No. 20 Compiled by: P. E. Negus, [redacted]

March 1967 London, S.W.1.

Produced by 'The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland'

10 KILOMETRE SQUARE MAPPING SCHEME FOR NON-MARINE MOLLUSCA

The last year has seen a most encouraging increase in the number of people actively working on the mapping scheme. A map showing the present state of recording is included with this Newsletter. New editions of this map will in future appear regularly in the Newsletter, so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of work and draw attention to the blanks. More helpers are still needed. I will gladly send further information on request, including lists of species already known from particular squares.

Some hints on covering a 10 kilometre square

As the scheme progresses it is becoming apparent that certain species tend to be under-recorded, and that unless special efforts are made to overcome this tendency a distorted idea of their distribution in Britain may result. For example, Punctum pygmaeum is in reality a very common and widespread species, which probably lives in more 10 kilometre squares than, for example, does Helix aspersa, H. nemoralis or Discus rotundatus. But owing to its minute size, and the difficulty of detecting it by eye in the field, it is very frequently overlooked. The notes below draw attention to certain categories of molluscs which, for one reason or another, tend to be under-recorded.

1. Species overlooked due to their small size: This category includes many woodland snails, such as Punctum, Acanthinula, Acicula and Vertigo. The most efficient way to find these is to use a sieve, in which leaves, twigs and moss can be shaken, and the fine material which falls through can be taken away for more careful examination at home. I have found that a mesh of about 2.0 to 2.5 mm. square is the most useful in practice. Many collectors use a 'sieve-bag', such as is illustrated by Janus (Molluscs, Burke & Co., London, 1965, p.35) and which can easily be made up for a few shillings. The use of some such tool is almost indispensable for finding minute land snails, enabling them to be recovered often in quite astonishing numbers. Of course, if the leaf-litter is too damp the method will not work in the field, and bags of litter must be taken away for sieving at home.

Curiously enough, Carychium seems to be spotted easily enough by most collectors, probably because of its conspicuous whiteness in contrast to the brown colour of most of the other minute species.

Among the freshwater species, the small Planorbis crista tends to be missed.

2. Difficulties of identification: This applies particularly to the segregates of Carychium, Cochlicopa, Vallonia and Vitrea, which are not adequately described in British manuals and with which many conchologists are therefore unfamiliar. Pisidium is similarly often ignored, and here the smallness of most of the species presents an additional difficulty. I should be very glad to identify any such material sent to me. In the case of Pisidium, the shells may be prepared for examination by heating for a few minutes in a 3% to 5% solution of caustic potash (or caustic soda), which destroys the soft parts and ligament. The shells should afterwards be washed in clean water. Do not heat too long or too vigorously, otherwise the periostracum will also be destroyed and even the shell itself may be attacked. An alternative method of preparation, gentler but equally effective, is first to kill the animals in boiling water, and then allow them to rot in a little water in a tube for two or three weeks. The shells should be well-washed in clean water and dried on a sheet of blotting paper.

3. Overlooked habitats: (a) I find that marshy places tend to be poorly investigated - for reasons which are perhaps obvious! Old clothes and Wellingtons are of course desirable. It is marsh habitats which are most in

danger of being destroyed at the present time, and it would be a pity if their faunas were neglected (Carychium minimum, Succinea spp., Vertigo spp., Vallonia pulchella, Zonitoides nitidus, Agriolimax laevis, etc.). A good idea of the faunas of such places may sometimes be gained by taking away bags of flood-refuse for examination at home. An entomologist's sweep-net can also be useful for sweeping through beds of rushes for Vertigo.

(b) The tree-living and rock-living species Balea perversa and Limax (Lehmannia) marginatus are often missed. The latter is admittedly often hard to find in southern and eastern England, having the knack of insinuating itself deep in crevices and only coming forth to feed at night, or in still, humid weather. The same applies to Helicigona lapicida, though dead shells can usually be picked up in its habitats.

