



SHELL-O-GRAM

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January Meeting

The January 25th meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the Southeast Branch Public Library at 7:00 PM.

Dr. Warren Allmon, Director of the Paleontological Research Institution (PRI), Ithaca, New York will speak on the evolution of the Florida malacofauna over the last 2-3 million years (Pliocene to Recent). He will also give a report on the latest activities at the PRI. Many of us will recall Warren's excellent 1992 presentation at the Conchologists of America fossil symposium sponsored by the JSC at the Marriott at Sawgrass.

The Shell-Of-The-Month will be presented by Harry Lee on a sinistral specimen of *Terebra dislocata* (Say, 1822) [Eastern Auger], collected in the Nashua Formation (Pliocene).

Plan now to attend and bring a guest!

February Meeting

The February 22nd meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the Southeast Branch Public Library at 7:00 PM.

Harry Lee will present the month's educational slide program entitled "Olivellinae of the western Atlantic." Harry is interested in this group because of repeatedly being stymied with identification attempts over the years - for instance three of the five local species are un-named. He thinks you will appreciate the diversity and beauty of the group - far exceeding the anemic glimpse that the popular shell books provide.

The Shell-Of-The-Month will be given by Bill Frank on *Olivella mutica* (Say, 1822) [Variable Dwarf Olive] - a species reportedly commonly found in northeast Florida.

See you there!

Diving the Grenadine Islands

By Charlotte Lloyd

The early part of this year I was contacted by dive buddy Wayne Harland to see if I would be interested in going to the Grenadines in the West Indies to island-hop and dive for shells. My answer - absolutely! It would be an extended trip of two weeks from September 27 through October 11, 2000 staying on Union Island with night-diving excursions to Mayreau, Tobago Cays, Palm, Carriacou, Petit St. Vincent and Petit Martinique Islands.

Four divers would take part in this trip, Wayne Harland (Pompano Beach), Jim Jacaruso (Palm City), Rob Massino (Ft. Myers) and myself. The cost would be split between us, and Rob made the dive arrangements with Glenn Roy, owner of Dive Union Island. Jim forewarned us that there had been problems in the past with this dive operator, but we were very optimistic. And besides - it was an opportunity to see new exotic islands and to investigate underwater reefs at night. Who could resist?

Once settled into the Sunny Grenadines Hotel, we found it adequate (well, almost) with a great view of the water from our 2nd story rooms (yes, lug all that heavy dive gear up and down steep steps), and it had air-conditioning (scarce in these regions.) Who knew we would have to arm-wrestle clean towels and toilet paper from the maid - when we could find her.

(Continued on page 4.)



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The Shell-O-Gram is issued bimonthly and mailed to all regular members. Annual membership dues are \$12.50 individual and \$15.00 family (domestic), and \$20.00 (foreign). Lifetime membership is available.

Send dues to: Teresa St. John, Treasurer
2605 Emily Court
Jacksonville, FL 32216-5101

The club meets each month, excluding December, at the Southeast Branch Public Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Boulevard, Jacksonville Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address shown above.

Closing date for article submission is two weeks prior to the first of each month of publication. Articles may be republished provided full credit is given the author and this newsletter and one copy of the complete publication in which the article appears is mailed to Editor at the above address.

Upcoming Events

➔ **Feb. 10-11 – Greater Miami Shell Club Show** at Nova Southwest University, Fischler Graduate School of Education & Human Services, 1750 NE 167th St., N. Miami Beach, FL. Contact Mark Bethke, 3001 South Ocean Dr., Suite 4-V, Hollywood, FL 33019-2904, E-mail: ferreter@gate.net or Phone: (954) 922-8189. Note: This is a reschedule of the show that was originally planned for Jan. 26th-28th.

➔ **May 5-6 – Central Florida Shell Club Show** at the Central Florida Fairground, Orlando, FL. Contact Phyllis Gray, 1212 S. Eola Drive, Orlando, FL 32806, Phone: (407) 422-0253.

➔ **May 26-27 – 7th Suncoast Conchologists Shellers' Jamboree** at the Honeywell Minnreg Building, Largo, FL. This all-inclusive package for a full weekend of fun, food, and shells is \$80 for those registering prior to May 1st. Registration after May 1st is \$85. The registration fee includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch and dinner Saturday, lunch Sunday, and the banquet Sunday night.

