

Suncoast Shorelines

January-February 2019

PUBLISHED BY SUNCOAST CONCHOLOGISTS

VOL. 35, No.3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Yes—it's time to ring in the new year!! Suncoast Conchologists is looking forward to a wonderful year of meetings, field trips, mini-boxes and our annual picnic, as well as the good times together that everyone looks forward to. If you have any suggestions for an activity in the coming months, please don't hesitate to tell one of our board members about it—we'd love to try something new and different!

As to something new—we will be having a Silent Auction at our February 5th meeting—an opportunity for you to acquire some new additions for your collection! These shells were donated to Suncoast Conchologists by our Founding Member Joan Pierson and her late husband Bob. See the article with auction details in this issue.

Our thanks certainly go to Sharlene and her committee for putting together our fun-filled December Holiday Shellabration. If you weren't there, you certainly missed a wonderful evening! (Do you remember who was our Hula Hoop Champion or baked hundreds of apple pies?)

Many more fun times are awaiting us in the new year beginning Tuesday evening, January 8th. I look forward to seeing everyone then!

And—before closing, I want to encourage you to take advantage of what I refer to as “Shell Show Season.” Many shellers spend hours putting together lovely exhibits on different subjects for your enjoyment of our hobby. During the next two months, there will be no less than four Shell Shows in Florida. Do make plans to attend—at least the two on our west coast! The 2019 schedule can be found in this issue of *Shorelines*. Best wishes to all for a very happy and “shelly” year. See you Tuesday, the 8th!

Carolyn

PLAN AHEAD

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 7:30 PM, Suncoast Conchologists
Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 North Highland Ave.,
Our program will be by John Jacobs, is about
"Cephalopods—Squids and Octopuses." Mini-box
theme is "Winter White."

Jan. 12-13 Broward Shell Club Show, Emma Lou
Olson Civic Center, 1801 Northeast 6th Street,
Pompano Beach.

Monday, Jan 14th, 7:00 PM Board Meeting at
Carolyn's home. Members welcome!

**Jan. 19-20 Astronaut Trail Shell Club Seashell
Festival**, Eau Gallie Civic Center, 1515 Highland
Avenue, Melbourne.

Fri., Feb. 1, 7:00 PM, St. Petersburg Shell Club
Meeting at the Seminole Recreation Center.

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 7:30 PM, Suncoast Conchologists
will be having a Silent Auction. Shells are from
former members Joan and the late Bob Pierson.(see
article inside) No Mini-box.

**Fri. PM, Sat., Sun., Feb. 8-10 Sarasota Shell
Show**, Potter Building at Robarts Arena, 3000
Ringling Blvd., Sarasota

Monday, Feb. 18th 7:00 PM Board Meeting at
Carolyn's home. Members welcome!

**Fri.-Sat. Feb. 22-23 ST. PETERSBURG SHELL
SHOW** Seminole Recreation Center (article inside)

Fri. Mar. 1, 7:00 PM, St. Petersburg Shell Club
Meeting at the Seminole Recreation Center

Suncoast Conchologists

(Founded in 1984)

P.O. Box 1564 Palm Harbor, Florida 34682-1564

Suncoast Shorelines is issued five times per year to all members. Annual Membership with emailed newsletters: \$20 Family, \$15 Individual, \$10 Junior. Lifetime membership is available. Add \$5 if you would like a printed copy of the newsletters. The club usually meets the first Tuesday of every month (except June, July, August, and December) at 7:30pm, at Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Avenue, Clearwater.

Articles, comments and suggestions for publication are solicited and should be sent directly to the Editor: spgeiger2000@yahoo.com

Closing Date for publication is the 15th of the month prior to the Sept, Nov, Jan, Mar, and May meetings.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint articles published in the newsletter providing the original author is acknowledged, and a copy of the reprinted material is sent to Suncoast Conchologists.

2018-2019 Officers

President: Carolyn Petrikin

First Vice President: Sharlene Totten

Second Vice President: John Jacobs

Recording Secretary: Nancy Holcombe

Treasurer: Katherine Smith

Corresponding Secretary: Elda Thomas

E-Mail: Suncoastshells@aol.com

Website: www.suncoastconchologists.org

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🎂🎂🎂 **Happy Birthday** 🎂🎂🎂

JANUARY

5-Nancy Holcombe

9-Russ Stauffer

12-Shirley Anderson

13-Marion Fuller

25-John Jacobs

February

4-Andrea Hutchinson

14-Deb Allen

19-Anita Freudenthal

25-Pat Linn

NEGATIVE or LOW TIDES for Egmont Key

January 2019

Sat	5th	-0.31	5:37	AM
Sun	6th	-0.31	6:10	AM
Sat	19 th	-0.58	4:40	AM
Mon	21 st	-0.72	6:06	AM

