



Suncoast Shorelines

March-April-May 2022

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President's Message

It has been 24 months since we have had an in-person meeting!!!! We are excited to announce that our first meeting will be Tuesday, March 1st 7PM at the Grace Lutheran Church. We have been patient, we have been safe, we have zoomed, and now it is time to get together and share our love of shells.

We have had opportunities to go on our field trips during the past 2 years. COVID has not stopped our desire to stay outside and explore our local shelling sites. Our latest trip was to Crystal Beach with Steve on our low tide exploration. I hope that you have had a chance to get out to the beach after some of our winter storms to look for treasures washed up on the shore. We have new members who have joined and a few that are hoping to come to one of our meetings. Membership is \$20.00 per person, \$25.00 per family per year. We have great speakers lined up for the rest of the year. It is a great opportunity to learn experts who can share their knowledge with us.

It is going to be exciting to have us all back together again. I have missed our mini boxes, displays, friendship, and yummy snacks! Happy Shelling!

Debi McCreary
President



Plan ahead

Tuesday, March 1st 7PM speaker:

Tim Marshall. Florida Park Ranger from Honeymoon Island Florida State Park. The title of the program is: ***"The Honeymoon is over, a History of Beachcombing on Honeymoon Island."***

Friday, March 4th 6PM

St Petersburg Shell Club
"Silent Auction"
Seminole Recreation Center
9100 113th St. N
Seminole, Florida.

Save the Date! Shell Shows

Gulf Coast 23rd Panama City Shell Show

Panama City Beach Center
423 Lyndell Lane
Panama City, Florida. 32407
March 26th - March 27th

85th Annual Sanibel Shell Show

Sanibel Community House
2173 Periwinkle Way
Sanibel, Florida. 33957
239-472-2155
March 3rd, 4th and 5th

40th Annual Shell Show Marco Island

New Life Community Church
489-590 W Elcam Circle
Marco Island, Fl. 34145
March 10th

Conchologists of America 2022 Annual Conference

Moody Garden Hotel
One Hope Boulevard
Galveston, Texas 77554
409-744-4673
May 31-June 4

2021-2022 OFFICERS

President Debi McCreary
1st Vice President Sharlene Totten
2nd Vice President Steve Geiger
Recording Secretary Marion Fuller/Vicki Eis
Treasurer.....Pat Snair

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Website: www.suncoastconchologists.org

Facebook: [Suncoast Conchologists Shell Club](#)

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2021-2022 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

COA Representative	Mary Ellen Akers and Carolyn Petrikin
Education	Mary Ellen Akers
E-Mail	Debi McCreary
FaceBook	Cheryl Jacobs
Field Trips	Steve Geiger
Hospitality	Cathy Petre
Library	Shirley Anderson
Membership	Betty Scheetz
Mini-Box Displays	Vicki Eis
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Projectionist	John Jacobs
Publicity	Debi McCreary
Raffle	Anita Freudenthal
Refreshments	Cheryl Putnam
Website	Cheryl Jacobs

New Members Spotlight

Charles and Paula Meyerriecks moved to Clearwater in December 2020 to Top of the World from Pensacola. They were members of the Gulf Coast Shell Club in Panama City. They started collecting in 1973 and have collections from Puerto Rico, Guam, Okinawa and Florida. We are looking forward to seeing some of their shells.

Low Tides for Egmont Key

March

Tue	1 st	-0.68	4:29	AM
Sun	6 th	-0.04	7:34	PM
Mon	7 th	-0.09	10:28	PM
Sun	20 th	-0.20	7:19	PM
Mon	21 st	-0.32	8:19	PM

April

Sat	2 nd	-0.09	6:46	PM
Sun	3 rd	-0.19	7:25	PM
Mon	4 th	-0.22	8:07	PM
Sun	17 th	-0.36	6:31	PM
Mon	18 th	-0.50	7:21	PM

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

New Members to add to your directory

Jami Shoop
4310 W. Spruce St., Unit 512
Tampa, FL 33607
917-582-0017
jamishoop@aol.com

Sandra Gann
15462 Gulf Blvd #506
Madeira Beach, FL 33708
828-243-1819
Sgann3110@Yahoo.com

Jami Shoop was born and raised in Kentucky where her Grandmother developed her artistic skills in jewelry and quilting. Then she moved to Brooklyn, New York and worked in Jewelry for Tiffany's and then the Metropolitan Museum. Jami landed in Florida 5 years ago and wants to creatively work with seashells. Some of her favorite shells are olives, catpaws and sea urchins. She now sells Real Estate.

🕯️🕯️🕯️ *Happy Birthday* 🕯️🕯️🕯️

MARCH

8---Betty Fearn

31---Cheryl Putnam

APRIL

14---Dick Mitchell

15---Dick Fearn

28---Katherine Smith

MAY

4---Paula Meyerriecks

23---Mary Ellen Akers

SHELLERS JAMBOREE PINS

Don't forget to purchase a former Jamboree pin. They will be available at our March meeting for \$5.00 each.



Field Trip News

Field trips for the near future are on hold until we have better low tides

ST PETERSBURG SHELL SHOW





Our club was the recipient of three separate donations of shells. We decided to sort them, put them into bags and sell them at the St Pete Shell Show.

A special thank you to Sharlene, Marian, Vicki and Debi. They were the, “shell sorters”.

We had many bags of shells to sell. We made \$177.00 for our club. It was a very successful day. We appreciate everyone who took the time to come out to the show and support our club.



