



## Spring Meeting Times

February 27, 12:30

March 27, 1:00

April 24, 11:30 Spring Picnic  
Englewood Gardens Beach Club

January, 2007 Volume 4 Number 2

### President's Message—

*I hope your Holidays were wonderful and that you are all ready for some serious shelling once again! But first, let's thank Anna Croteau and her committee for the fantastic Holiday luncheon at Manasota Beach Club and those who helped with the Cedar Point Christmas tree project and those who handled the Club Outreach projects Dec. 21 and January 6. To devote time to club activities so close to the holidays was special.*

*Thank you Marilyn Boyd, for becoming the club's parliamentarian. Its great to have your assistance. Both new and long time members of the club had fun at the Newcomer's Coffee at my house in early December. Thanks also to Doris Lyons, our publicity chairman. We have had so much excellent publicity on the club, including the full page in the Herald-Tribune! I so appreciate the gracious volunteers who are spearheading recent and upcoming projects and I look forward to many volunteers for leadership roles in the new year.*

*Field trips are planned for Sarasota Bay (Carefree Learner), Shell Key outside Tampa Bay, Isle of Palms in South Carolina and more. Club meeting programs should be outstanding. ShellCrafters have such a variety of projects planned and the Study Group is always ready to help answer your questions.*

*Your shirt box displays should be coming along nicely! The February meeting room will open at 12:15 so members can set up displays.*

*"Sailors' Valentines-Their Jounrey Through Time" is a new book donated to the club library by Jane Santini of New York State. All she asks in return is that we send her some coquina shells. Please give shells to Anita who will mail a package to her later this spring.*

*Anita Wilson*

### Carefree Learner Wonders—

Shelling at dawn on a brisk winter morning was just one of the visual treats experienced by those who enjoyed the Carefree Learner boat trips in Sarasota Bay in December and January. The December group found three species that we seldom, if ever, have seen on our local club trips. Bob Seats found a sea biscuit, complete with yellow green spines! Rhea Guertin and Eva Furner located a six-inch live sea horse and Debbie and Glenn Freeman discovered live baby ears. In addition, several people found many marginella, and others picked up bright orange color phase sunray Venus clams and true tulip shells. There were dozens of live dinner plate-sized sea stars and hundreds of large live sand dollars scooting across the sand leaving wonderful trails. We saw several lug worms and lots of their egg masses as well as sea hares, anenomes, sea urchins, and more. The newsletter went to press before the January 18 Carefree Learner trip, but you can hear all the details at the January meeting!



### Welcome New Members—

Dues are due! The 2007 membership directory will be coming out in February and we know you want to be included! Send your renewal check (\$15, individual; \$25, family) to Linda Powers, VP and membership chair, 2700 N. Beach Road, #D-106, Englewood, 34223. A hearty welcome to the members who have joined since the last newsletter: Martha Halas, Ron and Lee Gayowsky, Jim Guy (Jane's husband), Sally Hough, Ann Davidson, David and Claudia McColloch, Nancy Weborg, and Jim Burns (Clare's husband).

## Florida's Treasured Tree Snails—

Barbara Elliott entranced club members at the November meeting with her collection of Florida *Liguus fasciatus* tree snails. Barbara owns 57 of the 58-60 known color forms. These color-banded snails of the Everglades Hammocks may have inspired the colorful Seminole Indian native dress, according to Barbara. She said all have white or pink protoconchs and are right-handed (a lefty would be very rare). They grow up to three inches long and are hermaphroditic. Color patterns and hues vary with interbreeding, unusual weather or food sources. The snails spend all their lives in trees moving slowly along, about 25 feet in a day, eating lichen and mosses. They mate in late summer, then descend to the ground to lay their eggs, climb back up into the tree and begin hibernation. Average life span is probably 3-4 years with a maximum of about 9 years. Most people see these protected snails in fall and winter when they hibernate, glued tightly to hammock tree branches. It would be impossible to self-collect Barbara's collection today. Many color forms are extinct and all are environmentally protected animals. The first Florida race of *Liguus* was first described by Thomas Say in 1825.



