

**March 1999**

# THE SYDNEY SHELLER

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

## Shell Club of Sydney Mission Statement:

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

## Next Meeting:

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> April 99  
(normally 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday)

**Location:** Ryde Eastwood  
Leagues Club  
117 Tyedale Rd  
West Ryde

**Time:** 1.30 for 2.00pm

**Seminar:** Patty Jansen

## Contributions:

Please send contributions to:

**Steve Dean**  
166 Narrabeen Park Parade,  
Mona Vale NSW 2103

Photos, and disc files of articles by mail,  
or preferably by email to  
[steve@easy.com.au](mailto:steve@easy.com.au)

If you cannot get your text onto disc,  
then **Karen Wadwell** may be prepared  
to type it for you - send material to:

**1/7-9 Severn St**  
**Maroubra NSW 2035**



*Cabestana stretch-limo-us*  
Courtesy Angus Hawke

## Office - Bearers:

President: Des Beechey  
Vice Pres: Patty Jansen  
Secretary: Chris Barnes  
Treasurer: John Dunkerley  
Field Trips: Ashley Miskelly  
Sheller Editor: Steve Dean  
**Executive Management Committee:**  
Des Beechey, Chris Barnes, Steve  
Dean and Ashley Miskelly

## Some of the topics inside:

- The UniverShell trading company
- Unusual NSW shells (cover photo)
- Bishop Museum (Hawaii)
- Queensland finds
- Cultured pearls from Abalone
- Puzzles, Gossip and Classifieds

## The UniverShell Trading Company

**Bob & Rosemary look  
forward to your  
correspondence.**

<http://www.univershell.com/home.html>  
webmaster@univershell.com

This is a web site that sells shells. It grades each specimen of each species, and in many cases has photos.

Chances are that somewhere in the 500,000 shells they have at least one of what you need!

The site has been upgraded as follows:

- 1.] Added several hundred specimens to the web site. Lots of cowries, cones, spindles, wentletraps, scallops, conchs, and of course murex!
- 2.] Completely redesigned & rebuilt the site to be faster and easier to navigate.
- 3.] Added Credit Card processing via i-escrow [used by ebay and others]
- 4.] Created and posted reusable self-running digital catalogues. These applications allow you to have a full listing of the shells on your hard drive. They are refillable with a simple download. The file sizes are pretty large for download [2.5 Mb], but you only download the application once. The refill files are much smaller [100K]. This way you stay up to date with the inventory.
- 5.] The inventory is also posted in Adobe Acrobat form.
- 6.] Finishing up the collecting databases and expect them to be available for beta testing in late April.

Shells for sale are grouped into  
Land Snails  
Marine Gastropods  
Marine Bivalves  
Fossils  
Special Collections

An example of a land snail item for sale is as follows:

### Chrysallis virgata



Not all specimens have pictures, but all pictures seem to be in colour.

Each specimen is then listed with its details and price, eg:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 98-251 Chrysallis (Dolichostyla) virgata<br>form: partulooides 45 mm FINE | \$2 |
| Comments: collected 1988. dark colored with spiral bands                  |     |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 98-249 Chrysallis (Dolichostyla) virgata<br>form: partulooides 50 mm FINE | \$3 |
| Comments: collected 1988. Medium dark colored with frosty markings        |     |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 98-244 Chrysallis (Dolichostyla) virgata<br>form: partulooides 48 mm FINE | \$2 |
| Comments: collected 1988. Light colored with spiral bands                 |     |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 98-241 Chrysallis (Dolichostyla) virgata<br>form: partulooides 35 mm FINE | \$2 |
| Comments: collected 1988. Light colored.                                  |     |

An example of a Marine Bivalve follows:

### Chlamys sentis



|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Pectenidae 98-652 Chlamys senatoria<br>28 mm GEM | \$2 |
| Nice reddish orange color                        |     |

An example of a marine gastropod item for sale is as follows:

### Cypraea Lynx



|   |      |
|---|------|
| 98-747 Cypraea lynx 36 mm FINE                    | \$50 |
| If the identification is right - it's an Albino!! |      |

## Unusual NSW Specimens

### Angus Hawke

Hello I'm Angus from the ACT

On my birthday in April 1998, I was collecting with my brother when I came across a rare treat. It was a *sinstral Turbo undulatus*. At the very time I was talking to my brother about the only *sinstral undulatus* thought to exist (in the Griffith Collection in Victoria), I saw the shell pictured and picked it up.