Meet Professor Herbert

(Reprinted from the February edition of The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club Newsletter and permission from Professor Herbert)

When Professor Herbert was not able to attend and present at our January club meeting, he graciously sent the following article titled "Is the Florida Fighting Conch disappearing from Florida's west coast"? Since 2008, I have directed annual collecting expeditions off Florida's west coast using research vessels from the Florida Institute of Oceanography. These ships have a crew of 4 or 5 and space for up to ten or more scientists (mostly university students). Each trip lasts four days, which, over time, has let us sample from over 300 collecting stations spanning from the Dry Tortugas in the south to the panhandle in the north and depths ranging from 10 to 1200 feet. The mollusks, which we collect by dredge, are brought back to my lab at the University of South Florida, where students and I sieve, sort, identify, and count each shell, including worn fragments. We are close to producing the first high resolution maps of Florida's marine molluscan biodiversity that can be used by state and federal wildlife agencies for conservation. Occasionally, my students make surprise discoveries while doing research projects in the collections. USF Undergraduate Reynolds Hansen, for instance, was looking through the collections for fighting conchs (*Strombus alatus*) to compare the shell sizes of livecollected shells to dead ones. Dead shells found offshore can be hundreds to thousands of years in age and comparing live and dead shells can potentially reveal interesting changes. Reynolds noticed, however, that livecollected fighting conchs were found only in our shallower 4 stations (10-120 feet depth), whereas dead fighting conch shells were collected as deep as 360 feet. One explanation for this pattern is that fighting conchs today have a much smaller range and population size compared to the past. I do not think that storm currents have transported live or recently dead conch shells from shallow depths far out onto the deep shelf, because many of the shells we find far offshore are shiny. Transport across the sand for so many miles (nearly 100 miles!) would abrade the shells and remove the shine. The shininess is also a clue that fighting conchs were possibly alive in deeper

waters until relatively recent times because color patterns and luster are the first shell properties to degrade when the animal dies. The only exception to this is if the shell is buried deep in the sand shortly after the animal's death, where the shell is protected from bacteria and sponges that eat the shell. However, shell burial does not happen often (or for long) along the west Florida shelf as there is relatively little sand offshore. Our next step is to attempt to get radiocarbon dates from some of the shells, which should tell us if they were alive far offshore within the last half century. This past fall, another USF undergraduate student, Ana Jimenez Bustos, discovered another clue. Fighting conch shells that occur in deeper waters were nearly always found as fragments instead of whole shells, whereas conch shells in shallower stations were often found whole. The fragments we collected offshore are similar to those produced by fish, such as puffers and some sting rays, who crack the shells between jaw plates to get at the soft tissues. One possibility is that a new type of fish predator has moved into our area and is decimating mollusk populations in deeper waters. Alternatively, high predation of conchs offshore may be incidental to some other environmental change, such as low dissolved oxygen levels. Future projects will be studying other mollusks to see if these patterns repeat in other species.

Gregory S. Herbert, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Paleobiology
School of Geosciences

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620



Faculty page

<http://geology.usf.edu/faculty/gherbert>

Research:

<https://scholar.google.com/citations>

LabGroup:

<https://www.researchgate.net/lab/GregoryHerbert-Lab>

USF Paleobiology:

<http://hennarot.forest.usf.edu/main/depts/geosci/research/paleo/paleo/>

LET'S GO SCALLOPING!!!

By Carolyn Petrikin

Now most areas have what is known as the “scallop season,” or when it’s legal to collect scallops. Well, here’s another way to add to your scallop collection without waiting for the “scallop season” and a good tide! Just go to Publix and purchase a box (or two) of Matlaws New England Style Stuffed Scallops. Keep them in your freezer until you’re ready to eat them, bake per the directions, and then enjoy! We like to put a little cocktail sauce on ours. Now—be sure to keep your empty shells! You’ll probably want to soak them in water overnight if there is any crusty stuffing remaining. After this is all gone, soak the scallops in diluted bleach for several hours (or overnight) to help remove anything else on the shells. Rinse them in water, and after they’re thoroughly dry, put a light coating of baby oil on your scallops to help bring out the colors in your new shells. With thanks to Matlaws, here are the latest additions to our Pecten collection—and by shelling at Publix; we didn’t even get our feet wet!



Shelling at Publix



Affordable Therapy

By Cathy Petre

Spending time at the beach is a form of therapy for me. The sound of the waves and birds are very hypnotic and soothing. The sand as I walk provides a massage to my tired feet. The further I walk the more tension is released. Finding treasures is pure joy. Each prize I find tells a story from the ocean or surrounding area. I am a patient sheller looking through the wrack, seaweed or piles of shells that have been washed up. I comb through to find something unusual that I have never seen or found before. Once home I research to find out what discovery I have made that day. Each trip to the beach is unique in what I may find just as each beach is unique in the variety of shells and sand it contains. I have thousands of shells displayed in many different ways, but I still cannot resist picking up these miniature curiosities. I am fortunate to live so close to the beach so I can afford my therapy whenever I feel the need to drift away!

It is perhaps a more fortunate destiny to have a taste for collecting shells than to be born a millionaire – Robert Louis Stevenson

Crystal Beach Field Trip

Submitted by Steve Geiger



Cool crisp morning 2/3/22



Pat and a friend try to stay warm. Muddy feet could not be avoided.



More micros on the mud flat



Some micros on the rocks



Some incredible oysters.

There were also lots of craft quality scallop shells in the seagrass.

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Article regarding our own Florida Fighting Conch

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PHOTOS from our field trip to Crystal Beach



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