## Upcoming Programs—

Peggy Williams will be the speaker at the February 27 meeting. She will tell the group about her international travels in search of shells and the shell trips which she leads. Peggy is currently president of the Sarasota Shell Club. On March 27, Dr. Jose Leal, Director of the Bailey Matthews Shell Museum in Sanibel will provide the program, according to Marilyn Boyd, program chairman.

The April meeting will be a picnic and strictly social, just like the Holiday Luncheon. The picnic will be Tuesday, April 24 at the Englewood Gardens Beach Club on Manasota Key. Members will bring a dish to share while entrees, beverages and paper goods will be provided by the Club. Jackie McLean has graciously volunteered to chair the picnic details just as she did last year.

**Volunteer now for a club leadership position next year!**

## January Sale and February Show—

There will be a shell sale beginning at 12:15 before the January meeting. Thanks to Doris Lyons, Christina Anglin and Marie Gallant for spearheading this event and to all those who came to Anita's house to package shells on January 16. More importantly, we sincerely appreciate the recent shell donations to the club from Audrey Grant, Grace Gilbert, Rege and Judy Curtin, Dorothy Robertson, Barbara King and Nan O'Neil. Some of their shells will be for sale.

Set-up for the Mini-Shell Show at the February meeting will begin at 12:15 and judging will begin at 12:30. Review details for making your display in the November newsletter. Last year's winners were Kathy Schley, Linda Powers, Joe Bao, and Audrey Grant. They would be good resource people.

## Holiday Activities—

"The Holiday Party at Manasota Beach Club was fantastic!" was the consensus of all 65 who attended. A perfect warm sunny day combined with great food and splendid location to make a day to remember. Thanks so much to Anna Croteau for chairing the event and to the committee of Glenn and Debbie Freeman, Andy and Audrey Grant, Arlene Poetz, Irene Murray, and Sally Healey who helped Anna. The day was made even more special because Dick Forbush and Freeman Crosby were made Honorary Members in the club that day. Dick, an internationally recognized conchologist, has helped the club throughout its existence in more ways than can possibly be mentioned. He has been a frequent club meeting speaker, serves as resident expert at the Study Group sessions and has hosted the Study group in his home several times just to name a few activities. Freeman serves as the Club's Webmaster. The spritely toothpicks and shell holder favors and gift exchange added to the day's conviviality.

Thanks to everyone who helped decorate the Club's Christmas tree at Cedar Point and to those who came to help put away the decorations after the Holiday. The tree was enjoyed by many people, including all those who came to the shell lecture given by Barb Myers and Anita Wilson.





## Mussel Mania—

Some shells have species living in both marine and freshwater habitats. The mussel is one such critter. There are nearly 300 freshwater mussel species in the United States, many of which are threatened or endangered. In fact, there are more species of federally endangered mussels than any other animal. Mussels often are an indicator of water quality. Why? Because of their unique reproductive requirements. Mussels require a host fish to mature. Here is how it works. Male mussels expel their sperm only into moving water. The water then takes the sperm to the eggs which the females hold in their gills. The fertilized eggs remain in the gills for a few days as they develop into tiny mussels called glochidia. When the right fish passes by, the female mussel expels the glochidia and they attach to the host fish, becoming a usually harmless parasite. Some species can attach to many fish species; others have very specific host fish. If the little mussel doesn't find a host, it drifts for a few days and dies. Glochidia live on the fish for two to six months, getting food from the host. The little mussels detach when they are big enough to live on their own. Once mature, mussels are long-lived animals; some live 10 years; other species live 100 years if water quality is good. They can't survive excessive pollution or sediment. Marine mussels in our area include blue, invasive green, hooked, scorched, tulip and date mussels. We've heard of the invasive freshwater zebra mussel, but other names are quite comical such as elephant ear, monkeyface, wartyback and heelsplitter.