Registration forms will be mailed beginning March 7th to those sending a stamped, self-addressed, legal size, long envelope with postage for 3 ounces to: Roni Mucci, 795 County Road 1, #199, Palm Harbor, FL 34683, Phone; (727) 787-4968.

2001 Jacksonville Shell Club Meeting Schedule

Club Program Chairperson Cathy Williams has confirmed the following meeting dates for the coming year. All meetings will take place at the Southeast Branch Public Library and begin at 7:00 PM.

- Thursday, March 22nd
- Thursday, April 26th
- Thursday, May 24th
- Thursday, June 28th
- Thursday, July 26th
- Thursday, August 23rd
- Thursday, September 27th
- Thursday, October 25th
- Monday, November 19th

Fossil Field Trip

Fay Mucha of the Greater Miami Shell Club has organized a fossil collecting trip to the Caloosa Shell Pit (Paleo Preserve) in Ruskin, Florida on Saturday, January 13th. As there is no limitation on the number of people who can attend, this trip is open to individuals from other clubs.

The pit will be open for collecting from 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM and the cost of admittance is \$8.00 per-person (cash only) paid at the gate.

For more information and reservations, contact Fay at (305) 551-7655 (home) or (305) 585-7016 (work). A map with directions to the pit is available from your editor.

Publication Notice

“The *Liguus* Tree Snails of South Florida” by Henry T. Close (240pp. 6 x 9, 8 color plates, 40 black and white photos, 2 drawings, 11 distribution maps, 5 tables, 12 appendixes, bibliography, index) has been published by the University Press of Florida.

Some of the most beautiful and vivid shells in the world are found not on the beaches but in the trees of South Florida. This colorfully illustrated book, offers a comprehensive survey of these rare snails and their shells, as well as their biology, natural history, evolution,

and ecology. The book contains abundant reference material for scientists, but it is written in an informal style that will appeal to shell aficionados and amateur naturalists alike.

The book can be ordered on-line at the publishers web site (<http://www.upf.com/fall2000/close.html>), by phone (1-800-226-3822), or via snail mail (University Press of Florida, 15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, FL 32611.) The cost is \$49.00 plus \$3.75 for postage and handling.

Welcome New Members

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JSC Christmas Party 2000

A record number of JSC members and friends (36+) attended the Christmas Party on Saturday, Dec. 16th. Charlotte Lloyd's marshfront home twinkled with lights inside and out as a welcoming beacon to those traveling from as far away as Pompano Beach to attend this festive event.

We always praise the wonderful cooks in our club, but they outdid themselves this year. The range of food was extensive, and for starters there were Caviar Pie, crisp fried Lumpia Spring Rolls with Duck Sauce, Pigs in a Blanket, Spinach Dip or Taco pie to name just a few. The club provided the resources for the two main entrees: Roast Beef with Horseradish Sauce and Butternut Topped Grouper with homemade Tartar Sauce. Members filled in with German Potato Salad, String Beans, a wonderful fresh green Salad, Buffalo Wings, Squash Casserole and other delights. For the sweet tooth there were plenty of cakes and pies. The club also provided all the drink mixers and paper products.

The hostess provided the ever-popular "Fishhouse Punch," and halfway through the activities the happy party-goers called for a punch bowl refill.

Club president Claire Newsome explained to everyone how the "Abbreviated Chinese Gift Exchange" would

work, and by golly, it did! We saw many great shell-related presents going home with happy gift-exchangers.

Some members enjoyed chatting with friends, some sang Christmas Carols, and one couple even danced in the kitchen. The die-hards sat outside in the wonderful balmy weather enjoying their last party refreshment, and the party broke up around 11:00 PM.