(c) The garden and rubbish-tip habitat is often ignored (Milax spp., Limax flavus, Oxychilus draparnaldi, etc.).

(d) In 10 kilometre squares along the coast the brackish-water species are sometimes forgotten (Phytia myosotis, Hydrobia spp., etc.).

Untraced Records

The original localities on which are based the vice-comital records for about fifty of our more local British species have now been extracted from the Society's Census notebooks and incorporated in the mapping scheme. However, there remain a few records published in the 1951 Census (J. Conch. 23: 171-244) for which I have been unable to account. Most are given as 'unconfirmed'. I should be most grateful to anyone who may be able to tell me their source, perhaps in publications unknown to me (underlined records are given as 'confirmed' in the 1951 Census, the remainder as 'unconfirmed'):

Viviparus viviparus, 28, 60; Acicula fusca, 1 (Jeffreys (British Conchology, 1 (1862): 308) merely says 'the extremity of Cornwall'), 25, 46, H23 (132), H32 (117); Lymnaea glutinosa, 1, 25, 26, 37, 70; Segmentina nitida, 25, 36; Truncatellina cylindrica, 16, H38 (115), H39 (114); Vertigo pusilla, 3; Vertigo moulinsiana, 32; Vertigo angustior, 26; Clausilia rolphi, 4, 18; Laciniaria biplicata, 12; Helicella gigaxi, 39, 45, 81; Cochlicella acuta, 72, H32 (117), H37 (116); Milax budapestensis, 11.

M. P. Kerney,
Hon. Recorder for non-marine Mollusca,

CONKERS AND CONCHOLOGY

The view of Carshalton Park from our front windows includes some venerable Spanish chestnut trees (Castanea sativa) and also an avenue of horse chestnut trees (Aesculus hippocastanum) flanking one of the numerous sources of the river Wandle. In October schoolboys expend much time and energy in hurling sticks up into the horse chestnut trees to dislodge the prickly capsules containing the polished mahogany "nuts" (strictly seeds) in order to obtain ammunition for the time-honoured game of "conkers." Once the proud proprietor of a "ninety niner," it is now, alas, well over half a century since I participated in this ancient pastime, the name of which was assumed to be a corruption of the verb conquer. This facile etymology would seem, however, to be erroneous. Before the introduction into England in the early 17th. Century of horse chestnut trees, native in Macedonia and Albania (not Asia, as the French marron d'Inde implies), conkers used to be played with snail shells (not always vacant), so the derivation is presumably from concha. The original meaning of this word in Greek was a mussel or other bivalve shell, but in its latinised form the meaning was broadened to include gastropods such as whelks, murex and snails, in which sense it became anglicised as conche or conch. Accordingly conkers and conchology share a common ancestor. For the history of the word conchology see "Shell Collecting" by S. P. Dance, p. 270. The President might fittingly commemorate this affinity by challenging all comers to a conker contest at the October meeting of the Conchological Society.

If one may be permitted a relevant digression: the name horse chestnut is a translation of the Turkish atkestanesi, compounded of at=horse and kestane,

from Gk. kastanea, kastanos or kastanon (Lat. castanea) =chestnut tree, said by Pierandrea Mattioli (1557) to be so called because the "nuts" were used as a cure for broken wind in horses. One speculates as to how they were administered, as horses (and pigs) refuse them, though they are eaten by deer and cattle; conkers no longer find a place in the equine pharmacopoeia. Hippocastanum, first used by Tournefort, has of course the same significance. Aesculus in the Georgics is a kind of oak: botanical names are not infrequently applied in a different sense from classical usage.