## Active Outreach—



Barbara Myers and Anita Wilson spoke about "Shells of Southwest Florida" to a group of 29 people at Cedar Point, Thursday, December 21. This talk was the second in a series of 10 environmental education lectures that Bobbi Rodgers plans and promotes at Cedar Point this season. The Outreach Group

also sponsored a booth at the annual Tringali Fair Saturday, January 6. Amie Barnicle, Diana Leonhardt, Linda Powers and Barbara Myers all participated in this show.

The Club also will be participating in the Englewood Cracker Fair Saturday, February 10 from 11a.m.-5 p.m. We have permission to sell crafts to make some money for the club as well as to have our Outreach Display.

## Creative ShellCrafters—

Eleanor Langlois models the shell-decorated purse she created while she also carries her crafting supplies after the December ShellCrafter session at Tringali Center. The most amazing thing about this meeting was that every one of the 24 purses were entirely different! Anita, our President, couldn't help but think this bodes very well for the Mini Shell Show exhibit coming up at the February regular club meeting. This crew is extremely creative. Thanks to Marilyn Boyd and Doris Brown who chaired this ShellCrafter session.



In January ShellCrafters painstakingly made up to 70 coquina flowers and used them to create topiaries in wine glasses. The next meeting will be Friday, February 9 at 1 p.m. Eunice Herr will assist the committee at this session, since she and Joanne Carroll are the expert nightlight crafters. The group will be making nightlights in glass blocks and decorating them with shell

arrangements. Sign up at the January meeting, if you have not already done so.

The committee is looking for ideas from the group to implement at the final ShellCrafters session of the year in March.

## Helpful Study Group—

The Study group has a new project! They are going to study and identify the shells we give as door prizes each month. Not only will this give the winners information about the shell, but it will give study group members a sneak preview of the shells to be given, says Barb Myers, study group chair.

About a dozen shellers had a wonderful time at the January meeting and everyone learned a lot. They welcome you at the February 12 study group. There will still be time to get advice on shirt box displays at that time as well as help in identifying beach treasures.

## Thanks Nominating Committee—

Barb Myers, Audrey Grant and Doris Brown have agreed to serve as the nominating committee to select a slate for upcoming March elections. Anita has asked Barb to chair the committee and convene its meeting. They will announce the slate at the February meeting.



### Field Trips and Shell Shows to Come—

A bus trip to Shell Key is scheduled for Monday, February 19. We will be leaving Lemon Bay Shopping Center at 6:30 a.m. A fun day is planned on this barrier island just south of Pass-a-Grille and St. Petersburg Beach. Our bus capacity is 47, so you may bring guests and your cost of \$43 (\$21 bus and \$22 ferry) must be paid by the date of the January meeting. Bring your lunch and drinks for a picnic at Skyway Bridge Park and Rest Area where you may continue to shell until we leave again. The Shell Key trip was probably the group's favorite field trip last year. We found many shells, very large specimens and unusual ones. We are ferried to the Island an hour before the public, so we get a head start on great shelling.

March 3-10 is the date of the South Carolina Shelling trip to Isle of Palms. That popular trip is already filled. Ruth Middlebrooks welcomes suggestions for a local area March field trip as well.

A group carpooled to the East Coast for the Melbourne Shell Show on January 20. Remember the Sarasota Shell Show Feb. 16-18, the new location of the St. Petersburg Show Feb. 24-25 and consider carpooling to Sanibel for their show and the Bailey-Matthews lectures March 2.

The Treasure Coast Shell Club Show will be March 10-11 in Jensen Beach; Marco Island Shell Club Show, March 15-17; Jacksonville Shell Show, June 16-17; and the Conchologists of America Annual Convention August 1-5 in Portland, Oregon. See Anita for more information about these shows.



### Upcoming Area Events—

Peter Dance and Noel Gregory will both speak at the Bailey Matthews Shell Museum on Friday Evening, March 2 at 7 p.m. Peter will speak about the history of the Sanibel Shell Show which will be celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> show March 1-3. Noel will discuss shells of the Mediterranean and their similarities to those of Florida. Ruth Middlebrooks, our club trips chairman, is considering a car pooling trip to hear these speakers. It is possible that the group could make a full day's activities by attending the show earlier in the day, going to dinner and then taking in these unique lectures. Call Ruth at 474-4538 if you are interested in going &/or driving.

