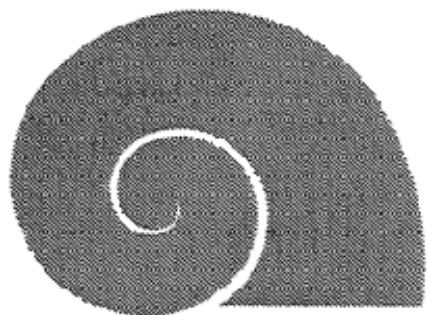


UNITAS MALACOLOGICA



UNITAS
MALACOLOGICA
FOUNDED 1962

Newsletter

Number 21 - December 2004

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The Malacological Society of London
The Western Society of Malacologists

Our aim is to further the study of Mollusca by individuals, societies and institutions worldwide

Newsletter Editor: Julia Sigwart
Collections-based Biology in Dublin (CoBiD)
National Museum of Ireland, Natural History Division
Merrion Street, Dublin 2, Ireland
tel. +353 1 716 2195
fax. +353 1 716 1152
e.mail: julia.sigwart@ucd.ie

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Keeping the World of Malacology Informed

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Editorial

There are some important things to know about this issue of your *Unitas Malacologica* newsletter. First, as it is your newsletter, we are asking for you to give your thoughts on its future development, so that UM can deliver news that is interesting and relevant to you. You will find a few questions on the back page of this newsletter, which I would ask you to answer for me, either by post or by e-mail. Of course, there is no penalty if you ignore this, except guilty nightmares, and an unsatisfying newsletter!

This issue of the UMN reports on the exciting World Congress of Malacology (WCM) held this summer in Perth, Western Australia. For those of us lucky enough to attend, the meeting was fantastically informative and more than worth the trip. I am very grateful to the organisers of sessions from the Perth Congress, all of whom performed admirably in organising the meeting, but some went even further, to re-live the experience and summarise their thoughts here for you.

Also in this issue, we have included some notes about recent book publications, including one must-have for the holiday season. More seriously, if you know of recently completed dissertations, theses, monographs, etc. of a malacological nature, please alert me so that announcements and appropriate congratulations can be included in the next newsletter.

This, then, is the final stage of a very successful meeting, and I am sure everyone is looking forward to the next meeting in Belgium, in 2007 (the 45th anniversary of *Unitas*)!

Secretary's Column

It is an honour for me to write my first newsletter contribution as Unitas Secretary and to follow in the footsteps of my distinguished predecessors. It is an honour too, I think, for the Natal Museum to host the 'secretariat', following on from such illustrious institutions as the Natural History Museum, London, and the Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum, Leiden [Naturalis].

My first job, must be to thank outgoing secretary Peter Mordan for his valuable contribution over the last six years. It is good to see that during this time our society has doubled the number of student research awards and increased the number of student travel grants for attending our meetings – thanks also to our treasurer in this regard. Now all we have to do is double the number of Unitas members!

Another task that it is my pleasure to do, along with many others I suspect, is to thank and congratulate Fred Wells and his team for hosting the recent WCM in Perth - a job very well done. A lovely venue, stimulating scientific programme, great social events and super excursions.

As is usual, associated with WCM meetings, we see some changes in the Unitas council, and we bid farewell not only to Peter Mordan, but also to Paula Mikkelsen and Takahiro Asami who step down as council members, and to Luitfried von Salvini-Plawen who is no longer immediate past president [Fred Wells of course takes over that position]. I thank them all, on behalf of Unitas, for their valued contribution. New faces in council, elected by ballot prior to the Perth meeting, are our incoming president Thierry Backeljau (brave man), myself as secretary, and Somsak Panha and Guido Pastorina as council members. Also stepping down is newsletter editor Yuri Kantor, who took over in 2002, and we welcome in his place Julia Sigwart from the National Museum of Ireland, who edits this, her first issue. I hope you will all support her by sending in news items for inclusion.

Somewhat flippantly, I mentioned above the issue of Unitas membership numbers, but this is in fact a very real issue. During the AGM in Perth, our treasurer expressed his concern at the declining Unitas membership, details of which are given in his report (see Treasurer's

Report, pg. 9). If Unitas is to prosper and grow, then we must ensure two things at least:

- that the existing members keep their subscriptions up to date
- that we have on-going recruitment of new members.