A. E. Ellis

SOME COLLECTING EXPERIENCES IN BRITISH GUIANA

"The malacologist who visits the tropics for the first time expects to be overloaded with material, but if he must restrict his researches to the lowlands he is usually quite disappointed. In the moist forests there are but few large and showy forms, the remainder being never numerous in individuals and quite well hidden. In the open savanna country the rank and dense grass renders researches still more tedious in the wet season, while during drought most species are aestivating deep in the ground or in crevices of rocks or trees. Ecological conditions are evidently quite uniform in the tropical lowlands over large areas; furthermore, certain factors, such as the extensive flooding of the forest near the banks of the rivers and the scarcity of lime in the soil, are decidedly adverse to terrestrial snail life. The mountains however are malacologically much richer, especially where they are covered with dense forests; not only are the rocks more varied, but altitude produces a series of life zones, while the exposure of the slopes further modifies environmental conditions." Thus wrote Dr. J. C. Bequaert in 1925, after his return from a collecting trip to N. E. Brazil and it was also the experience of the writer during the course of the 1938 Expedition to Mt. Roriama in British Guiana (now, of course, Guyana).

In common with R. H. Schomburgk, a German Botanist employed by the British Government, who travelled in Guiana from 1835 to 1839 and who was probably the first traveller to collect mollusca there systematically, subsequent visitors have landed at Georgetown, the capital, a city built on the mud-banks of the estuary of the Demerara River. Not a very likely place for snails one would think, but in point of fact, more species can be found within the city boundaries in a few hours, than can be discovered in the vast rain forest beyond it, in as many days. Both land and freshwater mollusca occur there in most unexpected and unlikely places. The garden of an hotel near the city centre produced Pomacea (Effusa) glauca, in the basin of a fountain, in considerable numbers, and a visit to this spot after dark found the snails engaged in depositing clusters of green eggs, about the size of a small pea, on the stems of plants just above the level of the water. In crevices of the surrounding walls and beneath stones where they were aestivating a number of land shells occurred in fair abundance, these included Subulina octona, Opeas gracile, Bulimulus tenuissimus, and a species of Succinea. A foul and evil-smelling canal a few hundred yards away contained a vast population of Pomacea doiloides, the principle food of the snail-hawk or everglade Kite, Rostrhamus sociabilis. I have many times watched this bird extract the mollusc from the shell, which it secures in the claws of one foot. The hawk then perches on one foot and with the other quietly holds the snail in such a manner that it can emerge from the shell. The bird makes no attempt whatever to extract it by force, but watches for the voluntary extension of the animal beyond the aperture of the shell. With that propitious moment comes the next step in the drama. Quick as a flash the hawk's bill pierces the snail apparently behind the operculum. It happens so rapidly that one is not able to follow the operation clearly. As a step further the snail, now spiked upon the beak, is instantly pushed up to the middle of the upper bill. Then begins a second wait. Gradually the mollusc's muscles relax. A few minutes later the snail-hawk vigorously shakes its head and before even the light, empty shell has reached the ground Rostrhamus has swallowed its victim, operculum and all. A thousand or more empty shells have been collected below the habitual perching trees of these birds; these shells are not usually in the least damaged, but the corneous operculum is always missing.

A visit to the Botanical Gardens in the evening or early morning would nearly always produce examples of the large snail Strophocheilus oblongus, a

species confined to the cultivated coastal region and never found in the forest. It may well have originally been introduced by man. Food markets are always worth a visit in any South American town, and that at Georgetown was no exception. A freshwater mussel, Prisodon latialata was offered for sale there as a remedy for eye sores; the pearly inside of the shell being scraped off and mixed with water.

