



SYDNEY SHELLER

Newsletter of the Shell Club of Sydney
NSW Branch, The Malacological Society of Australasia Limited ACN 067 894 848

Next Meetings:

Cypraeidae – July 08
Bob Snedic

Cancellariidae – Aug 08
Steve Dean

Shells & Stamps – Sep
Peter Pienaar

Annual Show – Oct 08
(1.30pm for 2pm – 4pm)
(normally 4th Saturday)

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
117 Ryedale Rd, West Ryde, Sydney

View old shell newsletters on line
www.sydneyshellclub.net

Submit articles or ads:

Steve Dean
PO Box 316, Mona Vale, NSW 1660
Text by disk or email only. Photos, and
disks by mail, or preferably by email to
steve@dean.as

Club Executive:

Office bearers:

President: Steve Dean
Vice Pres: Maureen Anderson
Treasurer: Peter Pienaar
Secretary: Kim Bishop
Raffles: Kim Bishop
Sheller Editor: Steve Dean
Librarian: Steve Dean
Annual Shell Show Mgr: Steve Dean
Special Projects Mgr: Vacant
MSA Delegate: Chris Barnes

Shell Club of Sydney Mission Statement:

To appreciate, understand and
preserve shells and their environment
and to share this with others.



March meeting Awards:



Largest Shell: *Harpa major* exhibited by Kim Bishop.



Smallest Shell: *Morum oniscus* exhibited by Steve Dean.



Shell of the Day: *Austroharpa punctata* exhibited by Kim Bishop.

Some of the topics inside:

- Harpidae (Cover photo)
- Minutes 22 March, 26 April, 24 May
- October shell show draft categories
- Upcoming meeting program and roster
- Murex presentation



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Peter Pienaar
PO Box 901
Campbelltown, NSW
Australia 2560

Note: The Sydney Shell Club is a branch of
the Malacological Society of Australasia
(MSA) It is preferred that you are also a
member of the MSA. MSA membership can
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FAMILY HARPIDAE

Kim Bishop

The Harpidae family is best known for its attractive tropical species, showing a combination of striking colour and elegant form, with sculpture resembling the strings of a harp.

The Harpidae family consists of just 3 genera and around 50 species. They are the genus Harpa, Austroharpa and Morum.

The genus Harpa, containing the largest and most spectacularly coloured species, occurs in the Indo to West Pacific and tropical Atlantic Oceans and has 20 species plus 11 subspecies and forms. Members of this family are usually taken down to 25 meters.

The genus Austroharpa is restricted to western, southern and eastern Australia and has just 5 species. They are **Austroharpa wilsoni** and **Austroharpa loisae** from WA, **Austroharpa learorum** from Great Australian Bight, **Austroharpa punctata** (See picture above) from Sth Aust and **Austroharpa exquisita** from eastern Australia. Members from this family have been taken by divers in about 35m such as the punctata and others from extremely deep water such as the exquisita which has been trawled between 50 and 274 meters from Fraser Island, Qld to Eastern Victoria and islands of Bass Strait.

The genus Morum was originally included in the Cassidae family but was later included in the Harpidae family when investigation of its anatomy showed it is very similar to the Harpa. This genus contains 26 species and 4 subspecies, from tropical and subtropical areas. Members from this family live from just below low tide down to several hundred meters.

As for NSW, only two representatives of the Harpidae family occur; one Austroharpa and one Morum, both occur in deep water and are rare. They are the **Austroharpa exquisita** and the **Morum bruuni**.



Harpa species and probably also Morum species live in sand and feed on small crabs. The crabs are enveloped by the foot, and held by large quantities of mucus. Saliva containing digestive enzymes is injected into the crab, and partly digested food sucked out by the mollusc.

The diet and habitat of Austroharpa are not known.

Harpa uses its large and strong foot to move over the sea floor to burrow into sand and are able to cast off part of their foot to avoid capture from an enemy.