So, if you are a member, *please pay up!* If you are in doubt about the status of your subscription, please contact Jackie – he will be only too happy to tell you where you stand and provide a renewal form if necessary. He has also indicated that he may be forced to wield the axe in cases where subs are long overdue! Don't let it fall on you.

As regards new members, I challenge every established Unitas member to recruit at least one new member between now and the next WCM in Belgium in 2007. If the Perth meeting is anything to go by, there are plenty of promising young students out there and Unitas has a lot to offer them. Our meetings represent a fantastic opportunity for students to meet the global malacological community, to find out who is doing what and where, to gain insight into the issues presently at the 'cutting-edge' of malacology and to listen to the presentations of the current luminaries in our discipline – inspirational stuff for young minds. They can also seek the opinion of experts in their particular field of endeavour and gain exposure for their own work. Such exposure could be critical in relation to their applications for jobs in future years. Unitas is keen to encourage and facilitate student participation – prizes are given for the best student presentations (see below, pg. 3) and all eligible applicants for student travel awards to the Perth meeting were funded (€800 each). So there is ample reason why we should encourage them to join and why they should wish to join.

Dai Herbert
Secretary

Best oral presentations:

- 1st (Aus \$500)
Adriaan Gittenberger, National Museum
of Natural History [Naturalis], Leiden,
Netherlands
*Mushroom corals and associated
gastropods: phylogenies and distributions*
- 2nd (Aus \$300)
Tanya Compton, University of Groningen,
Netherlands
*Fundamental niches as driving factors in
marine biodiversity: a case study with
bivalves and temperature*
- 3rd (six year subscription to Unitas)
Manual Malaquias, Natural History
Museum, London
*The systematics and evolution of Bullidae
(Gastropoda: Opisthobranchia)*

Best poster presentations:

- 1st (Aus \$500)
Rosemary Golding, University of
Sydney, Australia
*Morphological studies of Australian
Amphibolidae (Gastropoda:
Pulmonata)*
- 2nd (Aus \$300)
Tshifhiwa Nangammbi, Natal
Museum, Pietermaritzburg, South
Africa
*Phylogeny of southern African Tricolia
(Gastropoda: Turbinidae) based on
mtDNA sequences*
- 3rd (six year membership for UM)
Christian Albrecht, J.W. Goethe
University, Frankfurt, Germany
*Speciation in ancient Lake Ohrid –
freshwater limpets of the genus
Ancylus*

Congratulations to all!!!

*See page 7 for a scientific report from last
year's student prize winner Gregorio Bigatti*

Dear Members,

I very much enjoyed my term as your President and would like to thank all of the Council members for their considerable assistance in the last three years. In particular, I thank the Secretary, Peter Mordan, and the Treasurer, Jackie van Goethem, who have generously provided me with their experience in Unitas Council and offered considerable valuable advice during the organization of the World Congress of Malacology. During the last three years, Yuri Kantor has very ably written the newsletter, which has been distributed by Eddie Gittenberger. It has been a real pleasure working with all of these people, Vice-President Luitfried Salvini-Plawen, and the other councillors, Takahiro Asami, Paula Mikkelsen, Marco Oliverio, and Pablo Penchaszadeh.

Clearly the major role of the Unitas President is to organize the World Congress of Malacology, which was held in Perth from 11 to 16 July 2004. Other articles in this newsletter will tell you about the Congress, but it was truly a World Congress. The Perth Congress was attended by 302 delegates from 42 countries from all of the inhabited continents. About 80% of the delegates were from overseas and 10% were from the Eastern States. In addition there were 25 accompanying people. Only a handful of the overseas people had been to Perth previously. The conference provided them with a once in a lifetime opportunity to come to Australia for the conference, examine the collections of the Western Australian Museum, collect on their own, and see a bit of Australia. The icebreaker was held at the Museum on the Sunday evening, and the conference itself was held at The University of Western Australia during the week of 12 to 16 July. We believe the Perth conference was the largest mollusc meeting ever to be held in the southern hemisphere and one of the third largest ever anywhere in the world. The general consensus was that it was a very successful meeting.

