

Shell and Tell

The newsletter of the Gulf Coast Shell Club



Argopecten irradians concentricus (Say, 1822)

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President's Message



President
Phyllis Bernard

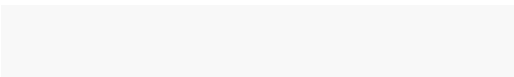
Happy, Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a good Christmas and a joyful, safe new year. It is a new year and we all have a shell show coming up fast. Now is a good time to check over your displays. Check your labels for spelling, punctuation, and accuracy of information. Check your presentation. Most of us enjoy learning the information about the shells we are displaying.

January starts a new year and time to think about dues, eight dollars single and twelve dollars family. Have a great new year, and when you get the time go out and enjoy the beach looking for that special shell.

Phyllis

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Corresponding Secretary - D. J. Moore
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Raffle - open
Newsletter - Linda Brunner

**GULF COAST SHELL CLUB
2022 PROGRAMS AND REFRESHMENTS**

or
Ways to expand your mind and waistline simultaneously!

MONTH	PROGRAM	REFRESHMENTS
January	L. Brunner/W. Baldwin	Luke Cooley/Kathy Brewton

Coming Events

The official dates for the **2023 shell show are April 14, 15, 16**. Start working on your exhibit(s) and let Susan Cole (susieqcole@yahoo.com) know how you can help. We need all hands so try to clear your calendar for these days. Remember: Due to allergies **NO NUTS** in any food you bring. Check all labels include mixes as, unknown to most consumers, this is a life and death allergy of one of our judges.

North Carolina 2023 show will be held May 5,6,7 in Morehead City with set up on the 4th. Try to attend and/or exhibit.

The COA 2023 Convention is still on schedule for May 31 - June 4, 2023 in Wilmington, NC.



Every Living Creature has to Eat!

Our state mollusk, *Triplofusus giganteus* (Kienner, 1840), The **Florida Horse Conch** dining on *Busycon sinistrum* Hollister, 1958, Lightning Whelk.

Photo by Amy Tripp

Field Trip

Our club trip for Cedar Key is coming up on January 20-22, 2023. Friday will be a travel day for most of us, Saturday when the tide is out we will search the sand bar by the motel for exposed shells and the elusive *Cyrtopleura costata* (Linnaeus, 1758), **Angelwing**, (p. 29 in the club's book) and Sunday will be a boat trip to Seahorse Key where the tide will be out and the shelling is fine, too fine to describe. Saturday evening we will all get together for dinner at a local restaurant. More will be discussed at Tuesday's meeting.*

*Find a reprint of a previous club trip to Cedar Key to dig for Angelwings in this issue.



Janice "Jan" Kittsmiller

November 13, 1941 - December 30, 2022



I first met Janice at a shell show several years ago. I don't remember which show but I remember being drawn to Jan, her sparkling eyes and everpresent laugh. Again we sat and chatted at a Conchologist of America Convention while Don sold his wares. We were privileged to spend time with Don and Jan prior to the Key West convention in a home in the keys. They were always laughing and gracious. Our club was enriched when Jan and Don moved to Panama City and became members of the club. Jan stepped in and supported the club as secretary when the current secretary moved in the middle of her term.

Janice brought joy wherever she went. The world has lost some of its brightness.



Angels in the Morning

Digging for Angelwings (*Cyrtopleura costata* (Linnaeus, 1758)) is an adventure! We are fast approaching Angel Wing season with very low tides. Winter tides are much lower than the summer ones and expose the habitat of shells we seldom find when it's warm. When the tide is out, way out, and large areas of sand near shore are exposed, the time is right to look for Angel Wings. Frequently these tides occur at daybreak or just before. Before the sun rises bundle up and head for the shore. Depending on the low tide time you may want to have a flashlight with you so you can look for the telltale holes the shell makes. This shell is not the only creature that makes a hole the size of a quarter or half dollar so you need to look into the hole to see the dual siphonal. There is also a sea squirt that makes a similar hole but it has two holes about six to ten inches apart and the view into the hold is usually void of anything. So, look into the hole for the siphonal. If the siphon is open it will look like the photo below. If it is not open it resembles a single slit at the end of its fleshy foot.