The club thanks everyone who attended and wishes all of its members a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Snails Are Where You Find Them

By Harry G. Lee

That most land mollusks are vegetarians is common and often painfully acquired knowledge. However, a few families of land snails have, like their marine cousins, adopted the flesh-eating habit. In Jacksonville there exists no finer example of this carnivorous conversion than *Euglandina rosea* (Férussac, 1821) – Rosy Wolfsnail. Nevertheless, this beautiful snail usually receives the same harsh treatment at the hands of irate and ignorant gardeners as the slugs upon which it feeds. It seems that shell collectors, at least the writer, have also been ignorant of *E. rosea*'s usefulness.

Early this autumn I collected a medium-sized (55 mm.) living specimen of *E. rosea* along Old St. Augustine Road. After one week in alcohol the soft parts were extracted from the shell *en bloc* and examined. I noted the stomach was swollen, firm, and irregular. It was cut open, and out popped no less than thirteen snail shells. Many were intact, but some had been partially dissolved by digestive juices. The prey were apparently "cleaned" of their soft parts by the *Euglandina* and were easily identifiable as:

- Eleven *Polygyra cereolus* (Mühlfeld, 1816) Southern Flatcoil
- One *Gastrocopta rupicola* (Say, 1821) Tapered Snaggletooth
- One *Fossaria cubensis* (Pfeiffer, 1839) Carib Fossaria

For years I have read of collectors such as the ambitious South Africans obtaining rare shells by searching the guts of deep-water predatory fish. After the *E. rosea* dissection it occurred to me that the thirteen shells would have to be logged as *ex cochlea* (from the snail) just as South Africans and others use *ex piscē* (from the fish)* for their prizes. The search for the *ex cochlea* shells will continue, as it is clear that *E. rosea* is a better snail-hunter than we humans. While the possibility of uncovering unusual shells with this technique is exciting, prospects for *Cypraea fultoni* Sowerby, 1903 are pretty remote!

*The phrase "*ex pisces*" is an error in syntax.

**Originally published in the Shell-O-Gram during December, 1976.

***This article, accompanied by a color photograph, is available on the club's web pages at:

<http://home.sprynet.com/~wfrank/where.htm>

Divining the Grenadine Islands - Continued

Nothing could dampen our spirit and the first night we chose to dive on the wreck "Perune" in Mayreau Island harbor in about 40 feet of water. Once on the bottom we found the wreck with our powerful dive lights and saw lots of tropical fish, pastel colored soft corals and red sponge growing on the hull. A very nice dark West Indian Murex [*Chicoreus brevifrons* (Lamarck, 1822)] and an orange Atlantic Trumpet-triton [*Charonia tritonis variegata* (Lamarck, 1816)] were found by Jim. The rest of us brought up small shells but nothing special. The second dive that night was the south edge of Mayreau Harbor. The bottom looked good - coral rubble with sand patches. Wayne found a beautiful Music Volute [*Voluta musica* Linnaeus, 1758], and I picked up Chestnut Latirus [*Leucozonia nassa* (Gmelin, 1791)], Lightning Olives [*Oliva fulgurator* (Röding, 1791)], Carrot Cones [*Conus daucus* Hwass, 1792], and an Angulate Wentletrap [*Epitonium angulatum* (Say, 1830)].

The next morning we found a restaurant that doubled at night as a dance hall. When we tried to order from the menu they were out of everything. Finally Rob asked, "What do you have?" The answer "eggs and cheese," sliced cheese that is. Yes - I would definitely find a grocery store for milk and bananas to go with the cereal I had brought along. That night we decided to try Tobago Cays and dive the anchorage area. As we eased onto the warm water enveloped by darkness, we swam to the bottom and discovered...sand humps. White sand as far as you could see with large 1-2 foot high humps/hills of sand made by a marine worm...and nothing else! No coral, no rubble, no grass, no fish; this definitely would not be the most exciting dive we have ever made. No one saw anything resembling a shell. Where were the dead bivalves, the trails in the sand? Nothing! Back in the boat we decided we were too shallow - we would try deeper water. The next dive we jumped into 40 feet of water, and upon reaching the bottom, I found the two prettiest Dominican Cones [*Conus dominicanus* Hwass, 1792] I have ever seen. What a thrill to see them gliding along the sand. Mucus from the animal was holding sand on their dorsal surface, which helped them blend into the sand bottom. Sixty minutes later, just before I surfaced, I found another. Back in the boat I discovered

that Wayne had found one, but it was damaged and he left it on the bottom. Jim and Rob had yet to see one.