By far the greater part of the interior of British Guiana is covered by a vast forest of the moist tropical evergreen type, through which those who wish to reach the far interior must travel for many days, by water or on foot, since roads are non-existent. The chief characteristics of this forest are the extreme density and endless variety of the woody vegetation; some of the trees such as the Mora, attaining a considerable size, their height often exceeding 35m. and occasionally reaching 50m. Below the canopy of higher trees numerous bushes and young trees fill all available space, while the soil itself is covered with marantaceous reeds, ferns and low herbaceous plants. Grasses are altogether absent. Many of the herbaceous plants have, in search of light, left the soil to live as epiphytes along the bole and in the crowns of the trees. These trees, including the great buttress roots which many of them possess, are the home of several very beautiful 'tree snails' of the family Orthalacidae, such as Orthalicus sultana and Corona perversa which the writer found in this type of habitat in the valley of the Mazaruni River living 4 or 5 feet above ground level. The best collecting for small land mollusca was done in the drier parts of the forest, by scratching the superficial layer of humus and earth. Numerous examples of such small forms as Opeas, Leptinaria, and Subulina could usually be obtained in this manner. In this connection it is necessary to remember that, notwithstanding the luxuriance of the vegetation, there is but little decaying vegetable matter on the soil of the rain forest in British Guiana, considerably less so than in temperate forests. The combined efforts of termites and fungi, together with the rapid decay by fermentation due to moisture and heat, seem to quickly dispose of dead leaves, branches and tree-trunks.

Limestone ridges often rising as considerable hills, form drier areas on which native villages are frequently situated. These are undoubtedly the best collecting grounds for mollusca anywhere in the area. Banana plantations and rubbish dumps always proved worth examining. In the former large numbers of living examples of a small land operculate, Aperostoma dunoonensis were found among the decaying leaf-sheaths or banana trunks, and several brightly coloured species of Drymaeus attached to the underside of the leaves. The rubbish dump at such a village, in spite of the stench, produced eight species of snails and a Veronicella, the latter in large numbers.

Aquatic mollusca, in view of the existence of many large rivers and extensive swamps, are few in species, although often very numerous in individuals. Swampy areas of forest, subject to periodic inundation is the home of a giant marsh snail Pomaca urceus urceus, the huge globular shells of which often attain as much as 125mm. in length and 115mm. in maximum diameter. During the dry season the presence of this snail can only be detected by the occurrence of dead and bleached shells on the surface of the ground; living examples being obtained only by digging to a depth of 8" or more. They are eaten by the Indians in times of scarcity, but are tough and tasteless.

Small clear forest streams in favourable situations often contain various Melanids of the genera Doryssa and Pachychilus as well as Pomacea glauca orinoccensis, a large and very beautifully banded race of P. glauca, confined to the rain forest area. Freshwater mussels are very restricted in distribution, being confined to sand-bars below the numerous falls which are a feature of all the rivers. Below the Pakatuk Falls on the Potaro River, the writer collected Prisodon latialata, Paxyodon complanatus and Anodontites ensiformis, the flat elongated shell of the latter species always occurring in narrow gaps between the rocks.

Planorbidae and Lymnaeidae although abundant in the open savanna country of N.W. British Guiana and Venezuela apparently avoid the rain forest belt and a careful search failed to reveal any trace of either.

The collector of land mollusca in Britain may obtain some satisfaction from the thought that hundreds of square miles of luxuriant tropical rain forest would produce far fewer species in many weeks' collecting, than he could expect to find in an average chalk woodland in S.E. England in a few hours.

T. Pain

OBSERVATIONS ON CYPRAEA CAPENSIS GRAY 1828

Within the last three months, members of the Conchological Society of Southern Africa, collected a number of specimens of this species, which were of a beautiful glistening mauve colour.

These shells were obtained at three localities - Haga-Haga, Gonubie, and Bonza Bay, between East London and the Great Kei River.

Available literature consulted contains no mention of this mauve colour, and the writer found two writers - Joyce Allan and Dr. K. H. Barnard - only, who refer to the colour of the shell as being brown, or in some cases slightly reddish brown.

As C. capensis was described over a century ago, it seems strange that no collector, or collectors, in past years have mentioned finding any specimen with the mauve colour; e.g. Turton, who collected extensively at Port Alfred.

It has been noted that at the localities where the mauve shells were found, others were collected with the usual brown colour.

Shells of the mauve colour fade with remarkable rapidity, and the writer was shown specimens, which had been kept in the dark of a cabinet for six or more weeks, already fading and assuming the brown tint.

