



# SHELL-O-GRAM

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There will not be a meeting during the month of July, 2012.

The meeting of the JSC will be on August 23, 2012 at 7:00PM. We will meet at 7:00PM at the Southeast Branch Public Library. Charlotte Thorpe will present her program and photos of shells/live shells collected in the Bay of Honduras. Charlotte was on a shrimp boat with five other divers night-diving in the warm waters of Trujillo Bay and at Sandy Cay near Utila Island. There was also some dredging done in the Bay that brought up many interesting shells. Be sure to attend this meeting as we will also go over the recent Shell Club Shell Show held on July 20, 21 and 22nd.

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**This is a call for members to attend and work at the Shell Show. We will need everyone's help since we are having a 3 day Show.**

We will need help with the following:

Thursday - Set-up beginning at 8:00am. We have to adjust the tables (this means moving them) and cover the tables to be ready by 10:00am for folks to set up their displays.

The three days of the Show we can use volunteers to:

- \* At 8:30am help with carrying in boxes for the Club Store and help in setting up the Arts and Crafts backboards. Bring some tools in case we need them.
- \* Be there to talk to visitors and welcome them to the Show.
- \* Answer any questions that visitors may have about the displays.
- \* Stand-in for dealers, and workers to take breaks from their jobs, to eat lunch, etc.
- \* To watch tables and be ready to relieve folks that are very busy, such as working in the Club Store or helping out the dealers.
- \* Ask if you can help anyone that looks like they have a question.

Please call Billie at 904-241-3755 about bringing items for the lunches, call Carmella 904-724-0768 if you can work in the Shell Store.

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This club meets each month at the Southeast Branch of the Jacksonville Public Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd., Jacksonville, Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address above. The *Shell-O-Gram* is issued bimonthly and mailed to all regular members. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 individual and \$20.00 family (domestic) and \$25.00 (foreign). Lifetime membership is available. Please send checks for dues to the above address and made out to the Jacksonville Shell Club. We encourage members to submit articles for this publication. 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.

### President's Message:

Dear JSC Members,

Summer is here and the Shell Show is right around the corner. We have a full house of exhibits this year and are anticipating a good turnout. Be sure to assist in advertising this event in any way you can, big or small, everything counts. I look forward to seeing everyone at the show. Brian

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### WELCOME NEW MEMBER:

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***ScienceDaily (Oct. 19, 2010) — Two world experts in micro mollusks, Anselmo Peñas and Emilio Rolán, have made an unprecedented description in a scientific publication of a combined total of 209 snail species. Commissioned by the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, the study was unveiled in September in the French capital, and it covers the most new species from a single genus of any study to date.***

"Never have so many species from a single genus, nor even from a single family, been described in one single study," says Anselmo Peñas, lead author of the collaborative monograph between the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) in Paris and Spain's National Museum of Natural Sciences (MNCN-CSIC), and one of the world's leading experts on the Pyramidelloidae superfamily.

In 2000, the Paris museum commissioned Anselmo Peñas and Emilio Rolán to carry out the study on deep water Pyramidelloidae from the tropical waters of the South Pacific. This is the first study to have described 272 species of snails from the genus *Turbonilla*, which were discovered over the past 30 years during international ocean research campaigns in waters between 100 and 1,700 metres deep off New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga and Polynesia.

The study has been published in volume 26 of the Scientific Publications of the Paris Natural History Museum, and has been described by its authors as "more than an achievement." "If there were a Guinness world record for Science, this would be one without a shadow of a doubt," say the experts, both of whom are retired and collectors of micro mollusks. "This study has been harder and larger than others, and it has been a great challenge for us because it involved deep water material that was also from a region that we were not familiar with, and it also involved a large number of species, which made it even more complicated," says Emilio Rolán, co-author of the monograph and a collaborator at the University of Santiago de Compostela.

### Ten years of study

A decade of analysis, evaluations, comparisons, rulings out and contacts made with museums from all around the world made it possible to confirm the finding of 209 species new to science. "It's really incredible," says Peñas of the

number of snails. Out of the remaining species studied, around 30 were already known and a further 33 did not provide sufficient material to make it possible to describe them as new species.