The following day we decided to scout Chatham Bay at Union Island for spots to dive that night. We found an area in 35 feet of water where the dense coral reef rolls down to the sand/grass bottom in 70 feet of water, and we marked this spot on the Global Positioning System (GPS). Our second spot was inshore in sand and grass in about 18-20 feet of water. That night we left at about 8:00 PM to head for Chatham. The wind and seas had picked up considerably, and it was a rough 40-minute ride to our destination. Using the GPS we found our position and anchored in 40 feet of water, jumped in and worked down the reef to a depth of 80 feet. Wayne found one Dominican Cone that was much smaller than the Tobago Cays specimens but more brightly colored. Jim found three nice Messorium Murex [*Haustellum messorium* (G. B. Sowerby II, 1841)] on the sand. Our next dive produced more cones, and I even found one. We all looked through the lush dense coral reef for shells, but the coral community species were just not there. Very strange! In the Bahamas a reef such as this would have Turbos, Cones, Vexilliums, Pectens, Cypraea and other species.

The following day a tropical depression blew in so we spent that evening at our favorite French restaurant the "Bougainvillea" where we dined on Callaloo soup, Curry Chicken, refreshing drinks and told tall tales while relaxing and enjoying each other's company.

With daybreak came much better weather, and, while at breakfast at the Clifford House (a restaurant that really served breakfast), we decided to rent a taxi and tour the island. It is a beautiful island of about four miles across by three miles long. The hills and yards are covered with a dense dark green grass mat - it's like the whole island has a beautiful thick green carpet. The homes have lots of tropical foliage, and every yard comes with at least one goat. Even undeveloped land had coral vine in bloom - a charming and beautiful place.

For the next few nights we visited Chatham again with about the same results and decided to go back to Tobago Cays. We thought we would do better there if we could cover more ground. So Rob and Jim bought 80 feet of poly-line and attached an underwater strobe to it so we could go with the current, and the bright strobe flashing on the bottom would help us stay together. This worked great; we let the current do most of the work, and we were able to cover about two miles of bottom on each drift. We all found more Dominican Cones but nothing else.

By now we were discouraged by the lack of shells and Glenn Roy's reluctance to allow his crew to take us to any of the other out islands. So...after a few phone calls, Wayne, Jim and I decided to hop on the ferryboat and

make the three-hour trip to Bequia Island for the remaining six days of our trip. Regretfully, Rob had to head home as business beckoned.

Bequia has always been one of my favorite places. It is one of the more undeveloped charming, islands, and its seven square miles remain among the most picturesque of the Caribbean. It was once a busy center for whaling, and Bequia still retains its traditions and maritime skills with a community of seafaring fishermen and boat-builders. We stayed at the lovely Gingerbread Hotel located at the waters edge.

The first night we went to Lower Bay where we had found Matchless Cones [*Conus cedonulli* Linnaeus, 1767] before. Now they were few and far between. After two dives, Jim had found 3, Wayne -0, Charlotte -0, but I did find some nice live Spiny Caribbean Vases [*Vasum capitellum* (Linnaeus, 1758)], and fresh dead Speckled Tellins [*Tellina listeri* Röding, 1798], King Venus [*Chione paphia* (Linnaeus, 1767)], Eggcockles [*Laevicardium laevigatum* (Linnaeus, 1758)], Atlantic Strawberry Cockles [*Americardia media* (Linnaeus, 1758)] and Reticulate Cowrie-helmets [*Cypraeacassis testiculus* (Linnaeus, 1758)].