From this it may be assumed that the mauve colour is the colour of the shell during the life of the animal.

After death it may well be that a mauve coloured shell exposed to the sunlight for a day or so, would rapidly assume the recorded brown colour.

This may account for the fact that no other collector has so far found a mauve coloured specimen, or specimens - at least the writer has not been able to find any record thereof.

References:- Allan Joyce, 1956 Cowry Shells of World Seas.
Barnard Dr. K.H., 1963 Annals S. Af. Museum,
cont. S. Af. Mollusca, Vol. XLVII Part 3.
Kennelly D.H., 1964. Marine Shells of S. Africa.
Turton W.H., 1932. Marine Shells of Port Alfred.

D. H. Kennelly,
East London Museum
12 Oct. 1966.

A GIANT HELICELLA ITALA (L.) AND A RACE OF GIANT HELIX NEMORALIS L. IN THE BURREN, CO. CLARE, EIRE

When collecting on the limestone pavements of the Burren (Co. Clare, west Ireland) in June 1966 I took a single enormous Helicella itala (L.). Unfortunately it was an empty shell, but it measured no less than 26mm. in diameter. Mr. Stelfox, to whom I showed my find, suggested that as the lip was not properly completed the animal may have over-wintered as snails very rarely do. Only the one shell was taken, and all the other specimens of H. itala obtained in the same locality (and elsewhere in the Burren) were of normal size; there does not appear to be a giant race of itala as there is of Helix nemoralis in the same place.

The exact locality was the bare limestone slope inland of the coast road where it drops down from Ballinalackan to Poulsallagh. The giant nemoralis (many 26mm. in diameter) I found abundantly on short turf among the limestone pavements between the coast road and the sea at Poulsallagh.

The limestone pavement where my giant itala was found also yielded numerous normal-sized examples of the same species, and (under a prostrate Crataegus) a number of living Clausilia bidentata (Ström) with single shells of Oxychilus cellarius (Müller), Lauria cylindracea (da Costa), and Euconulus fulvus (Muller).

Taylor (Monograph pt. 24, p.127, 1921) gives 25mm. as the diameter of H. itala var. major Moquin-Tandon to which variety my giant shell seems referable.

For giant nemoralis Taylor (Monograph vol. 3, p.296, 1910) quotes var. major Ferussac with a diameter of 32mm. (French localities, especially the Pyrenees) and var. lucifuga Ziegler with a diameter of 35mm. (Upper Italy).

Nora F. McMillan

A CHESHIRE LOCALITY FOR ANODONTA COMPLANATA ROSSMASSLER

There are not many localities for this freshwater mussel and therefore it may be worth drawing attention to its occurrence in the Shropshire Union Canal near Beeston, Cheshire. At Wharton's Lock, near Beeston, on June 30th. 1966 I found several dead examples in material cleaned out of the canal and I am sure it lives therein, but had no means of finding out at that time and the canal just there has not been emptied lately.

N. F. McMillan

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Notice is given of the possible use of plenary powers by the International Commission in connection with the following names:

Suppression of Voluta mitra episcopalis Linnaeus, 1758 (Gastropoda): case number 1728.

Validation of Tectarius Valenciennes, 1832 (Gastropoda): case number 1754.

Suppression of Hippella Moerch, 1861 (Pelecypoda): case number 1861.

Particulars of the above applications are published in Bull. zool. Nomencl. vol. 23, part 4, Oct. 1966. Comments should be sent in duplicate, citing case number, to the Secretary, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o. British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7.

FIELD MEETING - TO PLUMLEY NATURE RESERVE, CHESHIRE, APRIL 30th. 1966

By invitation a small but energetic party of 5 members (including one enthusiastic Junior) met at Plumley Railway Station and proceeded to Plumley Nature Reserve. This Cheshire Reserve, 4 miles E. of Northwich, is of interest as it is a 60-acre artificial landscape, once the site of large chemical works. When the works were demolished the site lay derelict for many years until now the varied pools and ditches, banks and a large lime-tip, are adequately covered with plants and trees, and shelter a surprisingly large fauna.