Many delegates were from Europe or North America, temperate areas where the marine molluscs are very well known and there are relatively few species. It is unusual to find a new species of mollusc in the shallow marine

waters of these areas. In contrast, Western Australia has a wide range of tropical and temperate habitats and overlap zone on the west coast. With thousands of species and a short history of study, finding new species along our coast is an everyday occurrence. In fact, the molluscs of the seabed of the continental slope, just west of Rottnest Island, are almost completely unknown.

Following the congress, there was a postconference field trip to the new Saville Kent Research Laboratory in the Abrolhos Islands. A total of 22 people participated in the field trip, including nine from overseas and one from Queensland. Many of the international participants had never dived on a coral reef, and they were astounded by the diversity and colourful life they found on the reef.

Other delegates took advantage of their visit to Australia to collect and sightsee in various parts of the state. Many went to Shark Bay, and others went to Albany and Esperance on the south coast. Some were smarter and headed for the warmer climes of Dampier and Broome. The trips were not limited to Western Australia. A group of delegates from Austria went to Darwin and a land snail contingent from the Natural History Museum in London went to Queensland.

Organizing such a huge Congress cannot be done by one person. I received considerable assistance in the planning and during the Congress from a committee of Anne Brearley, Lesley Brooker and Winston Ponder. During the event all of these people chipped in and helped, along with Corey Whisson, Mark Salotti, Jeremy Shaw and Jacqui Wells. Congresswest, through the efforts of Mandy Sheehan, and many other people and organizations helped tremendously in the background.

I have one substantial regret about the Congress. With over 300 people here during the event and all the distractions of organizing things, I was not able to catch up nearly as well with longterm friends and colleagues as I would have liked. I look forward to Brussels in 2007 when I can relax and watch your new President, Thierry Backeljau ably organize the next World Congress of Malacology!

Fred Wells
UM President Emeritus

New Council Members

There are several new members of the UM council, elected by ballot and announced at the AGM in Perth.

Thierry Backeljau, our leader, follows the end of Fred Wells' term as president.

Dai Herbert, secretary, who you hear from in this newsletter, succeeds Peter Mordan.

And two new members at large:

Somsak Panha and **Guido Pastorino** fill the gaps left by Paula Mikkelsen and Takahiro Asami.

Treasurer's Column

You will find my report on the Unitas Malacologica finances for the period 2001-2003 under the Treasurer's Report (pg. 9).

With this column I just want to inform you on some recent items:

We welcome a new affiliated society, *i.e.*
the Sociedad Malacológica de Chile (2004)
contact: Dr Laura HUAQUIN
e-mail: lhuaquin@uchile.cl

Small donations to the Trust Fund were received in the period of April-July 2004, from:

Rüdiger BIELER
Bernhard HAUSDORF and
Steffen KIEL.

Thank you.

Jackie Van Goethem
Treasurer

Summary of the Congress

The scientific content of the Perth WCM was divided into seven major symposia, in addition to general sessions of contributed papers. Below we present summaries of the accomplishments of four of these sessions: on phylogeny, reproduction and development, bivalves, and landsnails. For information the other three symposia not covered here in detail, please contact the respective organisers:

Biology and systematics of opisthobranch molluscs
Contacts: Dr Gilianne Brodie, James Cook
University, Australia
<gilianne.brodie@jcu.edu.au>

Molluscan Aquaculture and Fisheries
Contacts: Dr Greg Maguire,
<gmaguire@fish.wa.gov.au> and Dr Lindsay
Joll, Western Australian Department of Fisheries,
Perth <ljoll@fish.wa.gov.au>

Ecology of Molluscs
Contacts: Prof Tony Underwood and Dr Gee
Chapman, University of Sydney, Australia,
<gee@bio.usyd.edu.au>

PHYLOGENY OF MOLLUSCS

David Lindberg and Winston Ponder

This symposium, co-sponsored by the University of California Museum of Paleontology, brought together a remarkable group of scientists to present and discuss current hypotheses on the relationships and evolutionary history of the Mollusca, and featured 38 presentations and 9 posters. Speakers were intentionally selected to both complement and contrast different view points, datasets, and methodologies. The organizers were not looking for consensus, but rather a critical review and status report of our understanding of the evolutionary history of this major branch on the Tree of Life.