Our boat operator was a young Rastafarian by the name of Antonio, who always seemed to be in "another world" but who was very adept at boat handling. Our next dive choice was Pigeon Island about five miles away. It is a rocky abutment with sheer sides that stick up above the water to about 75 feet in height and plunges down to a 100+ foot depth. We anchored up and proceeded to get ready to dive and a cloud of mosquitoes descended upon us. I had dozens of mosquitoes trying to land on my face at one time, so I was ready and in the water in record time. It was a beautiful dive; the face of the rock was ablaze with every color imaginable. Red sponge covers most surfaces, lavender, orange and yellow sponges were abundant, as were soft corals, sea fans and whips with the polyps open feeding on plankton, red shrimp, lobsters, and eels out searching for food. With very little current, you could just hover along the rocky walls looking for the elusive Glory-of-the-Atlantic Cones [*Conus granulatus* Linnaeus, 1758] while taking in all of the wonderful sights of this underwater paradise. I ventured down to the bottom at 110 feet to see if it was perhaps littered with shells. Then it was all to soon time to ascend and climb back into the boat and face the mosquitoes. Back to Lower Bay for the second dive to again search for Matchless Cones. On this dive I examined marine life and saw hermit crabs wearing long plume anemones, spotted trunkfish and the flying gurnard fish with its electric blue spotted pectoral fins.

It was a delightful, relaxing two weeks. Friends asked me, "How was your trip, what did you find?" My

answer, the trip was super! Great friends, wonderful sights, easy diving, with time to read three books, and, although I didn't find a lot, it was one of my favorite trips.

*This article, accompanied by color photographs, is available on the club's web pages at:

<http://home.sprynet.com/~wfrank/grenadi.htm>

My Eleuthera Experience

By Scott Schubbe

I was first told about the shelling trip to Eleuthera, Bahamas by my friend Martin Tremor, who sent me an e-mail stating: "Hey Scott, do I have a deal for you!" He told me of a trip organized by Jim and Bobbi Cordy of the Astronaut Trail Shell Club (Melbourne) and I could join the trip for minimal expense. After all expenses were split four ways, it was a great deal. I was psyched from the get-go, and I couldn't wait.

After reading Martin's "Make Mine Eleuthera" article from the year before, I was ready to make it my own for this year. (Martin's article can be found on the Jacksonville Shell Club Website at <http://home.sprynet.com/~wfrank/eleuth.htm>).

So after some planning on the foodstuffs and the rental car over to the Jetport in Ft. Lauderdale, Lynn Gaulin, Martin, and I were ready to go. There we met up with the Cordys, Ellen Bulger, Nancy Leeds, Carol Goodman, Fran Perry, Theresa Stelzig, Alice Pullin and Eleanor Lahn. The flight to Eleuthera was with two Twin Air aircraft – twin-engine six-seaters smaller than school buses. The ride over was very a smooth and pleasant experience. We landed at Rock Sound Airport at around 2:30 PM - a very small but tidy and clean terminal. The other terminal was close by but had been destroyed by Hurricane Floyd. Our planes were the only two there.

We went through customs without a hitch and proceeded to load our gear into our rental cars. These cars were old but ran well. After a 20-minute ride, we arrived at our cottages. These were small but very clean two bedroom and one-bath accommodations, with four people to each one. The view was excellent, overlooking Tarpum Bay.

As soon as we all arrived, our luggage was tossed into our respective rooms, and the whole group slunk into the gorgeous warm and blue-green waters of Tarpum Bay. Some live American Carrier Snails [*Xenophora conchyliophora* (Born, 1780)] were found, as well as some orange Lace Murex [*Chicoreus florifer dilectus* (A. Adams, 1855)] and some small West Indian Top Snails [*Citarium pica* (Linnaeus, 1758)].

Others found Lightning Olives [*Oliva fulgurator* (Röding, 1798)], Silky Tegulas [*Tegula fasciata* (Born, 1778)], Common Atlantic Marginellas [*Prunum apicinum* (Menke, 1828)], and the West Indian Dove Snail [*Columbella mercatoria* (Linnaeus, 1758)]. Live Queen Conchs [*Strombus gigas* Linnaeus, 1758] were everywhere, some may have escaped from the large conch pens in the bay, where the locals "corralled" live conchs. I found a nice Chestnut Latirus [*Leucozonia nassa* (Gmelin, 1791)] and a huge Apple Murex [*Chicoreus pomum* (Gmelin, 1791)]. Big barracudas were on hand to inspect the new visitors.

