



SHELL-O-GRAM

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Because of draconian schedule restrictions related to "early voting" at the library and the annual conflict with Thanksgiving, the November get-together will be on the thirteenth of the month. We'll meet at the usual day of the week (Thursday), time (7:00 PM), and place, the Southeast Branch of the Jax Public Library. Charlotte Thorpe will present a travelog taking us to a half-dozen places around the world, in each of which she has done collecting and photography of mollusks. Ports-of-call include Pacific Panama, French Polynesia, and the Philippine Archipelago. The Shell-of-the-Month will be presented by John Fatu: *Thersistrombus thersites* (Swainson, 1823), collected in his native Tonga.

The Annual Jacksonville Shell Club Christmas Party will be hosted by Pauline and Bill Hall

The December meeting will be the annual Christmas Party. This year it will be at the home of Pauline & Bill Hall at **2535 Ligustrum Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32211, Telephone 744- 7495**. We will meet on Sat., December 13, at 6:30 in the evening. As usual, members will again take part in the Chinese gift exchange. Presents should not exceed \$15.00. We will have a dinner consisting of Turkey, Ham and cold drinks purchased by the Jacksonville Shell Club. Club members are asked to bring side dishes and desserts to the Party. Bring your favorite drink.

Please call Pauline to see what kind of side dishes we should bring (that way we will not have duplicates).

Directions to Party: Go onto 1-295 Beltway N. (or South); take the Merrill Rd. Exit (46) toward FL-116. Keep right at the fork in the ramp. Turn left onto Gaillardia Rd. Take the 1st right onto Syringa Lane; turn right onto Ligustrum Road. House number is 2426.



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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.

Preserve Your Mental Wellness through Shell Collecting

by Emma Crosby

There are various reasons why you may decide to start shell collecting. For some people this stems from an interest in nature, while others want a compilation they can admire. Whatever your reason, you may not realize that collecting shells also has the potential to benefit your mental well-being. The idea of, shell collecting for enhancing mental wellness, is nothing new though, as during the 19th, century references are made to conchology as a suitable means for managing obsessive compulsive disorder¹. However, it is as relevant today as it ever was, as close to a fifth of the US population suffer from some form of mental illness. When in the grip of mental health problems, relationships, your ability to work and your finances can all suffer. Mental illness doesn't just have a significant impact on quality of life, as it can also impair physical health, making sufferers more susceptible to conditions such as heart disease and a weakened immune system.

Promoting brighter mood

So what is it about shell collecting that makes it so valuable for our mental health? A range of factors are known to have a positive influence on our mental state and one of these is spending more time in the great outdoors. While it is possible to increase your collection without gathering the shells yourself, if you take the opportunity to visit natural habitats where these items are found, this can promote your well-being in a number of ways. For instance, natural light is a known mood booster, with people who suffer from seasonal affective disorder using light boxes to increase their exposure to it during the winter months. Some people find that just being outdoors on a sunny day is enough to lift their spirits, but there is another reason why sunlight can help. This is down to the fact that exposing your skin to the sun's rays allows you to produce vitamin D, which besides being linked to stronger bones, may also help to protect against depression. Exposure to sunlight isn't the only advantage of getting outside more, as green surroundings are also known to boost your mood. The benefits are even greater when you take light exercise in natural environments, as you might when collecting shells, with the presence of water enhancing the effects even further.

Protecting against destructive habits

While collecting is often seen as a solitary pastime, it still offers the chance to connect with others when you meet with fellow shell enthusiasts or allow people to admire your collection. The value of social interaction for promoting good mental wellness shouldn't be underestimated, as this can help to relieve problems such as stress, anxiety and low mood. Social isolation can often accompany mental illness, so by forming positive connections this can help reduce some of the negative consequences associated with mental health problems.

For example, poor mental well-being is already a risk factor for substance abuse, but feeling disconnected from your community can increase this risk further. With around one-third of people with mental health problems, suffering from substance abuse disorders, this is important. Taking part in constructive pastimes may also play a role in recovery from substance misuse, with a greater emphasis now placed on a holistic approach to treating addiction, giving sufferers a greater chance of escaping their destructive habits and making, addiction treatment more economical.