Molecular approaches figured prominently in the question of relationships amongst the higher molluscan groups (i.e., are clams more closely related to snails than snails are to squid). Relationships within the gastropods were a major topic, especially the long-neglected and largest subclade, the Caenogastropoda. The current state of knowledge regarding caenogastropod phylogeny was summarized by Winston Ponder (Australia).

Additional paleontological perspectives on molluscan evolution were presented by Pavel Parkhaev (Russia), Jiri Fryda (Czech Republic), and Peter Wagner (USA). Following a trend seen in the last two World Congresses, the dominance of cladograms, molecular datasets, and combined analyses was striking. What was unexpected was the number of papers that deconstructed some of the long-established and seemingly sacrosanct familiar groupings – the very suggestion of

which would have been viewed as systematic heresy just a few short years ago. Moreover, these findings ranged widely across the hierarchical ranks from molluscan genera to subphyla and invoked lively discussion rather than outright rejection.

Kenneth Halanych (USA) and his colleagues trampled on conventional wisdom with molecular trees that suggested that the Aplacophora were neither a clade nor grade, but rather convergent molluscan ventures into worm-like morphologies. Gonzalo Giribet's (USA) study of the evolution and phylogeny of the Bivalvia again raised the question of the monophyly of the Bivalvia and the placement of the protobranch bivalves. Peter Wagner (USA) presented analyses that clearly support diphyletic origins for the extinct bellerophonts, and Akiko Okusu *et al.* (USA) deconstructed several long recognized familial level taxa in the Polyplacophora based on multi-gene analyses. Brian Simison and David Lindberg (USA) showed possible diphyletic origins of the Gastropoda based on mitochondrial gene order and amino acid sequence analyses of complete genes, and Lindberg committed further heresy with character analyses and models that could not refute diphyly for the true limpets (patellogastropods). Lastly, Susan Williams (United Kingdom) and Tomowo Ozawa (Japan) deconstructed another long recognized group, the Turbinidae, based on multi-gene analyses. Some of these groups have been recognized since Aristotle, and their demise as non-evolutionary lineages was unanticipated by most of the symposium participants although this theme reverberated through these and many other talks. The only other theme that was more common was the cautionary note that 'more data is needed.'

REPRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS IN MOLLUSCS: AN OVERVIEW

Helena Fortunato, Toshie Kawano, and Angel Luque

The study of reproduction and developmental patterns in mollusks is now based on thorough studies of reproductive anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of reproduction and intracapsular development, as well as sophisticated studies of embryonic and larval stages. Results from these studies are widely used both in the applied fields of shellfisheries

and parasitology, and in more theoretical areas dealing with evolutionary patterns, phylogeny and biogeography.

The 16 lectures and 8 posters presented results that ranged from sophisticated studies of the larval nervous system, role of temperature and intracapsular nutrition during larval development, through the latest methodologies used to study embryological development. Land snails were also present with several presentations on maturation times, mate choice and mating success dependent of sinistral vs dextral coiling. Development of larval structures and its significance for the adults was another theme at the symposium. Influence of contaminants (imposex) in the reproductive success of several species and biochemical aspects of metabolism was also present. The discussions that followed each presentation showed how important and influential the field of reproduction and development has become.

The proceedings of this symposium aim to present results at the forefront of the science of molluscan reproductive biology. We hope to present the proceedings volume (*Journal of Invertebrate Reproduction and Development*) by the end of next year.