After a two-hour snorkel in the bay, it was time to shower up, eat dinner, and get ready for the next day. After dinner and when it was dark, it was time to grab my flashlight and walk to the concrete ramps and docks in Tarpum Bay to scout for large West Indian Top Snails. These specimens were found on the sides of docks and piers, and I took my hand dredge to pluck them off. The largest I collected was a three-incher, and smaller ones were everywhere. This turned out to be a nightly ritual for me and a favorite time.

Time to turn in and dream of the next day's events.

So, here we got settled and ready for the first full day of our trip. Before we left in the morning, Jim Cordy got us together and told us of what we might find in the area where we are headed. This particular morning we were heading for a spot toward the southern tip of Eleuthera, called Millar's Beach. That spot was a beautiful coral reef and teeming with life of all kinds. Nothing is prettier to me than sea fans swaying with the waves, and they came in many colors. Looking closely, I found some wonderful Flamingo Tongues [*Cyphoma gibbosum* (Linnaeus, 1758)], the first for me. They seemed to be everywhere. Some of these shells gathered together in groups of up to eight individuals per gorgonian. I found two live orange forms of the True Tulip [*Fasciolaria tulipa* (Linnaeus, 1758)] crawling around the rocks.

I used my fins for a while to fan the sand around the rocks and coral and found a beautiful small live bivalve that turned out to be a Decussate Bittersweet [*Glycymeris decussata* (Linnaeus, 1758)]. While doing this, I came across a whole but dead American Thorny Oyster, [*Spondylus americanus* Hermann, 1781]. This guy was huge with almost no spines, but in fairly good shape. Because it was dead, I kept it anyway.

Next, it was time for some serious rock turning. This turned out to be one of the most enjoyable parts of the trip for me because you never know what's going to be under the next one. I found many of the small and beautiful Ornate Scallops [*Caribachlamys ornata* (Lamarck, 1819)], clinging byssally to the sides or under the rocks. Some Coffeebean Trivias [*Niveria pediculus* (Linnaeus, 1758)] were present and some found Atlantic

Yellow Cowries [*Erosaria acicularis* (Gmelin, 1791)]. I found a dead Atlantic Gray Cowrie [*Talparia cinerea* (Gmelin, 1791)] and in the sand under the rocks, I found Silky Tegulas [*Tegula fasciata* (Born, 1778)], Flame Cones [*Conus flavescens* (G. B. Sowerby II, 1834)], and the West Indian Dove Snail.

As I made my way out of the water, I found I had snorkeled quite a ways away. So I checked the species on the iron shore all the way back to the rental cars. Besides the usual Spotted Periwinkles [*Littoraria tessellata* (Philippi, 1847)], Four-toothed Nerites [*Nerita versicolor* Gmelin, 1791], Beaded Periwinkles [*Tectarius muricatus* (Linnaeus, 1758)] and Zebra Periwinkles [*Nodilittorina ziczac* (Gmelin, 1791)], I found Common Prickly-winkles [*Nodilittorina tuberculata* (Menke, 1828)] in abundance. I also found one White-spot Miter [*Vexillum puella* (Reeve, 1845)].

What a day! I was tired after all the time in the water, but I had the best time and I still dream of snorkeling at this place. Then it was time for a shower. This proved to be quite interesting, as our "shower" turned out to be a trickle the diameter of a pencil! But after a few days, this was a luxury, and one got used to it very quickly. Of course, right after the shower one needed a healthy dose of bug spray to keep the no-see-ums at bay. The air conditioners cooled only the bedrooms, and with cooking going on in the kitchen with no air conditioning, we needed to keep the front and back door wide open! So the no-see-ums made themselves right at home in our cottage, and we needed to defend ourselves accordingly. I still came home with very scarred legs as these pests were brutal at this time of year.

About a half-block away was a pay phone, and I would call my wife collect every night, as cell phone service was not a part of Eleuthera. Gasoline was \$3.16 per gallon, everything was about double of what one would pay in the states. Two bucks for a gallon of water, a dollar for a soda, etc. With the unemployment rate at 60%, I'm not sure how the locals got along. But they seemed very happy and were very friendly.

On two occasions after our daily trips, we walked to the piers where they were cleaning their catch of the day, be it huge lobster, fish, or conchs. The locals ate very well, and the sheer size of some of the lobster was stunning.