Harpa deposit their eggs in capsules, each capsule containing between 3,000 and 4,000 eggs. Morum also lay eggs in capsules. The rarity of Austroharpa and Morum species and their preference for deep-water existence limits our knowledge of their other activities.

Shell Characteristics

Shells of most Harpa are usually shiny, beautifully coloured and patterned and sculptured with strong axial ribs more highly polished than the remainder of the shell.

A good example is the Harpa major. The anterior siphon canal is deep, the aperture large and wide, the columella is without folds. The well-defined axial ribs are flattened at the suture and curved towards the columella. The ribs may be broad as in **Harpa cabriti** or narrow as in **Harpa amouretta**, widely spaced as in **Harpa harpa**, or closely packed as in **Harpa costata**. The relatively thin and light shells of Austroharpa have very delicate ribs.

A reduced operculum is present in Morum but absent from Harpa and Austroharpa.

There seems to be no significant difference in shape or size between the shells of males and females although those of males are generally narrower.



The protoconchs of the different Harpa species vary sufficiently in form and in number of whorls to aid identification, which also applies to Austroharpa and Morum. Superficially the shell of Morum differs markedly from that of Harpa and Austroharpa. Besides being smaller it is more elongate, has weaker axial ribs, prominent spiral cords, a ventral shield and a well developed outer lip with teeth along its inner edge.

Freshly collected shells of Harpa are brightly coloured in various shades of red, brown, pink and orange, the colours being distinctly arranged in spots, blotches, chevrons, dashes and bands. Shells of Austroharpa may be colourful but patterns less varied. The most colourful part of Morum is often the ventral shield which may be orange, violet, or reddish, the paler pustules often showing through clearly.

Generally speaking the protoconch of Harpa is flesh coloured or a shade of brown, that of the Austroharpa yellowish pink and that of Morum yellowish or golden.

Minutes 22 March 2008

The President, Steve Dean, opened the meeting at 2.10pm.

Attendance

Steve Dean, Maureen Anderson, Peter Pienaar, Kim Bishop, Ron Moylan, Keith Dean, Sandra Montague, Chris Barnes, Jack Hannan, Michael Heigh, Steven Jones, Bob Snedic

Visitors: John Dunkerley

Apologies: Michael Keats, Des Beechey, David Abbott, John Franklin, Deborah Hannan

Correspondence

Nil.

Finance

Bank account balance currently \$3,544.62 with proceeds of February and March 2008 raffles to be banked reported by Treasurer, Peter Pienaar.

A discussion took place regarding the club's finances and possibility of hosting the National Shell Show in 6 or 8 years time.

President's Report

Nil.

Library

President, Steve Dean appealed for contributions for the next issue of Sheller and reported that no suitable books for the club library were available at the Brisbane National Shell Show held two weeks ago. Books to the value of \$400 may be obtained by the club from Hugh Morrison in return for membership and advertising in the Sheller.

Coming Events

Field trip to be organised later in the year when tides are more favourable.

Other Reports

Nil.

Field Trips

Jack Hannon reported on a recent trip to Long Bay where he noticed many different cowry species in shell grit.

Ron Moylan reported on his recent diving trip to Cook Islands with Mike Hart in search of the rare *Conus adamsonii*.

Bob Snedic reported on a recent trip to Bribie Island, Queensland.

Steve Dean reported on his shelling trip with Keith Dean on the way to Brisbane National Shell show visiting a number of places including Sawtell, Woody Head and Caloundra. He noted that *Turbo militaris* were in abundant numbers at Woody Head. Unusual conditions whereby the low tide was higher than the normal high tide at Caloundra hindered their collecting efforts.

Seventh National Shell Show Brisbane, 7th-9th March 2008 Report

Ron Moylan provided an overview of the 7th National Shell Show:

- Overall a very successful event with large crowds attending both Saturday and Sunday.
- The venue at the Italo Australia Centre was quite acceptable.
- The Presentation dinner was well attended however the meal provided could have been of a better standard for the \$50 charged.
- Access to the Competition Hall on level one via a 1.1 metre wide spiral staircase with 22 steps proved difficult for many people.
- The quality of exhibits was of a very high standard.
- Dealers were provided with plenty of space and were successful.