"When the director of Malacology from the Museum of Paris told us there were a lot of species, we smiled, because we are old hands at this, and we thought there would be around 20 or 30 new species. The surprising thing was when we saw they were all different, with more and more turning up," explains Rolán.

"The novelty is not only in the description of so many species, but also in the fact that they all belong to a single genus, *Turbonilla*, to a single family," points out Peñas. According to the expert, so many species from a single genus have never been described before in a single study, not even in the 19th Century, when the largest number of species were described, nor during the 20th Century.

#### The difficulty of identifying Pyramidelloidae

Identifying mollusks from the *Turbonilla* genus is not as easy as it is for other families, such as the Conidae, the most numerous family of gastropod mollusks along with the Pyramidelloidae. Their lack of a radula (mollusks' 'teeth', which

are used to identify the species) and their tiny, almost microscopic, size (less than 10 millimeters), made the authors' work harder and longer, requiring them to spend long periods at the Paris museum.

"Since there were so many and they were so small, it was impossible to separate them by sight alone, so we had to take photographs with an electron microscope and then arrange them. In total, there were 1,300 photos. It's been a huge job," explains Rolán.

Another distinctive feature of this family is parasitization: "It is known that the Pyramidelloidae feed off the body juices of other mollusks such as the common mussel and sand mason worms, but we don't know how many Pyramidelloidae are mollusk parasites," says Peñas. Since they have no radula, these mollusks feed on others using a kind of trunk, which they stick into their soft juices.

The work of the two Spanish experts does not end here. This is the first part of their study, which over the next two years will lead to the publication of new studies on other genera in the same family that will be "almost as important as the first one."

*These are some of the 209 new species of the genus Turbonilla belonging to the family of Pyramidelloidea. (Credit: Anselmo Peñas and Emilio Rolán)*



## Night Diving and Dredging in the Bay of Honduras

by Charlotte Thorpe

My first visit to Utila Island in Honduras was in 1988. We stayed at Trudy's Hotel and went out in pipantes (dug-out canoes) to scuba dive. Most of our diving was at night and we had great success finding shells.

Fast forward 24 years later and my 8th trip to the Bay of Honduras in June was also great. There were six collectors on this trip. Rob Masino put the trip together, and we had Mark Johnson, Scott Robichard, Tom Steward and Jason and myself. We were on a live-aboard shrimp boat and dove at Trujillo Bay and Sandy Cay near Utila Island. I only made one dive during the day, but we dove at least twice each night of the trip. Our depth was anywhere from 12' to 48' of water and was on sand/turtle grass. I again found wonderful shells and some that I had not collected before. I was very happy to find a beautiful 68mm (**on right**) *Vokesimurex donmoorei* (Bullis, H.R., Jr., 1964) since it was a first for me. The diving in Trujillo Bay was on dark sand and turtle grass and the specimens I found there were much





different than the lighter colored shells that come out of the white sand and gravel at Sandy Cay. Several nights later I found a 77mm *Conus spurius atlanticus* Clench, 1942. That certainly made my dive! I had previously found this species, but never over 30mm. in size.

Bedtime was between midnight and 1:00 am in the morning so of course everyone slept late. Except for me as I had the bunk in the Captains wheelhouse, and the Captain and 4 mates were pretty early risers. I did have some serious naps. The meals were good and the cook make a few salads. Before getting on the boat we stopped at a grocery store and bought fruit, Gatorade and other items for cleaning and packing our shells.

Each night after our dives it was show and tell, and we all enjoyed looking at each other's shells. I once again found at **(left)** *Turbo canaliculatus* Hermann, 1781. The first shell I found was at Sandy Cay in 1990, then this larger Turbo (59mm) again at Sandy Cay, and the only one that was found on this trip. This is very uncommon shell - with pretty blue eyes.



**Below** is *Prunum oblongum* (Swainson, 1829) a beautiful shell with a red and white animal. Also found on sand at night.



**Left** is *Falsilyria sunderlandi* Petuch, 1987 This volute measures 56mm in length and has the creamy white color with reddish-brown markings. It is quite striking. Every one found several of this species.

I have to say that I have enjoyed all of my trips to Roatan/Utila when I was taking groups over to go shelling.

This last trip was wonderful and I did find shells I have not collected before. I can recommend it to anyone that loves the adventure of diving at night (in warm shallow water) and finding great shells.

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