Next to the shelling, my favorite part of the trip was dinner. Bobbi Cordy is one awesome cook, and the meals she pre-made, froze, and heated for us on Eleuthera were excellent. I successfully hounded her for the recipes, and my family now eats them every week. I was so lucky to have been in the same cottage with her and Jim. Others would walk by our door at night and say, "What is that I smell?"

Now, our second full day on Eleuthera started much the same with Jim briefing us on the expected finds of the day. We watched the children walk to the near by school each morning, and each child was dressed impeccably his/her uniform.

The target area for this day was a place north of our cottages called Governor's Harbor. This locale was by the airport, and there we could only shell more than a certain distance from the airport areas - per the airport officials the year before. So in we went, a rather rough entry at that, with the surf a little rough and an iron shore entry to boot. American Starsnails [*Lithopoma americanum* (Gmelin, 1791)] were there, some long dead Milk Conchs [*Strombus costatus* Gmelin, 1791] and not a whole lot else. The water deepened rather abruptly, and I found my first West Indian Chank [*Turbinella angulata* (Lightfoot, 1786)] scooting across the bottom at about an eighteen foot depth. It was only about four inches long, but with a very nice and velvety periostracum.

I decided to exit the water and walk back, and about halfway back I heard my name being called. "Want to try a little further towards the airport?" Seems that Lynn decided to stroll about that way and was approached by an airport official, which inquired about her actions. Lynn stated she was with a group of shell collectors who just wanted to find some shells close to the airport. Now, I suppose she seemed rather credible stating this fact because she was in a black wetsuit, soaking wet, holding fins, a snorkel and mask, and a bag full of shells. So, this official took her to a spot in an airport vehicle and told her that she could shell there as long as she and her group stayed by the water. This was the same spot from which the group was kicked out on a previous trip! So, Lynn came back, retrieved me and two ladies from our group, and we headed for this spot.

The water here is beautiful, calm, and an easy entry. The beach here is loaded with fresh dead Milk Conchs, and in the water, live ones abound. I must have examined two hundred specimens, and kept five. These were of a very small stature for fully matured adults, maybe approaching the "dwarf" category. Also abundant were sea biscuits, but I only took one thinking I would get more later. This is a major regret of mine, and I wish I had taken a few more, but with a shelling fantasy in front of me, these were easily forgotten. Others joined us at a later time there, but we still needed to head back to our original stop to pick up Bobbi, who, by this time, had collected many choice Lace Murex, and the whole group was covetous of her finds. She had gone a long way out in search of these, and she was very successful.

Not much else was found here, but what a beautiful spot. I never imagined I would tire of collecting Milk Conchs, but here I did. Time to move on. Just before

getting out of the water, I collected a live American Carriersnail [*Xenophora conchyliophora* (Born, 1780)]! I found it at the end of a small trail half buried in the sand, and I was thrilled.

The next day it was time for a little travel and tourism. We headed way up north to a place called the Glass Window. Here Eleuthera is only as wide as the road, and what a beautiful place this was, with lots of photo opportunities – cliff-smashing waves on the east side and tranquil turquoise waters on the west side. We stopped at a place called James' Cistern, but it proved to be not too great. I found a cruddy Caribbean Helmet (*Cassia tuberosa* (Linnaeus, 1758)), some additional Flamingo Tongues, along with some huge Cayenne Keyhole Limpets [*Diodora cayenensis* (Lamarck, 1822)], Turkey Wings [*Arca zebra* (Swainson, 1833)], and a lone Smooth-edge Jewel Box [*Chama sinuosa* Broderip, 1835] attached to a submerged branch. Some small Queen Conchs were found here as well.