February

Mon	4 th	-0.19	5:50	AM
Sat	16 th	-0.36	3:42	AM
Sun	17 th	-0.52	4:27	AM
Mon	19 th	-0.52	5:47	AM

March

Sun	3 rd	0.01	4:27	AM
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But remember, the low at St. Petersburg occurs almost 2½ hours after the low at Egmont Key, but Clearwater Beach is very similar, about 10 minutes behind Egmont....

http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/tide_predictions.html

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION AT MEETINGS

Your board has recently asked Jennifer not to distribute the printed copies of *Shorelines* until our meeting breaks. This is a courtesy to our officers and chairpersons who have news and information to share during the first part of our meeting.

Please put your newsletter away after the break so you may enjoy our guest speakers' presentations. We appreciate everyone's help and understanding with this.

FIELD TRIP!



See the article by Nancy Holcombe

Silent Auction Coming!!

Tuesday, February 5th

Have you ever been to a Silent Auction? This doesn't mean you can't talk---what it does mean is that there will be no auctioneer to call out "How much am I bid?" and "Going, going, gone!!" Numerous lots of bagged shells will be spread out on tables, each with a bid sheet with space for you and other bidders to list your bidding number and the amount you are bidding. As there will be no Mini-box or program at this meeting, everyone will have plenty of time to move around the tables and place their bids--(and more bids!) Each item will have a minimum bid indicated on the bid sheet as well as the increment for additional bids.

Now---just what will be in the auction?? As you may remember, last year Suncoast Conchologists was gifted with founding members Joan Pierson's and her late husband Bob's shell collection. Our auction will feature their shells from Florida, the Bahamas and other locales, including some Florida *Liguus* tree snails collected in the Everglades and nearby areas. There are now laws in Florida prohibiting the collection of any species of these *Liguus*, often referred to as "Ligs."

When the allotted time is over, "pencils down" will be announced, and all bidding ends. Payment will be made after the close of bidding.

To whet your appetites, here are pictures of some *Liguus* species similar to those in February's Silent Auction. You definitely won't want to miss out on this wonderful opportunity to add to your collection!



*Liguus fasciatus
floridanus*



*Liguus fasciatus
castaneus*



*Liguus fasciatus
wintei*



*Liguus fasciatus
barbouri*

THE ST. PETERSBURG SHELL SHOW

The St. Petersburg Shell Club presents their 72nd Annual Seashell Show, "Shells and Their Stories," Friday and Saturday, February 22nd-23rd. You will see some of the ocean's most beautiful creatures—Seashells! Featured will be exhibits of shells from all over the world, as well as shells in art and craft, a raffle and door prizes. Dealers will be there with local as well as worldwide shells, jewelry, books and much more. Friday the show will be open 10AM to 6PM; Saturday, 10AM to 4PM. Admission, \$4 for adults, children under 15 no charge with an adult. Seminole Recreation Center, 9100 113th Street N., Seminole. Plenty of free parking.

The St. Petersburg Shell Club Presents their 72nd Annual

Shell Show

Shells & Their Stories

Feb. 22nd and Feb. 23rd, 2019

Friday, 10AM-6PM
Saturday, 10AM-4PM

Beautiful Exhibits
Door Prizes, Raffle Items
Shells for Sale

Seminole Recreation Center
9100 113th St. North
Seminole, Florida
1 Mile North of Park Blvd.

Minimum Donation of \$4
for an Adult at the door
Children under 15 Free with Adult

stpeteshellclub.org
Facebook E-mail: stpeteshellclub@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Please make these changes to your Directory:
Vicki Eis
2501 Stirling Circle, Apt 403
Dunedin, FL 34698

Add to Sharlene Totten her Cell number
727-278-3396

Members Corner....



Shirley and Jennifer having cake

Photos by Betty Sheetz



Sharlene and Cathy looking at the mini box



Marion and Sara Jean at break

A different kind of photo contest...

In each newsletter, I will put a photo of a small part of a shell. I am not giving you any other clues. It could be any part of any shell. All you have to do is send me the name in an email or give me the name before the next newsletter comes out. At the last club meeting I'll announce the winner.

Hint: Think and it will strike you!