A total of 22 species was obtained, the most interesting being Retinella radiatula which was fairly frequent on a mossy bank. The lime-tip yielded only Helicella caperata and Helix nemoralis.

The complete list of species is as follows:

Lymnaea truncatula (Müller)
Planorbis albus Müller
Segmentina complanata (L.)
Cochlicopa lubrica (Müller), s.s.
Helicella caperata (Montagu)
A. hortensis Ferussac
Vitrea crystallina (Müller)
V. contracta (Westerlund), a dead and bleached shell.
O. alliarius (Miller)
R. nitidula (Drap.)
L. peregra (Müller)
P. crista (L.)
Acroloxus lacustris (L.)
Helix nemoralis L.
Arion circumscriptus Johnston
Euconulus fulvus (Müller)
Oxychilus cellarius (Müller)
Retinella radiatula (Alder)
Limax maximus L.

Agriolimax reticulatus (Müller) Both the blotched and reticulated "garden" form and also the plain cream-coloured form were taken.
A. laevis (Müller) Pisidium milium Held (det. A. W. Stelfox)

Mr. Booth and Mr. Scott, the two Wardens of the Reserve, kindly showed us round and were most helpful in every way.

Nora F. McMillan

EXCHANGES, SALES, ETC.

Mrs. Wolf, [redacted] New Zealand, wishes to exchange New Zealand shells for British.

Mr. Laszlo Pinter, [redacted] Hungary, wishes to exchange non-marine recent mollusca. He specialises in the Clausiliidae.

Mr. John Eppert, [redacted] Mexico, proposes exchanging marine shells in lots of 25; he has many unusual examples from Mexico.

Sr. Carlos Altimira Aleu, [redacted] Barcelona, Spain, sends a printed list of land and freshwater gastropods and wishes to exchange for similar.

Mr. Stephen R. Shadlow, [redacted] Queensland, Australia, sends a duplicated list of deep dredged shells from the Australian coast, with prices.

Mr. John S. Rathbone, [redacted] S.A., Australia, can supply Australian shells, including Cypraea ziola thersites.

Flt. Lt. P. A. Hall, [redacted] Singapore, Singapore and Malayan shells offered in exchange for Cypraeas in particular.

Mrs. Helen Peters, [redacted] Belgium, requires specimens of Chiton marmoreus Fabr. She would exchange fine Acanthochitona discrepans from France (alcohol-processed or dry live-collected) or other live-collected shells; a list can be sent to any member interested.

James P. Conlin, [redacted] Texas 76105, U.S.A., wishes to purchase Tertiary Gastropods, particularly Barton Beds, London Clay, etc. (also Cretaceous echinoids).

Mr. W. K. Witsiepe, [redacted] Delaware 19808, U.S.A., has collection of Delaware Cretaceous and Maryland and Virginia Eocene and Miocene fossils (incl. teeth). His main interest is Cretaceous oysters. Any offers?

Information Wanted: I should be very glad to know the whereabouts of any well labelled non-marine shells from old collections from St. Helena Island. Any member able to help please contact T. E. Crowley, [redacted] Oxfordshire.

Circular No. 75 (June 1966) - Conchological Society of Southern Africa.

A short note describes a ceremony held in the Marine Gallery of the East London Museum on 14th. May 1966 to unveil a plaque dedicating a seashell display case to D. H. Kennelly in appreciation of all he has done for the Museum. The Editor of the Circular, Mrs. Kerr, notes that of 74 circulars issued, Mr. Kennelly had contributed interesting and valuable articles to no fewer than 72. Notes from his indefatigable pen appear in No. 75 also, one giving a useful synonymy of the Harpidae and one listing a number of record sizes for South African gastropods. There is a useful note on Cones by J. A. Marsh, largely supplementing the information in his 'Cone Shells of the World'.