Finding the hole is the first step. Now you get down on your knees, not to pray although it may help, but to begin digging. Push up your sleeves and slowly work your hand down following the burrow the shell has made. Keep working your arm down until you can place your hand under the shell. The next step is the reverse of going down. Slowly, the shell is fragile, work your arm back to the surface protecting the shell all the way. **DO NOT** entertain any thought of grabbing onto the siphonal and pulling. So, assume the position and start digging..



You know the saying, "Diamond in the rough,". Well, Angelwings can be referred to as "beauty in the mud". These two photos were taken on the sandbar at Cedar Key during a club field trip.

And, when the hand comes up, behold success!



The golden glow is not coming from the shellers beaming face but from the rising sun.

We kept digging until the incoming tide forced us to



stop digging or drown in the incoming tide with our arm in the mud. All in all it was a successful trip. We pooled our finds and had enough to take back and share with club members and still have specimens for our collections.



The Gulf of Mexico is not the only place to find Angelwings and *Cyrtopleuro costata* is not the only species. Angelwings belong to the family Pholadidae as to all of the different species found worldwide. They are used for food in many areas. The picture below



The reason for the name. This one that has been de-mudded and cleaned.



Belonging to the family Pholadidae and called piddocks or angel wings several different species are found on our coast. Many bore into wood or rock. When you find a rock or a piece of wood with holes in it, members of this family probably were the culprits. However, angelwings live from 18 to 36 inches deep in the muddy sand near shore...Some are under water so deep that their burrows are never exposed at low tide and are safe from shellers and diners.

One seldom finds pairs of angelwings washed ashore. Between their weak hinge, large body and brittle shell they just don't survive the trauma of being exposed intact.

Cedar Key is a good place to dig and we have also found them at Bald Point. As to some of the others you will find them in wood that washes ashore at Indian Pass Beach. Check our species list for all of the borers in the area. Don't pass that piece of wood by. Pick it up and break it open. There is treasure inside.

two species for sale in a market in Manila, Philippines. the following photo shows some prepared for baking. Notice the scallions and garlic used for garnish. I wonder if the ones Linnaeus used to describe the species were discovered in a market?



An angelwing truly depicts what we imagine an angel's wings looks like.

by Linda Brunner



Say it with Shells!



We shellers know about valentines made by the ladies in Barbados but do you know there are many other ways to remember sweethearts and loved ones with shell and ocean related heart symbols? Here are a few ideas to get you started.

If you are on a budget why not take your loved one to the beach and draw a heart in the sand? Make it a family affair and leave handprints inside the hearts. Find shells and outline a heart.



Paint a shell with a valentine motif. Glue shells onto a heart shape or around the edge of the shape. Decorate a heart shaped mirror with shells. Whatever you do your Sweetie will be impressed and hold your creation close.



Always remember that members of the Veneridae (Venus) always have a heart near the umbone. Last but not least, there are shells shaped like hearts. Below are a few examples and all have cardium somewhere in their name.



Happy Valentine's Day!



Christmas 2022 !

Linda covered the tables, Kathy decorated, members brought food and gifts, all ate!



Kathy's decorations.



Presents came.



Food came.



And more food came.



Jane checks the book and, ever the money man, Jim has the check book.



Jim & Linda numbered each.



Phyllis unwraps..



I think she is pleased!



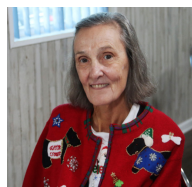
Ernie enjoys the event.



Bill & Heather enjoying the party.



Leonard & Sheree.



Barbara was festive..



What is CJ thinking?



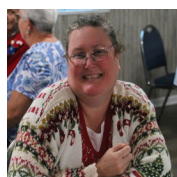
Dave, Deborah & Gwen waiting their turns



Gerry and Brant solving the world's problems!