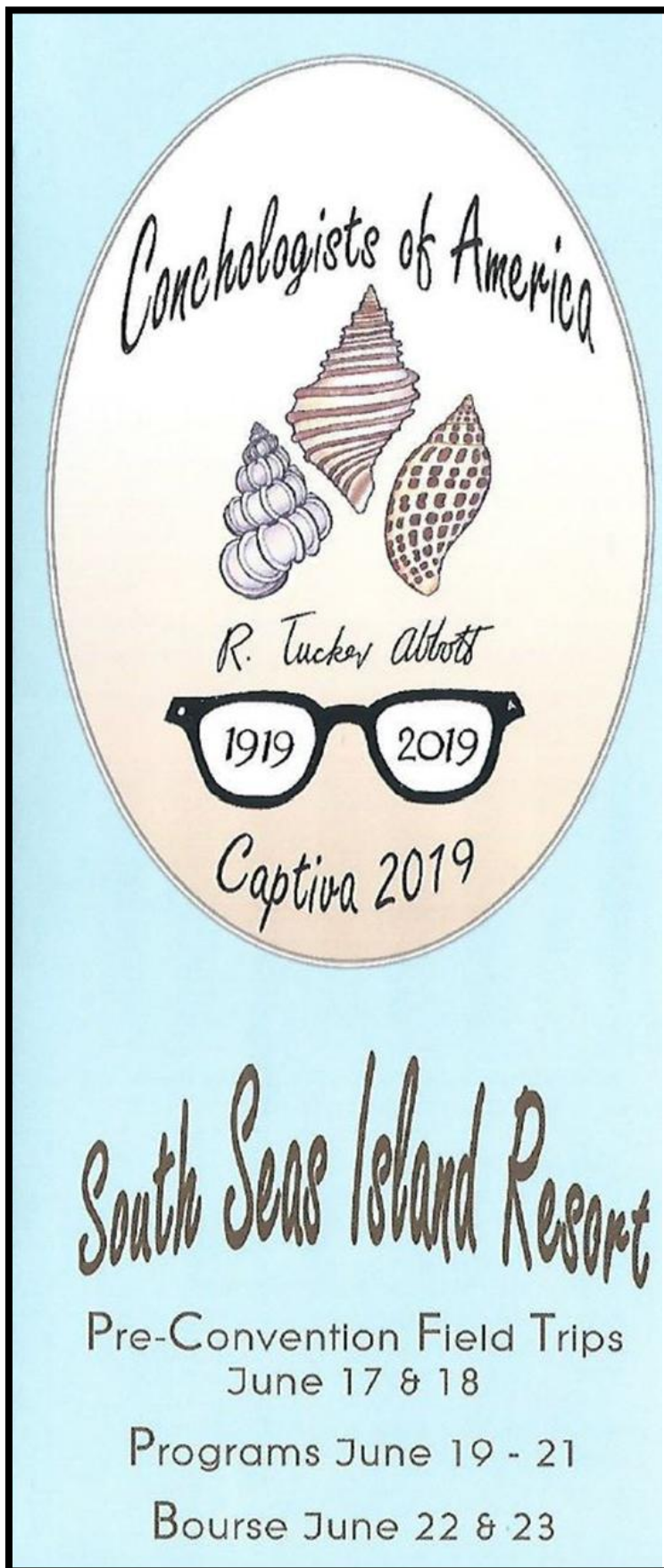
spgeiger2000@yahoo.com



P.S. – Nov.-Dec. = Queen Conch
Lobatus gigas



N. Holcombe



The cover of Captiva's COA Convention brochure designed by Mary Ellen

2019 FLORIDA SHELL SHOWS

Jan. 12-13 54th Broward Shell Club Show, Emma Lou Olson Civic Center, 1801 Northeast 6th Street, Pompano Beach

Jan. 19-20 39th Astronaut Trail Space Coast Seashell Festival, Eau Gallie Civic Center, 1515 Highland Avenue, Melbourne

Feb. 8-10 56th Sarasota Shell Show, Potter Building at Roberts Arena, 3000 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota

Feb. 22-23 72nd St. Petersburg Shell Show, "Shells and Their Stories," Seminole Recreation Center, 9100 113th Street North, Seminole

March 7-9 82nd Sanibel Shell Show, Sanibel Community Center, 2173 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel Island

March 14-16 39th Marco Island Shell Show, United Church of Marco Island, 320 North Barfield, Marco Island

May 31-June 2 22nd Gulf Coast Shell Club Shell Show, Panama City Beach Senior Center, 423 Lyndell Lane, Panama City Beach, 32407

**June 17-23
Conchologists of America Convention
South Seas Island Resort
Captiva, Florida**

Information about the convention can be found at conchologistsofamerica.org



N. Holcombe

My First Shelling Trip to South Skyway

Story and Photos By Nancy Holcombe



My first shelling trip to the South Skyway Bridge began early on the morning of November 26, 2018. Filled with excitement, I left my house at dark thirty (actually about 6:20 AM), headed south and enjoyed watching the sunrise at 7:00 AM as I crossed the bridges on I-275. When I arrived at the designated location, the South Skyway rest area, I found that there were already numerous people out shelling. Rats, I thought, they'll get all the good shells. I quickly signed in with Sheryl and headed out to find John and see what I could find. Well, what a surprise! There was not much in the way of empty shells for me to add to my collection. Practically everything I found was inhabited.