Circular No. 77 (August 1966) - contains some detailed notes on recent unusual finds in Natal waters, further notes on the Harpidae, and a discussion on the nomenclature of Haliotis spadicea Donovan 1808, more usually known as H. sanguinea Hanley 1841, by D. H. Kennelly.

The September issue, Circular 78, contains the Society's Annual Report; it now comprises 166 ordinary and 25 student members, and the Conchological Society of G.B. & I. may read with a degree of regret and envy the Librarian's Report. Percy Elston contributes a list of the largest specimens of South African species in his possession with the hope that records will be available from other sources. A further note on Haliotis spadicea Don. (Syn. H. sanguinea Hanley) comes from D. H. Kennelly, also the results of experimentally boiling live specimens for considerable periods.

Circular No. 79 (October 1966) - this issue contains a note on Hydatina velum Gmelin, and an article by D. H. Kennelly on the Marine Shells of Luanda, Angola, a somewhat neglected coast, with definitive list of those collected and identified up to the present.

Circular No. 80 (November 1966) of the Conchological Society of Southern Africa describes the opening of the Kei Mouth Shell Museum, founded on the collection of Mrs. Hazel Jefferies. The shells are fully documented and the exhibition is designed as a basis for future scientific study.

Notes contributed by D. H. Kennelly include observations on Cypraea capensis Gray, shells from Marion Island, and some further observations on Cypraea amphithales Melville. The Cowries certainly maintain their charm.

'Poirieria' Vol. 3, Part 2 (March 1966)

Though duplicated, this publication is accompanied by very passable illustrations. Articles include one on Iredalina, the Golden Volute of New Zealand, one on Phenacharopa - a small land snail (dimensions not given), and one on the periostracal processes of local land shells, all by N. W. Gardner. N. Douglas writes on Preserving Sea Stars, C. A. Fleming on "The Origins of the New Zealand Molluscan Fauna", and D. G. Forsyth on 'Shells and Primitive Cultures', which packs a great deal of interesting fact into a small article.

Poirieria (Auckland, New Zealand)

The issue (Vol. 3, No. 3) for June 1966 contains several interesting detailed accounts of collecting activities, and an endearing feature of the publication is the balance it is able to keep between marine and nonmarine subjects. L. Price relates an unusual field trip to Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands in company with Dr. Alan Solem, to investigate the land-snail fauna; N. Gardner evaluates the reserves in North New Zealand and draws attention to the rapid changes in snail populations to be observed there. B. Elliott records the discovery of a rare subfossil, Schizoglossa major, and B. Dudley contributes an accurate and lucid account of the working of the tides, a subject on which most people are sufficiently vague. A very interesting note on edible snails is reprinted from the 'Australian Newsletter'; it appears that Helix pomatia in Paris is frequently dressed for the table in shells of H. leucorum imported for the purpose annually to the tune of fifty millions; this is necessary because the original shells are often broken when the snails are extracted. At least seven species of Helix are eaten in France, imported from European countries, Asia and Africa; even Syria, whose trade with France in this respect is small, exports about 136 live tons per annum. Some of the species concerned have almost certainly established themselves in France; a twelve ton load of live snails from Turkey was recently condemned at the frontier and tipped into a nearby wood at Verrieres-de-Joux. The locals later had a wonderful time collecting thousands of edible snails which had arisen from the dead.

'Catalog of Dealers' Prices for Marine Shells', 1st. Ed., 1965.