It was hard to believe I had just found it. The shell is fairly small at 20mm length. It was collected at Congo NSW. This picture was my first attempt at photography.



The front cover of this issue features another freak, a *Cabestana* that my father found, of all places, in a garden at a caravan park in Byron Bay NSW! The last whorl is self-explanatory.

## Bishop Museum (the Hawaii State Museum)

### Allen Allison Neal Evenhuis Vice President, Research Chair, Natural Sciences

The Bishop Museum in Hawaii has large collections of Indo-Pacific molluscs, plus collections of the endemic land snails of Hawaii, which are close to extinction.

Friday 26 February the Bishop Museum layed off approximately 20 staff and reduced time for another 12 people

The Bishop Museum is privately funded deriving most of its operating funds through admission fees, contributions, trusts, bequests, grants and contracts.

Because of a stagnant Hawaiian economy, lower-than expected returns on investments, delays in expecting large grants and contracts, and a significant reduction in state subsidy, the Museum has had to implement a cost-reduction plan.

For the next four months (until the new fiscal year), no collections transactions (accessions, deaccessions, and loans) will be carried out and no access will be provided to collections by researchers and scholars unless specifically funded or obligated through existing grants or contracts. Basic maintenance (care and preservation) of all collections will continue.

In the meantime they are working with state legislature to try to increase state appropriation (during the past few years it has been reduced by more than \$2.1 million to \$381,000 today).

Many people wrote letters of support last year and this helped retain some state support. If you would again like to write in support of Bishop Museum please send your letters to Dr. Allen Allison, Vice President for Science, Bishop Museum, 1525 Bernice Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817. Fax 808-847-8252, e-mail allison@hawaii.edu. Letters will be distributed to key legislators and state officials. Many thanks for your concern and for your support.

### Revised presentation program

| Month                     | Meeting Organizer | Presentation    |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 27 <sup>th</sup> March 99 | John Dunkerley    | Ashley Miskelly |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> April 99 | Chris Barnes      | Patty Jansen    |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 99   | Des Beechey       | Ron Moylan      |

Fort Denison Low tides:

|                             |      |      |
|-----------------------------|------|------|
| Thur 15 <sup>th</sup> April | 1339 | 0.2m |
| Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> April  | 1421 | 0.2m |
| Sat 17 <sup>th</sup> April  | 1506 | 0.2m |

The 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> April have daytime low tides of 0.3m

The Townsville Shell Club Annual Shell Show is on 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 99

Whitsunday Shell Club, Swap and Buy 10<sup>th</sup> April, call Annette 07 49561708

Melbourne Shell Show 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> July

The Keppel Bay Shell Show is on 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July 99

### Things To Think About:

Last night I played a blank tape at full blast. The mime next door went nuts.

We know about the speed of sound, and the varying colours to make up the speed of light (i.e. blue is different to red - red blue shift) So what's the speed of dark?

Why don't they just make mouse-flavoured cat food?

I just got skylights put in my place. The people who live above me are furious.

Why do they sterilise needles for lethal injections?

Isn't Disney World a people trap run by a mouse?

Whose cruel idea was it for the word "lisp" to have an "s" in it?

## Our National Malacological Society newsletter needs articles – (but don't forget our own newsletter first)

**Peter Duncan**

Dear NSW molluscophiles,

Thanks to Karen and Chris for providing me with some branch news for next week. I am in fairly desperate need of some good articles for the newsletters for June onwards. In particular I could do with a front pager - nice photo, exciting to all, you know the kind of thing. It doesn't need to be particularly long but something eye-catching would be good.