Oooo look what Sheree has!



The joy of Christmas!



Kathy watching the festivities.



Scott & Kathy



Latest edition.



Carol's shirt may say Alaska but she is not going there. She is aboard ship headed around the world. Jane is basking in her friend and the holiday.

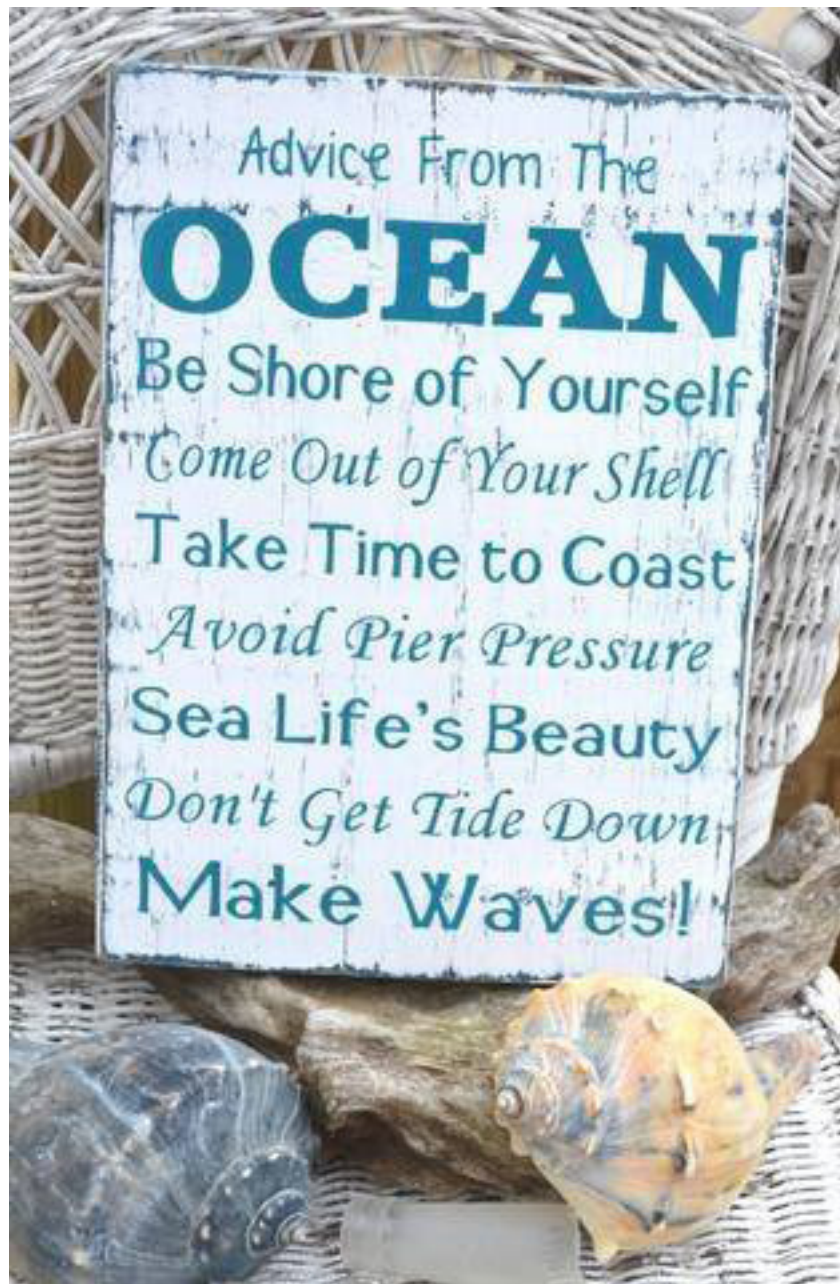


Kathy and her gift.



Deborah & Susan admiring Susan's gift.

Thanks to DJ and all the elves that helped make this a fun gathering!
Photos by DJ and Linda.



Creator unknown.

Happy New Year!