This is a comprehensive and comparatively inexpensive aid to the conchological financier. One infers that it has been compiled from the price lists of a number of American shell-dealing firms, though how complete a survey has been made is not clear. Cypraea aurantia for instance, at $ 75 is fairly widely divergent from prices quoted in van Nostrand's 'Catalog'. Shells are listed alphabetically in genera, and the list is confined to those species for which prices have been noted in the dealers' lists. In accordance with popular

American taste, the resulting catalogue largely comprises marine tropical shells, although some freshwater species were noted. Thus, although there is no mention of Planorbis or Lymnaea, we find a variety of Neritina and Hydrobia (s.l.). The British species of Hydrobia incidentally, are priced at fifty cents each, a figure which tends to arouse interest in the prices quoted for European shells generally. Dreissena polymorpha goes (or does it?) for 75 cents, so does Mactra stultorum; Mya truncata, perhaps because it is listed from Alaska, at a dollar each. One wonders why Ocinebra erinacea should cost £ 1, while Nassarius reticulatus can be had for no more than five cents a time, and the conclusion is inevitable that in many cases the pricing of shells is haphazard although it seems that, on the whole, large shells are apt to cost more than small, even though the latter are of rarer species. Murex ramosus costs anything between 20 cents and five dollars.

It would have been very nice to have the opportunity of supplying the World market in Helcion pellucida at 50 cents each, or any of the British Littorinas at a similar figure, or even allow a 50% discount to the dealer on the figure; but perhaps shell finances don't work that way.

American collectors seem little, if at all, interested in taxonomy, and many of the names by which their shells are generally known are out of date and synonymous ('Ampullaria'). Most dealers send accurate locality data with their shells, although the localities quoted in the catalogue are of use only as a kind of reminder, being either necessarily vague ('Australia'), or representative of the stock of a single dealer ('Puget Sound').

The work is quite comprehensive enough to serve as a very good check list for the general collector of marine shells, and the duplicated production is excellently laid out and free from printing errors. Many dealers' advertisements are included.

Obtainable from Thomas C. Rice, [redacted] Washington, U.S.A., price £ 2.50.

T.E.C.

Publication of an important Report.

DANCE, S.P., January 1967, Report on the Linnaean shell collection. Proc. Linn. Soc., vol. 178, part 1, pp. 1-24, pl. 1-10.

CORRECTIONS

Page 1, paragraph 5: for Conchological read Conchologists'.

Page 5, 5th. line from foot: for Cambidge read Cambridge

Page 7, Notes, 4c: for Liressidge read Liversidge

Page 8, line 12: for Australasion read Australasian

Page 11, paragraph 3: for Coecillioides read Cecilioides

Page 12, paragraph 3: the price of Linn. Soc. Synopsis No. 8 is now 7/6.

Page 18, line 2: for carniverous read carnivorous

Page 23, line 20: for soxatilis read saxatilis; line 8 from foot: for Commensual read Commensal; last line: for Pennart read Pennant

Page 25, line 4: for beginings read beginnings

Page 25, line 18: for Systeme read Systema

Page 25, line 28: for Linnaean read Linnean

Page 29, line 36: for Bythinia read Bithynia

Page 38, paragraph 2: for hymnaea read Lymnaea; last line: for Potamapyrgus read Potamopyrgus

Page 41, paragraph 4: for cygnaea read cygnea

Page 48, line 32: for siezed read seized

Page 51, line 1: for truncatula read tentaculata; line 7: Arion was also a mythical monstrous horse.

Page 55, last line: for Cepea read Cepaea

Page 67, paragraph 3: for fluviatalis read fluviatilis; for reticulosa read reticulata; for Cepea read Cepaea; paragraph 4: for strialata read striolata; for Spharium corneus read Sphaerium corneum; paragraph 6: for pallusida read pellucida; for cinero-niger read cinereoniger

Page 84, 7th. line from foot: for Rosts read hosts

Page 101, in 4 places: for cygnaea read cygnea

Page 117, line 9: for Bythinia read Bithynia; line 23: for polmorpha read polymorpha

Page 123, line 10: for Lacinaria read Laciniaria

Page 132, line 27: for carniatus read carinatus

Page 133, line 10: for Spaerium read Sphaerium

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