Steve Dean reported that the 8th National Shell Show will be hosted in Fremantle in two years time.

Maureen Anderson and Sandra Montague brought along their First Prize trophies.

Successful exhibitors were as follows:

Category	Name	Prize
Cassidae World Wide	Maureen Anderson	First - Perpetual
Strombidae-Lambis World Wide	Maureen Anderson	First
Cypraeidae World Wide	Maureen Anderson	First - Perpetual
Gastropod Family not otherwise listed	Sandra Montague	First - Perpetual
Volutidae World Wide	Peter Pienaar	Third
Volutidae Australian & NZ	Peter Pienaar	Second

Acquisitions

Peter Pienaar reported on the purchase of 500 stamps with a shell and marine theme from Dawn Mayer and the purchase of two New Zealand volutidae at auction at the National Shell Show in Brisbane.

Bob Snedic reported on the purchase of a number of Land Shells.

Steve Dean reported on a successful Buy Swap and Sell event at the National Shell Show.

General Business

Nil.

Raffle

Won by Kim Bishop and Michael Heigh.

The meeting closed at 3.40pm.

Presentation

A presentation followed by Kim Bishop on the Harpidae family.

Awards, judged – see front cover

Minutes 26 April 2008

The President, Steve Dean, opened the meeting at 2.07pm.

Attendance Steve Dean, Maureen Anderson, David Abbott, Kim Bishop, Keith Dean, Sandra Montague, Chris Barnes, Ashley Miskelly, Bob Snedic, Steven Jones, Michael Keats

Apologies Ron Moylan, Des Beechey, John Franklin, Peter Pienaar

Correspondence Nil.

Finance

No change reported by Peter Pienaar.

President's Report Nil.

Sydney Sheller

To be issued shortly.

Library

Peter Pienaar reported on the possibility of a book "Shells on Stamps" being made available to the Library shortly.

Coming Events

It was reported by Steve Dean that Ron Moylan may be attending the forth coming BVC International Shell Show, Antwerp, Belgium 10-11th May 2008.

Other Reports

Ashley Miskelly provided an interesting report on his recent diving activities in Botany Bay and Sydney Harbour. Shells displayed included a large Tonnidae *Tonna cerevisina* found at 14m in Botany Bay, a live taken *Veneridae Antigona chemnitzii* found at 14-16m in Botany Bay, a live taken Mitridae *Mitra solida* found at 16m in Botany Bay and a number of other interesting specimens. Ashley also reported on a soon to be released book that he is publishing on sea urchins.

Michael Keats reported on a bush walking expedition over the Easter long weekend to Coricudgy Creek in a remote area of the Wollomei National Park where he found four land snails *Meridolum bowensis* which he has sent to the Australian Museum.

Michael also reported on a soon to be released book "Land Snails of East Coast of Australia" by Dr John Stanisic of Queensland Museum and Mr Michael Shea of Australian Museum, Sydney.



Field Trips Nil.

Acquisitions

Peter Pienaar has purchased two *Volutidae adelomelon* and is awaiting delivery from Paraguay and Bob Snedic has made a purchase of land snails from Hugh Morrison. Steve Dean has recently purchased three very heavy *Umbilia hesitata* trawled off Apollo Bay VIC, and two dead *Kapala kengrahami* trawled from the continental slope off Straun, Tasmania.

General Business Nil.

Raffle

Won by Steve Dean and Kim Bishop.

The meeting closed at 2.53 pm.

Minutes 24 May 2008

The President, Steve Dean, opened the meeting at 2.13pm.

Attendance Steve Dean, Maureen Anderson , Peter Pienaar, Ron Moylan, Keith Dean, Chris Barnes, Sandra Montague, Bob Snedic , Steve Jones and Kim Bishop.