Other stories for inside are also needed.

If it helps there are a few categories which I hope to continue (see last issue)

biopics on major characters

collectors' corner for interesting items about collecting or finds, regulations etc

science in a shell- an "abstract" version of a paper or something scientific which people would not normally read

flotsam and jetsam- light bits and pieces, short and interesting

exchanges- who wants a specimen of x for a specimen of y

You may have a few things from your branch newsletter which would be suitable for a wider audience.  
*Editor I am now sending complete copies of our NSW newsletter*

Much obliged to you for your help

## Queensland Finds

### Kevin Lamprell

Recent collecting in the waters off Halifax Bay, North Queensland has produced many interesting species, both gastropodes and bivalves, several of which are yet to be described while others are new records from Australia.

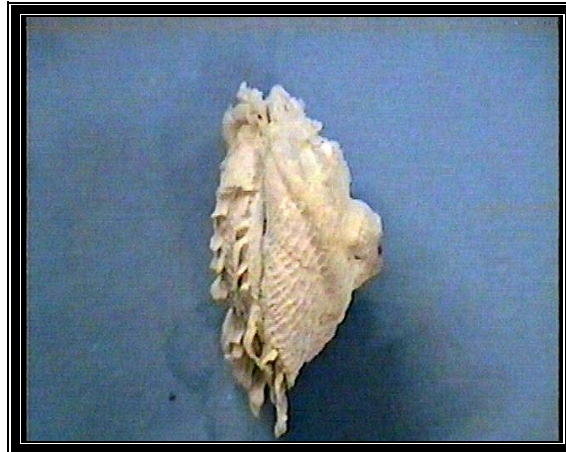
However one bivalve in particular got my attention. Recently described from New Caledonia by Dr Aki Matsukuma this is the first record outside the type location of New Caledonia

*Eopseuma phyllotrapezium* Matsukuma, 1996, is a unique member of the Chamidae with leafy-like folds and delicate sculpture, the particular specimen in my collection is off-white in colour and 43.3 mm in length. Three views are shown here.

Two gastropodes from the same locality are also figured. The one below is the rare *Cymatium comptum*



*Eopseuma phyllotrapezium*



The other, shown in the two photographs below, is an unknown genus possibly *Fax*. Perhaps some reader may be able to help with the identification?



## Cultured Pearls from the Abalone, *Haliotis iris* Martyn, 1784 from Stewart Island, N.Z.

By Maureen Anderson

Whilst travelling around New Zealand, my husband Noel and myself decided to spend some time on tiny Stewart Island, which is separated from the rest of New Zealand by Foveaux Strait - 32 kilometres from the bottom end of the South Island.

We weren't disappointed. We discovered that on this tiny island they were farming half-cultured pearls from the abalone *Haliotis iris* Martyn 1784.

The abalone, however are extremely strong and mobile, ejecting implants almost at will. They are also haemophilic, which makes handling difficult, so in the past they have been collected in the wild rather than farmed. They are very excited with their results on producing half round pearls (maybe) which grow on the inside of the shell. A full round pearl actually grows in the abalone flesh and that is proving much more difficult.

### Gemmological Characteristics

- Rounded to baroque shapes.
- Multi coloured nacre that is seldom completely smooth.

### Cause of Colour.

The distribution of the multi coloured, rainbow like diffraction hues which characterise abalone pearl nacre are determined by a combination of factors including genetics of the particular abalone species, diet (of seaweed) and which wavelengths of incident white light are diffracted by even layering of the shell's nacre. Hues commonly displayed by abalone nacre include a mix of pink, orange, green, blue, lavender, silver and gold.

These cultured pearls are expensive. Being a woman, and liking pretty things, I just had to have one. Mine is set in an 18-carat gold swivel that I wear with pride. How many of us have seen a cultured pearl from the *Haliotis iris*? They are truly beautiful.

Tiny Stewart Island was one of the highlights of our trip. I even cooked on a fuel stove! Plus it generated heat for room warming in the cottage that we stayed in.



