



March 2009 Volume 6 Number 2

www.Englewoodshellclub.org

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Shell Crafters April 17
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General Mtg. Oct. 27
Sanibel Trip Nov. 17-18

President's Message

Thanks to everyone for a most successful and enjoyable year with the Englewood Shell Club. We have had the most trips ever this year, thanks not only for your participation but an extra thanks to Ruth Middlebrooks, Marilyn Boyd and Debbie Freeman. Great job!

I think this year's crafting has been outstanding from Sue Ross' wire-wrapped seaglass jewelry, to Joy Brandt's and Rita Stonehouse's beautiful garland for our Holiday Tree, and shell jewelry, wreaths, buckets and tissue boxes.

The variety of crafts being offered has been un-believable. Thank you everyone for making our crafting year the success it has been.

In addition, our club grew in membership this year. It's been a great year all around so let's celebrate all we have accomplished at the picnic. Lets have a great time at the picnic on Tuesday, April 28th, at noon, at the Englewood Gardens Beach Club. See you there! Doris

Reminder:

Please return your library books to ESC Librarian, Eunice Herr, or place them in the Returned Books box at the March General Meeting. If you miss the meeting, you can bring your books to the Spring Picnic or contact Eunice at 941-475-

Spring Picnic April 28

Mark the date! April 28 is our annual spring picnic. It will be held again at the Englewood Gardens Beach Club at 2560 Beach Road on Manasota Key. You can RSVP at the March 24 General Meeting or contact Jackie McLean at 941-474-8011. At the meeting, you need to indicate on a sign-up sheet if you will bring a food dish, supplies, or condiments to share with other club members. Food dishes should serve between 10-12 people. Appetizers are served at 11:30 a.m. and the main meal is served at noon. The club



provides hamburgers and soda for everyone. This year we are trying something different to become more environmentally conscious. We are asking everyone to bring their own place setting. This will cut down on refuse in our landfills.

Ten volunteers are needed to clean up after the picnic. A sign-up sheet will be provided at the General Meeting for those who can help us return the picnic grounds and shelter to the nice conditions we always find them. There is time before and after the picnic for shelling. Additional parking is available across the street.

Fossil Trip

The February fossil trip to Northern Collier County led by Gary Schmelz, Ph.D. and Glen Stacell, M.S. of Naples was fantastic! The weather warmed up enough to make fossil shelling comfortable and the guides proved to be invaluable. We found buckets of fossil shells to take home - some extinct, some not. There were many *Strombus alatus* and *Strombus pugilis*, as well as, *Ficus communis*, *Pyrazisinus scalatus*, and *Terebra dislocata*. (Ask one of us for our fossil shell identification guide.) Gary held a lottery of fossil shells at lunch and we each went home with two specimens. Some were 3.8 billion years old. Let's do this again!



Members Dona and Matt Blaine found one of the largest fossils of the day, our club's shell—the Lightning Whelk!

Nominating Committee Results

The nominating committee this year is Susan Ross, Joy Brandt and Helen Gardner. They presented the following slate of candidates at the February 24 General Meeting: Doris Lyons, President; Christina Anglin, Vice President; Nancy Weborg, Treasurer; Judy Kauk, Secretary; Ann Madden, Brenda Steele and Eunice Herr, Board Members-at-Large. There were no nominations from the floor at the meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the March 24 General Meeting before the final vote is taken and new officers are installed.

Three Marco Island Excursions

A pilot group went to Marco Island in January to determine if a shelling excursion by boat would be worthwhile for the price. It was deemed one of the best places to shell in the region and three other excursions for members were immediately arranged for Feb. and March. Following is Ruth Middlebrooks' testimony from the pilot trip:

"The trip to Marco Island was fun! My treasures are outside stinkin' up the lanai right now. I got some really nice shells, Florida cones, a fig that has an unusual (to me) mottled brown coloring, also two nice articulated egg cockles and my prize of the day, a wentletrap! Several of the ladies returned with big horse conches. I would say that it is a great place to revisit for shelling!" *Ruth*

January Carefree Learners

Cold weather didn't deter shellers at January's Carefree Learner expedition. Many excellent species were discovered including large lightning whelks, sand dollars, sea stars, false ceriths, banded tulips, marginella, marsh periwinkles, hermit crabs, and lively bivalves such as the bay scallops. It was great fun to see the trails in shallow water left by ceriths and watch scallops defend their habitat. This is one trip everyone agrees is well worth taking as it is so unique walking Sarasota Bay at low tide and viewing so many shell species alive in their natural habitat.



ESC member on January's Carefree Learner expedition.



Shelling in the Philippines

Long-term ESC member Linda Powers had a once-in-a-lifetime experience shelling in the Philippine Islands last year. We had the wonderful opportunity to see her presentation of spectacular shells; listen to her rich stories; personally meet her tour guide, Glenn Duffy and new ESC members, Homer and Ann Rhode, who also went on the trip; and become awestruck at her huge array of shells brought home. This was a great presentation and one we'll talk about for a long time.