Apologies: John Franklin, Jack Hannan.

Correspondence

Three miscellaneous emails were tabled by Steve Dean, one from Deniliquin Council seeking interest in the sale of a shell collection owned by the Council. Please see Steve Dean for more details.

Finance

No change reported by Peter Pienaar.

President's Report Nil .

Sydney Sheller

October 2007 - December 2007 issue is now available and is being mailed to members who did not receive a copy at today's meeting.

Library

A number of regular publications have been received and circulated at today's meeting.

No decision has been made about the acquisition of new books for the library. Club members to consider what books should be purchased to update our library.

Coming Events

July 12-13, 2008: Keppel Bay Shell Show, Yeppoon, Qld.

July 19-20, 2008: Townsville Shell Show, Townsville Qld.

Other Reports Nil.

Field Trips, Shows and Club Visits

Ron Moylan advised that he had recently returned from a diving trip to the Solomon Islands.

Acquisitions

Maureen Anderson reported on a Cymatiidae *Charonia lampas rubicunda* taken on a rock platform at low tide at Broulee NSW.

Peter Pienaar reported on the purchase of a Volutidae *Amorina damoni keatsiana* taken off Darwin NT.

General Business

Peter Pienaar reported that he had recently joined a stamp club and is seeking assistance setting up an exhibit at the Fisher's Ghost Stamp Fare in November 2008 matching stamps featuring shells with shell specimens. Peter's aim is to attract new members to the Shell Club.

Presentations:

September 2008	Peter Pienaar	Stamps and Shells
October	Des Beechey	Epitoniidae (At the Annual Show)
November	Chris Barnes	Shells collected in Sydney region not usually located in this area.
December	No meeting	



Cake Roster:

July 2008	Bob Snedic
August	Chris Barnes
September	Steve Dean
October	Everyone
November	Ron Moylan
December	No meeting
January 2009	Maureen Anderson
February	Kim Bishop

A discussion followed regarding categories for the October Annual Shell Show and Steve Dean is to provide a list at the next meeting for further consideration.

Murex Talk – April meeting

Steve Dean

Here is a summary of the points discussed in more detail during the talk:

- The family Muricidae includes:
 - Coral Shells (Babelomurex, Coralliophila, Latiaxis, Mipus, Rapa etc)
 - Oyster Drills (Bedeva, Cronia, Phyllocoma, etc)
 - Murex Shells (Chicoreus, Haustellum, Hexaplex, Murex, Pterynotus, siratus,
 - Whelks (Drupa, Morula, Rapana, Thais)
 - Trophines
 - Many other Subfamilies and Genus
- Murex live in both tropical and temperate seas
- All are carnivorous – eating invertebrates – molluscs, barnacles, worms
- Many drill holes in the shell of creatures they want to eat. They use a rotating radula in conjunction with chemical absorption
- In 1988 Ponder re-combined some of the subfamilies, but most collectors still use the old family names to aid in identification.
- There is no good comprehensive book on Muricidae
- They live in sand, mud, and many species live in exposed areas of intertidal rocky reefs.
- Lay tough eggs in clusters. Some species live in colonies and lay their eggs attached in amongst the spines of colony members.
- Hatched eggs can be either plankton carried by currents, or direct descent to the bottom, depending on species
- The varixes, spines and fronds on most species provide both strength and protection
- As shells mature later varixes exhibit spines that are longer, more numerous and more hooked in shape. These are made by the mantle edge.
- As a whorl overtakes the varix of an earlier whorl any spines in the way are resorbed.
- In the more advanced species the anterior canal is tubular and may be completely enclosed
- In the Typhinae the posterior canal is also tubular.
- There are some species with such open whorls they look more like limpets
- Many species look more like Nassarius (Phos), or like Buccinidae, or Turridae
- By comparison with the spined murex, Columbarium have similar spines, but they are not limited to being on varixes as murex are.