Editor's note. Maureen wore this gem at our last shell meeting



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**Easynet**

Are you missing out on shell  
information from **the NET**?

If you are Sydney based,  
talk to **Steve Dean**.

My ISP company has all-inclusive  
packages from **\$6/mth.** (+\$30 setup)

**02 94379290w 02 99795736h**

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most families. No lists at present.

4 Gillies Close  
Coffs Harbour 2450

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**Sydney Shell Club Membership**

runs in calendar years for **\$15**.  
It includes these newsletters, and  
entitles you to borrow or hire club  
assets (when we get some)

Membership of the Malacological  
Society of Australasia (MSA), of which  
we are a branch, is a prerequisite for  
Sydney Shell Club membership.

MSA fees are paid directly to the  
MSA, currently around **\$30** for  
Australian adults, due each February.  
To pay MSA fees call 0293206275

**Members News, &  
Buy, Swap & Sell:**

Wanted contributions to this classified  
section of the sheller. Please get  
contributions to Steve Dean or Karen  
Wadwell. (See front cover for contact  
details)

Wanted gossip for this section of the  
sheller. Please get contributions to  
Steve Dean or Karen Wadwell.

For workers and others interested in  
cowries and allied families, the archive  
site of THE CAPTURED COWRY has  
been completed, with the nine original  
issues of Griffiths' THE COWRY and  
thirty-three years of cowry-related  
articles and items from the Hawaiian  
Malacological Society's HAWAIIAN  
SHELL NEWS (1960-1992).

The site address is  
<http://www.geocities.com/~makuabob/>  
Additionally, there is an on-line version  
of Lindsey Grove's INDEX OF  
CYPRAEACEAN & TRIVIAEAN  
LITERATURE, plus three indices for the

archive site itself—a Date of Publication  
index, an Author's last name index and an  
index to the maps contained in the various  
articles themselves. All of these are  
accessible via the main page.  
Aloha, Bob Dayle (a.k.a. makuabob)

There is now a 'mirror' site for the Archive  
site of cowry-related articles from Griffiths'  
THE COWRY and the Hawaiian  
Malacological Society's HAWAIIAN  
SHELL NEWS for dates from 1960 (both  
publications) through 1968 for THE  
COWRY, and through 1992 for the SHELL  
NEWS.

The 'mirror' is at  
<http://homepages.go.com/~makuabob/>  
The primary site is still at  
<http://www.geocities.com/~makuabob/>

All code glitches, I hope have been  
corrected and the indices updated also.  
Feel free to alert Bob Dayle of any  
problems encountered, Aloha

Dear Steve,  
Just wanted to thank you for the latest  
Sydney Sheller. Sorry I don't get to many  
meetings but I enjoy your efforts very  
much. Carey Beebe

Dear Des, thank you very much for  
your message, which I received with  
great pleasure. I am very happy that  
you can help me during my visit to  
Australia. As soon as I have the  
precise dates of my trip I'll be back in  
touch with you. I am an orthopaedic  
surgeon and will be in Australia  
ostensibly for the SICOT international  
conference of orthopaedics but my real  
interest in life is the study of the  
Terebridae family, I can't wait to meet  
my fellow Australian malacologists,  
and visit the Sydney Shell Club.  
I'll be in touch soon with the dates of  
my trip. Umberto Aubry.

Dear Des, I've just finalised the details  
of my visit to Sydney and I'm really  
delighted to inform you that I'll be in  
your city from Tuesday 20/04/199 until  
Sunday 25/04/199 when I'll be leaving  
for Cairns. This means that I'll be in  
town on the fourth Saturday of April  
and will be able to attend your  
meeting. I'll be staying at the Star City  
Hotel (tel. 02.97779000 fax.  
02.96578345) . Do you think that you  
could organise some meetings with  
fellow collectors for me? Thanks a lot  
for your help. I hope to see you soon.  
Best wishes. Umberto Aubry.