Following are a few captions from her presentation. This first one is regarding the women and children who clean, count, pack and stack millions of fresh shells every day: "They work for three dollars a day, dipping their hands directly into muriatic acid without any hand protection to clean the shells; some no longer have fingernails." Linda also shared her reason for the rich red, purple, orange, blue and green colored sea stars she saw while snorkeling. She said the colors come directly from the rainbows seen frequently overhead, as they spill into the waters and give their colors to the sea stars. Thanks Linda for sharing so many of your photos and shells with the club and you're right when you say, "What a way to travel!"



Above: Sea star au natural. Note the neon yellow color. Below: Red sea star. Viewed while snorkeling.



Below: Local laborer in Philippines using bare hands in muriatic acid to clean shells for \$3 a day.





NEW! Upcoming Sanibel Shelling Trip

The club is planning another Sanibel Island shelling trip. The trip may include a reception with Larry Strange and his wife Carol, owners of Sanibel Seashell Industries (www.seashells.com) and honorary members of ESC. Plans for other activities are also in the works. The Sanibel trip dates are Nov. 17 and 18, 2009, and Marilyn Boyd, ESC Excursions co-chair, is holding a block of 20 rooms temporarily for us at the Holiday Inn. Each room holds up to four people, we will stay two nights, and room rates are \$288 for two nights. If you want to share a room, the room rate including tax for two nights can be split as follows:

- 2 per room is \$144 per person
- 3 per room is \$ 96 per person
- 4 per room is \$ 72 per person.

You need to express your interest in the trip early and may do so without payment. Contact Marilyn Boyd at 941-474-2500 to express your interest and for additional information. Final reservations and payments need to be made through Marilyn Boyd. Make payments by check, payable to Marilyn Boyd. Include your phone number on your check. If you plan to stay with specific friends as a group of 2, 3 or 4 in the same room, please indicate this information in a note to Marilyn with your payment(s).

ShellCrafters

We had great turnouts at the January and February ShellCrafters' meetings at Englewood's Tringali Center. In January, we had three tables of crafters happily working hard on their jewelry creations. I was busy drilling holes into scallop shells for necklaces and adding jump rings, while seashells were wrapped with wire and embellished with crystals. Two tables were filled with crafters learning to wire wrap seaglass, taught by Sue Ross. ESC members learned single-wire and double-wire wrapping, and the beads and jewels were flying. It was lots of fun and we have quite a talented group! Thanks to all for sharing jewelry design ideas and creative tips.

In February, there were eight tables of crafty ladies making shell wreaths and shell buckets.



New member Carol Roberts with shell bucket.

There was a lot of variety in design and it is interesting to note the diversity of each artist's finished creation. Several crafters enjoyed the project so much, they were going to make additional wreaths or shell-filled buckets as gifts.

At our March crafting session, we will make shell flowers. We have many talented flower crafters in our membership who will give instruction techniques for making magnolias, violets, pussy willows, as well as blossoms from jingles and coquina shells. ESC supplies most of the



Members at February Beach Walk on Manasota Key

necessary shells and leaves for the flower projects.

As a reminder, the crafting fee is \$5 to cover the room charge and you should bring your own shells if possible for any project. You can also bring along a project of your own and join us in the fun. See you there! Joy Brandt

Next General Meeting: Spotlight on Lemon Bay & Area Parks

Parks Naturalist Kathi Rader-Gibson at Lemon Bay Park will speak at our Tuesday, March 24, General Meeting held at Lemon Bay Park. Her presentation titled: "A Walk Through Lemon Bay" will be filled with interesting facts and cause us to take note of the things around us we take for granted or easily overlook at Lemon Bay and at other area parks. There are many park offerings and she'll help us learn what they are and where to go for information. In addition, she will connect some of her presentation to the nature walk scheduled two days later with Bud Doyle at the North Jetty Beach in Nokomis. Please join us if you can to hear this expert and enjoyable presenter.

March Beach Walk is Nature Walk with Bud Doyle

Bud is a great storyteller and will share his knowledge of SW Florida shells and shorelines from 9-11 a.m., Thursday, March 26, at the North Jetty Beach in Nokomis. [Note: This beach is accessed via Albee Road off of US 41 (Tamiami Trail) in Nokomis and located just south of Nokomis Beach. It is *not* located in downtown Venice.] Bud will share with us why sharks' teeth appear on Venice's Beaches and not elsewhere; will display items from the Amazon found on Nokomis Beach; and will tell us which shells on our local beaches are 30,000 years old, yet look like new arrivals. Bud promises an enjoyable outing and you are welcome to bring a lunch and stay after his talk to participate in an ESC group discussion as part of our March Beach Walk.

Outreach Request

Outreach co-chairs Jane Guy and Amie Barnicle need volunteers to occasionally assist with educational programs conducted in homes, schools, parks and clubhouses. Outreach programs are fun and share information about shells. Contact either one if you can help them out.



Carrier Shell discussed at Study Group in Jan.

Study Group

Members of the ESC Study Group met on January 12, February 9, and March 9, at the home of Debbie Freeman. In January, Carrier shells were discussed and several specimens were circulated by members and co-chairs Barbara Myers and Debbie Freeman.

