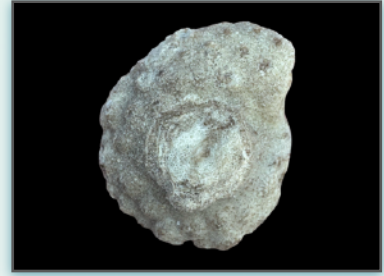
N A V A R R E B E A C H



Coral?



Shell?



Fossil?

I WAS STUMPED STARING AT THIS STRANGE OBJECT I HELD IN MY HAND. BURIED ONLY INCHES DEEP IN THE DRY SAND, IT APPEARED TO BE CORAL BUT HAD A PERFECT APERTURE INDICATING IT WAS A SHELL. MY HUSBAND CHALKED IT UP TO A FOSSIL, AND MOVED ON, BUT I WAS COMPLETELY INTRIGUED. A TWO-HOUR DRIVE HOME STILL DID NOT YIELD AN ANSWER, SO I TURNED TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND QUICKLY GOT A QUALITY REPLY.

THE TEXAS LONGHORN SHELL

“EVEN THOUGH RELATED SPECIES ARE STILL ALIVE TODAY, I’VE ONLY SEEN THIS PARTICULAR KIND AS FOSSILS HERE IN FLORIDA. THIS IS A BRYOZOAN (A COLONY BUILT BY VERY TINY BUT COMPLEX ANIMALS WHO USE CALCIUM CARBONATE TO MAKE THEIR SKELETON - THE TINY HOLES WERE EACH OCCUPIED BY ONE OF THESE CRITTERS, IN THE GENUS **CELLEPORA**).



WHAT HAPPENED WITH THIS BRYOZOAN IS THAT THE COLONY WAS BUILT ENCRUSTING AN EMPTY SNAIL SHELL THAT WAS AT THE TIME BEING CARRIED AROUND BY A HERMIT CRAB (WHICH EXTENDED OUT OF THE OLD APERTURE OPENING OF THE SNAIL - THE BIG OPENING).

I’VE FOUND THESE FOSSILS IN THE **CALOOSAHATCHEE** FORMATION (SANDS AND MUDS LAID DOWN OVER PARTS OF THE FLORIDA PENINSULA ABOUT 4 MILLION TO 2 MILLION YEARS AGO WHEN THIS AREA WAS FLOODED BY A SHALLOW SEA DUE TO HIGHER GLOBAL SEA LEVELS BEFORE THE ICE AGE). VERY NEAT FIND.” - RICK BATT

June Dawley, A Minor Marine Miracle



Courtesy of jaxshells.org. Used with permission.

POP QUIZ!

THE KIDS ARE HEADED BACK TO SCHOOL, SO IT'S ONLY FAIR!
CAN YOU NAME THESE? ANSWERS LISTED BELOW. NO CHEATING!

BONUS POINTS IF YOU ALSO KNOW THEIR LATIN NAMES!



1).

6).

2).

7).

3).

8).

4).

9).

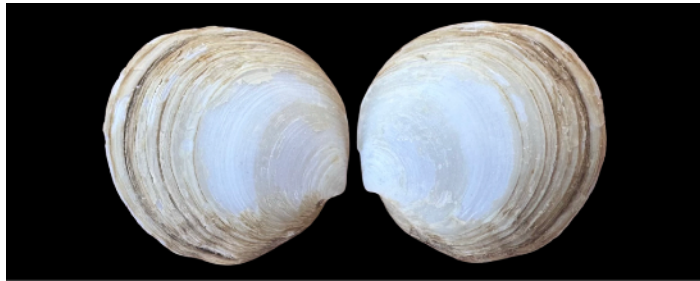
5).

10).

1). MERMAID'S PURSE 2). SPECKLED TELLIN 3). BONNET 4). PEAR WHELK 5). ATLANTIC JINGLE
6). CRASSATELLA 7). BITTERSWEET CLAM 8). FLORIDA CONE 9). PENNSYLVANIA LUCINE 10). IMPERIAL VENUS

DO YOU KNOW ME?

Written By: Jim Brunner



Well, you should! My name is the Florida Lucine (or *Stewartia floridana* to you Latin lovers). A shell guy named Tim Conrad gave me my name way back in 1833, and while my genus name (*Stewartia*) has bounced around over the years, the "florida" part has always stuck with me.

But WHY should you know me? Because I'm one of the Big Four! What I'm referring to are the bivalves that are most numerous in north Florida bays. We could argue about the exact proper descending order but I figure it as No. 1: Oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*), No. 2: Southern Horse Mussel (*Modiolus squamosus*), No. 3: Cross-barred Venus (*Chione elevata*) and No. 4: Me (tada). Note that I'm slighting the really little guys like *Gemma gemma*, the Amethyst Gem Clam that comes in at 3 millimeters and of which there are trillions.

Of these, oysters are usually found in bars (poor parenting I suppose) although I do recall finding a few solitary ones in Spanish Shanty Cove at Shell Island. They are essentially immobile throughout their life. The Horse Mussels are equally sedentary and are often found in clumps at the base of Turtle grass (check out the north shore of St Andrews Bay). The Cross-barred Venus are members of the Veneridae family and have the ability to move around through the use of a powerful "foot". It's kind of surprising to find one at the end of a sand trail standing straight up in the water with the "umbos" on top. And then there is me. I'm in the family Lucinidae and we also have the ability to move around via a "foot". But usually we aren't on top; you will find us shallowly buried in soft sediments and thus are usually only spotted after we die.

Now let's look at this from a shell collector's point of view. The disadvantage of No's 1 & 2 (Ha! Made you look didn't I) is when they die, they generally tend to get covered up by new growth or sand and we don't see them. This isn't a problem for the Cross-barred Venus; when it goes the shell is usually left lying on the surface. The same is true for me but I'm 3-4 times larger than the venus and just about as abundant.

So, the next time you're snorkeling be on the lookout for me. I'm the round whitish thing about the size of a half-dollar and to be honest, I'd much rather be in your collection than sitting down here being a home for barnacles.



Crassostrea virginica



Modiolus squamosus



Chione elevata

COA 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