Reducing stress

With the hectic nature of modern life, the high expectations we hold ourselves to and the various problems we may face, it is not surprising that many of us feel stressed. Stress can trigger problems such as low mood and anxiety, so it is important that we find suitable ways to manage the pressure we find ourselves under. While there are numerous options for stress management, taking time out to participate in relaxing activities is one of the top tips that experts recommend for keeping stress under control. Whether going out to collect specimens, organizing your collection or admiring its growth, this hobby has various relaxing aspects to it.

Preserving your mind

Lifelong learning is essential for the health of our brain, with research showing that when we keep our mind active we are less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Engaging pastimes are one way that we can develop our knowledge and skills, with shell collecting an ideal activity. From identifying the specimens you collect to finding out about their natural history, studying shells offers plenty of opportunities to exercise your mind to keep it sharp and preserve your cognitive function as you age.

Sources used:

- 1 George Eliot, Middlemarch, a study of provincial life, Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 113, accessed September 28, 2014
- 2 Statistics for mental illness among adults, National Institute of Mental Health, accessed September 28, 2014
- 3 Mental illness complications, Mayo Clinic, accessed, September 28, 2014
- 4 A prescription for better health: go alfresco, Harvard Medical School, accessed, September 28, 2014
- 5 In the green of health: just 5 minutes of green exercise optimal for good mental health, Science Daily, accessed, September 28, 2014
- 6 Social relationships and health, Carnegie Mellon University, accessed September 28, 2014
- 7 Drug abuse and addiction, Cleveland Clinic, accessed, September 28, 2014
- 8 Tips to manage anxiety and stress, Anxiety and Depression Association of America, accessed September 28, 2014
- 9 Lifelong learning benefits body, mind and career, Bellevue College, accessed September 28, 2014.

Opisthobranch Mollusks Found in Florida Waters



Chromodoris clenchi (Russell, 1935) Harlequin Blue Doris
Photographed by Anne DuPont while SCUBA diving in 12 feet water at Lake Worth Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Beach Co, Florida 8/6/2007 (about 20 mm.). Copyright 2008 by Anne DuPont.



Oxynoe antillarum Mørch, 1863
By SCUBA near Peanut Island, Palm Beach County, Florida, March, 2013. Copyright 2013 by Ariane Dimitris.



Flabellina verta (Ev. Marcus, 1970)
Photographed by Anne DuPont using SCUBA in 15 feet of water at Lake Worth Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Bch. Co., Florida, 11/14/2007 (about 12 mm). Copyright 2008 by Anne Dupont.



Cerberilla potiguara Padula and Delgado, 2010
Photographed by Diane Leazenby while SCUBA diving in 15 feet of water at Lake Worth, Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Beach Inlet, Palm Beach Co., FL, 8/9/2008. Copyright 2008 by Diane Lwazenby.

***Spurilla creutzbergi* (Er. Marcus and Ev. Marcus, 1970)**

Photographed by Anne DuPont while SCUBA diving in 12 feet of water at Lake Worth Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Beach Inlet, Palm Beach Co., Florida 10/1/2008. Underwater photograph copyright 2008 by Anne DuPont (Delray Beach, FL).

***Phidiana lynceus* Bergh, 1867**

Photographed by Anne DuPont while SCUBA diving in the Lake Worth Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Beach Inlet, Palm Beach Co., Florida 6/3/2012. Underwater photograph copyright 2012 by Anne DuPont.

***Elysia ornata* (Swainson, 1840) Ornate Elysia**

Photographed by Anne DuPont while SCUBA diving 14 feet of water at Lake Worth Lagoon near Peanut Island, Palm Beach Inlet, Palm Beach Co., Florida 7/19/2008 (about 14 mm).
Underwater photograph copyright 2008 by Anne DuPont (Delray Beach, FL).

Thanks to Bill Frank and others for allowing us to use their wonderful Opisthobranch Mollusks photos - they are outstanding!