In February, Debbie handed out information sheets on mollusk classification and the different types of operculi. Topics that day were Moons (*Naticidae*), and Wentletraps (*Epitoniidae*). Members also viewed different moon snail sand collars.



Moon shell with body extended.

Wentletraps always bring discussion about where best to find them, and the interesting designs of these beautiful shells.



Precious Wentletrap *Epitonium scalare*.

In March, the Study Group talked about different egg casings and how to clean and store shells.



Study Group at Debbie Freeman's home.

Handouts were provided including an excerpt from "Sea and Shore" Volume 3, Number 4, titled: "The Glass Sponge or Venus's Flower Basket." Two samples of glass sponges (*Euplectella* shown below), were passed around and the group saw the spectacular and intricate basket designs, the trapped shrimp, and learned the story of how Japanese newlyweds regard this as a gift symbolic of their wishes to remain together unto old age and into the same grave.



Glass Sponge (*Euplectella*) shown at Study Group.



Dr. Leal and ESC founder Barbara Myers in February.

“Mollusks 101” with Dr. Leal

Dr. Leal provided us with another stellar program in February. We are so sorry if you missed his presentation as he quickly engaged us with a newly created presentation he uses to train his staff and docents. Dr. Leal’s slides were exceptionally detailed and yet clearly helpful in explaining the differences and similarities among mollusks around the world. It is no wonder he has received many honors of distinction and runs the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum in Sanibel. In fact, many of his slides portrayed information found at the museum, available online through a link at our website, or at www.shellmuseum.org.

Dr. Leal’s specialty is cowries and he shared images with us of how immature are different from adults. He covered bi-valves and gastropods both large and small, and included those that live in fresh as well as salt water and on land.

He also provided club members with handouts including: *Cleaning Your Shells*, *How, When And Where To Find Shells*, *Safe Travel For Shells: How To Get Them Home In One Piece*, and *What Shell Seekers Need To Know About Tides*. The articles were all prepared by Kathleen E. Hoover and published in *The Islander*. As an FYI: Kathleen notes the best time of day to collect shells is in the morning from an hour before low tide to an hour after low tide.

Charlie Barr Wins at Area Shell Shows

New member Charlie Barr won high honors at several area shell shows again this year. One entry, titled “Victoriana,” was made from calico scallops he and his wife Kris collected on Boca Grande. It received a blue ribbon in the *Mirrors* category plus an award for *Best Art Exhibit* at the recent Sarasota Shell Show.



“Victoriana” wins blue ribbon at Sarasota Shell Show.

“Undulations” placed first in the *Mosaics* category plus it received the *Judge’s Special Merit Award* at the Sarasota Shell Show. It placed second in the *Pictures or Mosaics other than Flowers* category at the Sanibel Shell Show.



“Undulations” wins red ribbon.

In addition, Charlie, who is also the co-chair of the Artistic Division at the Sanibel Shell Show for both 2009 and 2010, won first place with his scientific exhibit in the *One Species, Any*

Source category with his entry titled “Pleasing Venus.” It is made from *Protothaca grata* shells found in Mexico. He won first place for his scientific exhibit in the *One Case* category at the Sarasota Shell Show. Charlie entered his exhibits at the Marco Island Shell Show and rumor has it, he also placed well at this show.

Many of you may recall Charlie was our guest speaker in November 2008 and encouraged us to attend area shell shows, especially if we wanted to enter an exhibit sometime. This year, over 20 ESC members attended the Sanibel, Sarasota, Melbourne and Marco Island Shell Shows due to his encouragement. Thanks Charlie and again, congratulations!

Club Sets New Record

The Englewood Shell Club set a new record reaching 136 members this year. We also turned 14 years old in January and plan to celebrate our 15th anniversary in January or February, 2010. Plan now to be here for the celebration.

Thanks goes out in advance to Barb Myers who started our club with the assistance of Dr. Leal, and all of our long-term members who helped shape our club and its programs over the years. You made it a rich and enjoyable experience for everyone. We also want to welcome our many new members and encourage you to participate in the many activities the club offers and to help us by volunteering your expertise or assistance. This will help us learn from each other and about each other and makes us a stronger organization. If you look over our archived newsletters, you quickly realize every year we added something new and the club just gets better and better with strong leadership and many excellent volunteers.

Englewood Shell Club

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Electronic Survey Coming

This summer, many of you will receive a comprehensive electronic survey sent to over 100 members with email addresses. You can help us shape our future programs, Internet presence, excursions, news items, craft sessions, study group topics, outreach programs, and other areas important and of interest to club members. You can also add comments and suggestions. I hope you will respond to the survey with honest answers as we are growing and each chairperson needs to set in place what will work best for the majority of the club. Thanks in advance for your active participation in the survey.

Special Thanks

I want to personally thank Anita and Richard Wilson, our most recent newsletter editors, for their years of service in producing high quality newsletters that captured the essence of our organization both in print and in picture. It will be hard to follow in your footsteps. *Susan Ross*