



SHELL-O-GRAM

Official Publication of the
JACKSONVILLE SHELL CLUB, INC.

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This edition of the Shell-O-Gram will be the last one that will be printed and mailed. All future editions will be sent electronically. Please ensure that we have your accurate email address so that you will continue to receive the Shell-O-Gram. Send your current email to Rick Edwards at edwar1@hotmail.com or to Paul Jones at jonesP0854@gmail.com.

Upcoming meetings

The Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc. (JSC) now meets on the **fourth** Sunday of each month except for November (a week earlier due to Thanksgiving) and December (traditional Xmas get-together/TBA) in the **Village Inn in St. Augustine**. The meeting will be from **5 to 7 PM**. Those who wish to have dinner prior to the meeting should be there by 4 PM to order dinner.

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, **July 28**. The program will be presented on the recent COA in Melborne, Florida. Jane Pope will do a crafts presentation

At the **August 25th** meeting, Paul Jones will continue with his programs on collecting in Sicily. Individuals will be asked to bring a nice shell to help construct a shell lamp during the crafts portion of the meeting.

A Shell of the Month will be presented at each meeting.

Club Update

I would like to thank everyone for the increased attendance at the meetings. It looks as if we are on a positive path for the longevity of the club. Thank you for volunteering suggestions and accepting leadership roles in making the club more of a shared organization.

At the last meeting, it was decided to suspend membership dues collection until the month of September. Those who have not paid their dues will need to do so in September along with the rest of the members. This will allow us to develop an accurate membership list. Also, we would like to publish a member list with name, address, phone, and email. If you do not want yours published, let me know.

Paul Jones has been sponsoring field trips at local sites during minus tides. Thank you Paul.

We hope to have the website, JAX Shells.Org, updated in the near future as some information is dated.

Rick

Membership Dues are payable in **September** each year.
Many of you have complied, but if you're in arrears, please send in your dues:
Individual \$15.00; Family \$20.00, to

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572 Boxwood PL
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The club customarily meets monthly at the Village Inn, Route 1, St. Augustine, Florida. Please address any correspondence to the club's address above. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 individual, \$20.00 family (domestic) and \$25.00 (overseas). Lifetime membership is available. Please remit payment for dues to the address below and make checks payable to the Jacksonville Shell Club. The club's newsletter and scientific journal, the *Shell-O-Gram* (ISSN 2472-2774) is issued bimonthly and emailed. An electronic (pdf) version is sent to members and to about 200 individuals who have demonstrated an interest in malacological research and/or Florida mollusks. These pdf's (ISSN 2472-2782) have also been posted to <http://jaxshells.org/letters.htm> since November, 1998. We encourage members and other friends to submit articles for publication. Closing date for manuscript submission is two weeks before each month of publication. Articles appearing in the *Shell-O-Gram* may be republished provided credit is given the author and *Shell-O-Gram* Editor-in-Chief. As a courtesy, the editor and author should receive a copy of the original and republication version respectively. Contents of the *Shell-O-Gram* are intended to enter the permanent scientific record. The club is a chartered corporation in the State of Florida and a non-profit educational organization under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the US IRS Code.

A report on our amazing shelling finds on the spring 2024 minus tides

Paul Jones

Shell collecting at our two local "haunts" - the intertidal sand and mud flats of the "Summerhaven River" (a tidal creek that runs south from Matanzas Inlet and "Strombus Island", a sand bar on the west bank of St. Augustine Inlet both in Northeast Florida, has been especially good lately. Members of the Jacksonville Shell Club (JSC) have taken full advantage of the very low tides afforded by the Spring 2024 New Moons, especially in April and May of this year.



The most noteworthy find is of a *Panopea bitruncata* (Conrad, 1872), Atlantic Geoduck, at “Strombus Island”, first noted by JSC members Nancy Galdo and myself in early April. We spotted its very pronounced siphon extending out of the sandy bank about three inches. I knew from previous experience that it was indeed the siphon of a Geoduck. The mollusk and the shell are buried down into the sandy substrate by about two to three feet. Extensive digging is required to get down to it.

Unfortunately, I did not have anything better than a small hand shovel, yet I tried digging down anyway in an effort to get it out. I was unsuccessful due to water refilling the hole faster than I could dig! While I dug, Nancy imaged and videoed my effort. It became the shelling version of “the one that got away”. I was able to feel the telltale fluted edge of the shell with my fingers to verify that it was indeed a Geoduck though.

Fast forward to the May New Moon low tides and we were once again back on “Strombus Island” for more shelling. Naturally, I was intent on looking for the previously seen Geoduck as I suspected it would still be there. Sure enough, we once again spotted its large siphon protruding even farther out of the sandy substrate. This time, with JSC member Mary Reynolds help, we were successful in retrieving a beautiful, almost perfect, six and 2/3 inch, Atlantic Geoduck! I decided to donate the mollusk to the University of Florida to conduct DNA and other genetic studies on it.



Also on the May New Moon low tides, JSC member Mary Reynolds found a crabbed specimen of *Cittarium pica* (Linnaeus, 1758), West Indian Top shell, found around oyster rubble at the south end of the “Summerhaven River” tidal creek, about one mile south of Matanzas Inlet. The shell is small for the species, measuring about two and a half inches. To our knowledge, this is the first time this normally Caribbean and Florida Keys species has been recorded from our area. We’re not sure yet whether, or not the find constitutes a range extension as it may have been “introduced” artificially. We will, however, be actively searching for a live specimen that would nail down the proof of a verified range extension.



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