Abandoning the idea of collecting shells, I turned this trip into a photo session with my phone camera. What fun to watch whelks and horse shoe crabs and starfish and banded tulips scurrying around in the water or trying to hide in their shells. I took lots of pictures trying to get the best shots of them. I even got some neat video footage of several of them. (I wish we could put video in the newsletter but that only works in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter for now.)

My favorite experience of this trip was finding a banded tulip with a native inhabitant. Imagine how exciting to me at my age (which I will not tell) and many years of shelling to finally see this. I have found many banded tulips over the years but they were always either empty or occupied by hermit crabs. I carefully picked up this fellow and placed him in a spot that I could get a good shot of him with my phone. To my surprise, he came out of his shell and flipped himself over. This was too cool and I wanted a video of this so I turned him back over and videoed him as he flipped himself over again. When I told John what had happened, he said that tulip shells do not like to be on their backs.



Such a fun time I had that morning as I learned a whole different aspect of shelling -- photographing live shells in their natural habitat. As John said, it was nearly perfect conditions—plenty of light, not too hot and very low tide. I can't wait to do this again, and next time I will bring my water camera.



A Horse Conch Tale

By Carolyn Petrikin

Our home aquarium was once home to an unusual specimen of Florida's State Shell, *Triplofusus giganteus*, a brownish Horse Conch we named "Mr. Horse." We found this mollusc with the gorgeous bright orange animal near Dunedin one summer evening on a very low tide among some exposed grass. At the time I wondered if it might be a bit too large for our 30 gallon tank! Yes, we kept it, and since we enjoyed watching this fascinating shell so much, we didn't return it to the bay.

How I wish we had measured this rather small shell! Fifteen months later, our Horse Conch became a whopper at 7 1/2 inches in length and about 9 1/2 inches around! When I picked it up for the first time, months later after placing it in our aquarium, I was amazed to discover how heavy it had become. It was certainly no longer a "little" shell!

We were unable to keep other living shells for very long because of "Mr. Horse's" voracious appetite. There was a True Tulip, *Fasciolaria tulipa*, about 4 inches, along with several other species; however, this soon changed with our newest resident—we could keep very few molluscs without them becoming part of our Horse Conch's diet—however—he never ate that tulip!



Mr. Horse Looking For His Dinner! A *Melongena corona* riding on the back of the shell that was to devour it soon after this photo was taken!

We often wished we had kept a log of every mollusc "Mr. Horse" had eaten, so a list began early the next year—about six months after we'd found the shell. During the time we kept it, our Horse Conch devoured approximately:

25 King's Crowns—*Melongena corona*
5 or 6 Fighting Conchs—*Strombus alatus*

Several Banded Tulips—*Cinctura hunteria*
2 Pear Whelks—*Fulguropsis spirata*
5 small *Lightning Whelks*—*Sinistrofulgur sinistrum*
Numerous Eastern nassas—*Nassarius vibex*
Tiny Oyster Drills—*Eupleura tampaensis*
Moon Shells—*Neverita duplicata*
Cross-barred Venus Clams—*Chione cancellata*
Marsh Periwinkles—*Littoraria irrorata*
Common American Augers—*Terebra dislocata*
Many Lettered Olives—*Americoliva sayana*

Then there were the half dozen Spruce Creek Melongenas—*Melongena sprucecreekensis* gathered south of Daytona Beach at Spruce Creek the following July. By the middle of September, all six shells were empty! (note: Since that time, this species has been changed to *corona*.) Believe me—this is really a nifty way to clean your shells!! To show that this ravenous mollusc was not a terribly picky eater, three of the invasive species of Asian Green Mussels—*Perna viridis* also became part of Mr. Horse's diet. At that time, there was an area in Safety Harbor on Old Tampa Bay where these mussels were living.



Last of the Spruce Creek Melongenas Mr. Horse just beginning to eat the last of the six Spruce Creek Melongenas. A portion of the animal still shows.

These were the molluscs on our Horse Conch's menu that I'm able to recall. This never ending appetite certainly caused Mr. Horse to become the "king of the tank."

Note: My story appeared on the *Man and Mollusc* website for many years after it was first written, about 2006. (You just might still be able to find it there!)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Silent Auction

Skyway Field Trip Story

Shell Shows

PHOTOS!



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