The Suncoast Conchologists will hold their 9<sup>th</sup> Shellers' Jamboree Memorial Day weekend, May 26-27 in Dunedin. The theme is Shellympics—Let the Games Begin!. There will be shell-related programs, a shell market, snail parade, shell art and craft show, oral auction, shell show for single specimens, shell ID of your mystery shells, shell measuring, silent auctions and a raffle. Registration prior to May 1 is \$95 which includes buffet lunch and dinner Saturday and lunch on Sunday. The Sunday banquet is an additional \$25. Registration forms are available beginning March 7 with a request and stamped, self-addressed, legal size envelope (9x4") with 78 cents postage to Roni Mucci, 795 County Road 1, #199, Palm Harbor, FL 34683.

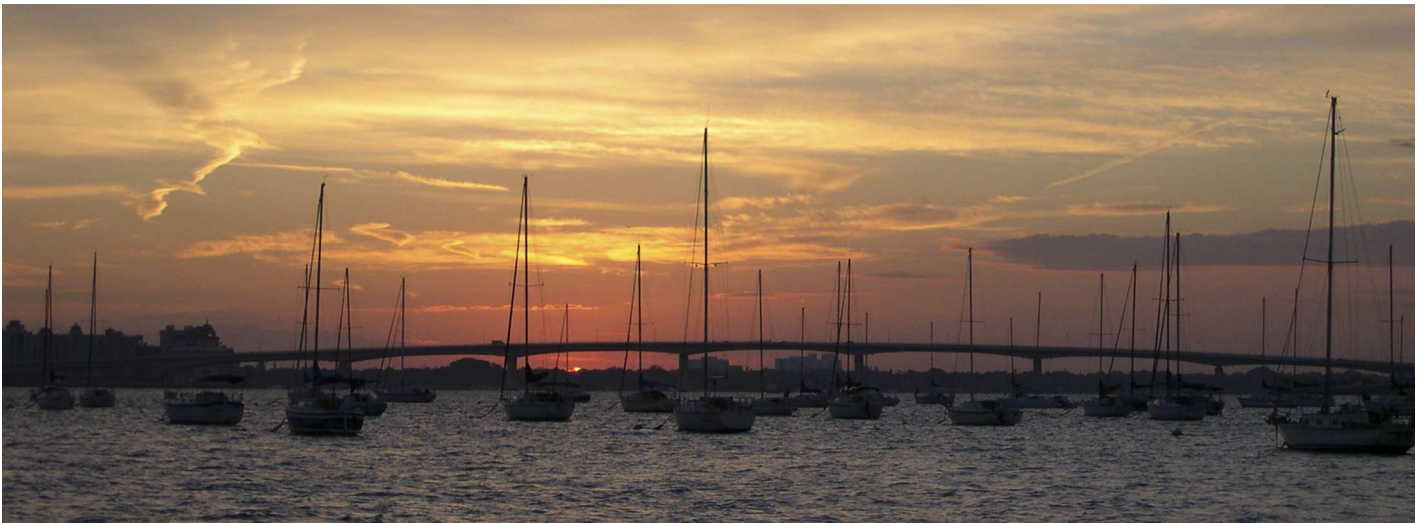


#### The Arks

Have you pondered the ponderous ark?  
So many ark shells on the beach.  
No ark chowder on the shelf!  
It's Incongruous!

*Rich Wilson*





Sarasota Bay from the Carefree Learner



Catch-up Photo—Behind the scenes tour of Bailey-Matthews Museum on Sanibel Island. April 2006.



Live Tree Snails in Big Cypress Preserve



April 2006 Cayo Costa Trip

- **Bring Coquinas for Jane Santini**
- **Cracker Fair February 10, 11–5:00**
- **Volunteer to repair the shell-decorated bird bath at Cedar Point**
- **See you on Shell Key, February 19**
- **Please wear your name tag to all club events**



***Englewood Shell Club***

Rich & Anita Wilson

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