Interesting side discussions:

- Rapa may live their lives inside soft corals and sponges, growing as the sponge does.
- Magilus live trapped inside hard corals
- All "Coral Shells" have no teeth. They eat the slimy secretions released by coral polyps. (Rub your hand over hard corals such as stag-horn during the day when polyps are retracted, and they feel slimy)



Guess what these are and where they are from.

Hint, they were included in an article in a Sheller a while back:



Draft Categories for Annual Shell Show October 2008

No.	CATEGORY	Location	No. Specimens
1.	Shell of the show	World-wide	1
2.	Conidae (less than 50mm)	World-wide	20
3.	Olividae	World-wide	20
4.	Volutidae	World-wide	20
5.	Cypraeidae (less than 50mm)	World-wide	20
6.	Variation of a single species	Any	7-10
7.	Shells of one colour	World-wide	15
8.	Large Shells	World-wide	5-10
9.	Shells from any one location	Any	15
10.	Favourite Shells	Any	20
11.	Gastropod family not otherwise listed	World-wide	20
12.	Junior	Any	20

Notes

- Shell Show Rules will apply.
- Shell of the Show entries can either be stand alone or part of another competitive category. Bivalves may be judged separately if enough entries in shell of the show. (Shells are judged primarily for perfection, colour and size, with rarity a secondary consideration)
- No display box size restrictions.
- No restrictions on number of exhibits entered.
- Visiting the show is free. Members exhibit free.
- Dealers or collectors, with or without a display table who sell shells: Fee of first \$20 of sales, or donate shells for raffle.
- Conchologists of America Award. (Donated by the COA) This prestigious award is for an exhibit with a scientific educational component that best advances the interest in shells and shell collecting. The exhibit should preferably be an entry in one of the competitive categories 2-12, and if possible won its category. If there are no suitable scientific exhibits that advance the interest in shells then no COA award will be issued.
- Individual exhibits can have a competitive element that is judged in the normal way - shell quality, variety, number of specimens etc, plus a non-competitive educational or other interest section that is not judged and may contain additional specimens. For the purpose of judging the COA Award the whole exhibit will be taken into consideration.

Shell Show Program Outline:

- 12.00 – 12.30 Members lunch in groups (own arrangement)
- 12.30 – 1.15 Registration and setup exhibits



- 1.20 – 1.40 Judging (everyone to volunteer to judge categories that they are not competing in)
- 1.40 – 2.00 Display viewing, (and score counting)
- 2.00 – 2.20 Normal meeting general discussions and then Judge 'Best of the 'Best.
- 2.20 – 2.30 Award Certificates and COA
- 2.30 – 3.15 (or so) Guest Speaker, Des Beechey – Surprise Subject
- 3.15 – 4.00 Pack exhibits
- Buy Swap and Sell, and any dealers throughout show.

Monthly Meeting Program

Month	Presenter	Topic
January 08	Steve Dean	Land Snails
February 08	Peter Pienaar	Volutidae
March 08	Kim Bishop	Harpidae
April 08	Steve Dean	Muricidae
May 08	Sandra Montague	Strombidae
June 08	John Franklin	Conidae
July 08	Bob Snedic	Cypraeidae
August 08	Steve Dean	Cancellariidae
September 08	Shells & Stamps	Peter Pienaar
October 08	Des Beechey	Annual NSW Shell Show
November 08	Unusual shells from Sydney. Followed by Club annual dinner	Chris Barnes
December 08		No meeting

Cake Roster

Members bring a cake to monthly meetings for afternoon tea.
Have you forgotten when you volunteered for?

Month	Provider
January 08	Maureen Anderson
February	Kim Bishop
March	Ron Moylan
April	Bob Snedic
May	Sandra Montague
June	Peter Pienaar
July	Bob Snedic
August	Chris Barnes
September	Steve Dean
October	All (with optional hamper)
November	Ron Moylan
December	NA
January 09	Maureen Anderson
February	Kim Bishop