Leaving this place, and on the way back, we found time for the souvenir shops, which were not really more than small huts that sold their wares to the few and far-between tourists. It was still a great place to pick up a couple of T-shirts. When we left here, we stopped at a small place nick-named the "salt pond." This was a strange very warm pool of salt water teeming with algae and other life, and some of it was very irritating to human life, as things tended to sting as one moved through the shallows. I snorkeled this pond and found quite a few Dunn's Murex [*Chicoreus dunni* Petuch, 1987], said to be endemic to only this pond. These shells were crawling everywhere and not rare here at all; I saw at least a hundred. I also found some Striate Bubbles [*Bulla striata* Bruguière, 1792] and three beautiful Saltpond Marginellas [*Prunum pellucidum* (Pfeiffer, 1840)] crawling on the sand, starkly in radiance by the sun. I only had a short time here for we needed to leave and pick Jim up; he had been involved in a solo search for Abbott's Cone [*Conus abbotti* Clench, 1942]. If memory serves me well, he found nine of these and was quite pleased. Time to head back and rest up, for tomorrow will be our final day here in this little paradise.

We woke up to the last full day at Eleuthera. This was the grand finale, and Cape Eleuthera was the final shelling destination of our little trip. Jim gave us the usual briefing; we loaded up; went to get gas; and off we went. When we arrived, there were two different spots pointed out to us. The tide would be low in the hours to come; we needed to decide on the species we would want to target at first, either the dwellers under the rocks, at the reef, or in the sand.

I chose the rock area first. After less than a minute, I came across my best Caribbean Helmet [*Cassia tuberosa*

(Linnaeus, 1758)] of the whole trip. It was not very big, but it was clean and had a stunning parietal shield. I found another about an hour later, twice as big with a glorious shield but not as clean. Time to try a different area.

Martin told me he was amazed at the amount of damage that had been inflicted here by Hurricane Floyd, that the trees had been so thick where we were parked that one could have hardly seen the beach. But now they were absent in some places a hundred yards from the water. Some rocky places in the water had been sanded over with the storm, and some molluscan species collected there the year before were now absent.

Along the beach, while snorkeling in three to four feet of water, I found a beautiful Hawkwing Conch [*Strombus raninus* Gmelin, 1791] and a ten-inch crabbed West Indian Chank. Pairs of fresh dead Gaudy Sanguin [*Asaphis deflorata* (Linnaeus, 1758)] were abundant, and I found my first Atlantic Partridge Tun [*Tonna pennata* (Mørch, 1852)] fresh dead among some rocks. Two live Amber Penshells [*Pinna carnea* Gmelin, 1791] were found in shallow sand along with a dead Barbados Keyhole Limpet [*Fissurella barbadensis* (Gmelin, 1791)]. Speckled Tellin [*Tellina listeri* Röding, 1798], and Tiger Lucine [*Codakia orbicularis* (Linnaeus, 1758)] pairs were also abundant, and I found two mammoth Longspine Starsnails [*Astraliium phoebia* (Röding, 1798)] in the sandy areas. Algal growths betrayed their presence where no weed was present.

Then it was time to head back, but the day was not over without a final dip in Tarpum Bay at Savannah Sound before dark. Ellen Bulger found the most perfect Lace Murex that I have ever seen, with a deep color and huge frilly lace, which made it the shell of the day at this place.

Then, after the usual shower, it was time to pack up and get ready for the next day. Since our flight was early, shelling for me was not an option. I gathered all of my shells from the freezer and carefully packed them. Then we made our way to the airport, and I knew I was going to miss the sweet little accommodations we all had for the previous days, along with the great people with whom I shared this trip. What a trip it had been, and I will remember and dream about this experience for months to come. I eagerly await an opportunity to return - to once again experience the charm and tranquility and all that is Eleuthera.

Note: Common names used throughout this article were derived from Turgeon, D. D., J. F. Quinn, Jr., A. E. Bogan, E. V. Coan, F. G. Hochberg, W. G. Lyons, P. M. Mikkelsen, R. J. Neves, C. F. E. Roper, G. Rosenberg, B. Roth, A. Scheltema, F. G. Thompson, M. Vecchione, and J. D. Williams, 1998. Common and scientific names of aquatic invertebrates from the United States and Canada: Mollusks, 2nd edition. *American Fisheries Society, Special Publication 26*, Bethesda, Maryland, U.S.A. For those species without an officially sanctioned common name, the editorial board has provided one employing a variety of resources but applying the same style criteria as enunciated in Turgeon, Quinn *et al.*

*This article, accompanied by color photographs, is available on the club's web pages at: <http://home.sprynet.com/~wfrank/scott.htm>

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