BIVALVES: A LOOK AT THE BRANCHES

Paula M. Mikkelsen & Rüdiger Bieler

Within the context of a U.S. National Science Foundation PEET (Partnerships in Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy) award for marine bivalve studies, to Rüdiger Bieler (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago) and Paula Mikkelsen (American Museum of Natural History, New York), a one-day symposium on "Bivalve Systematics – a Look at the Branches" was held at the World Congress of Malacology in Perth on 15 July 2004. Although bivalve systematics has taken substantial steps in recent years, the "tree" and resulting classifications are still far from stable. This symposium allowed the opportunity to journey the major putative bivalve clades, with each contributor introducing diversity and characters of their group, and discussing hypotheses of relationship and classification. An international slate of 16 authors for the nine presentations covered eight major taxonomic

groups: Arcoidea, Pterioidea, Pectinoidea, Palaeoheterodonta, Galeommatoidea, Lucinoidea, Veneroidea and Anomalodesmata. Most presentations included a mix of molecular and morphological data, each with a blend of resolution and yet-to-be solved problems. One student participant, Mr. Ilya Tëmkin, of American Museum of Natural History and New York University, won the Sir Charles Maurice Yonge Award from the Malacological Society of London, awarded at the Congress for the best student presentation on Bivalvia; Mr. Tëmkin is an NSF-PEET marine bivalve graduate student. Contributions from the symposium will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Molluscan Research*.

The NSF-PEET Marine Bivalve Project currently supports three graduate students, one postdoctoral fellow, and several support staff at its centers of activity in Chicago, New York, and Miami. Other major products include the project website (<http://peet.fnmh.org/>) and an International Marine Bivalve Workshop (Florida Keys, July-August 2002), with contributions to be published in late 2004 as a dedicated issue of the journal *Malacologia*.

PATTERN AND PROCESS IN LAND MOLLUSC DIVERSITY.

Robert Cameron, Jeff Nekola, and Beata Pokryszko

This session developed from discussions between Jeff Nekola, Robert Cameron and Beata Pokryszko, all of whom are engaged in analysing land mollusc diversity at the whole range of scales. A particular impetus was given by the location of the Uitas Congress in Perth, the base from which the late Alan Solem conducted his ground-breaking research on the Australian fauna. Solem's classic review (1984) of global land mollusc diversity was limited, as he himself acknowledged, by the absence of data from many parts of the world. Apart from their theoretical interest, the patterns of diversity in land molluscs are often radically different from those seen in other groups, and this has direct and immediate consequences for conservation policies. Work in Australia has already demonstrated the use of land molluscs as indicators of "hotspots" of endemism and high conservation value.

REPRODUCTION AND DIET OF THE ZIGZAG VOLUTE
ODONTOCYMBIOLA MAGELLANICA (GMELIN, 1791)
(MOLLUSCA: GASTROPODA) FROM PATAGONIA

Gregorio Bigatti

The organisers therefore tried to engage speakers from different continents to give “state of play” accounts of the patterns of diversity in their regions, and of efforts to understand the processes involved. The plenary talk, given by Robert Cameron, analysed the contribution made by Solem, exposing the questions he raised that have yet to be answered, and pointing to the opportunities to complete the work he started in Australia.

Initially eight talks were commissioned, spanning all continents with the exception of South America, and two archipelagos. Much to our delight, however, there were many offered papers and posters relevant to the theme; in the end, there were twenty-four papers and fifteen posters presented within the session, though some were concerned with phylogeny, physiology or behaviour. Contributions came from at least twenty-two countries, and an impressive proportion represented the work of multinational teams. The explosion of interest and activity in S.E. Asia was particularly welcome.

While there is still much to be done, even at the level of primary survey and alpha taxonomy, global patterns emerged: at local level, species richness in good sites varies only modestly across continents and latitudes, but at regional level faunas at low latitudes have far higher rates of turnover. These vary idiosyncratically with region, and between families of snails within regions. There are profound conservation implications here: some of the least known areas may contain high diversities and many threatened species yet to be found or described.

The plenary talk, solicited contributions and some of the offered papers will be published in a special number of *Records of the Western Australian Museum*, with the generous financial support of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.

My 2003 Unitas Malacologica student award was used in three research field trips to Puerto Madryn, Patagonia (1600 km from Buenos Aires) and some expendable equipment (mainly histology supplies). This sampling enabled me to finish some studies that I have been doing the course of my Ph.D. thesis. A paper entitled ‘Imposex in *Odontocymbiola magellanica* (Gmelin, 1791) in Patagonia’ was submitted to *Comunicaciones de la Sociedad Malacológica del Uruguay*.

O. Magellanica inhabits shallow water (6 to 12 meters deep) in the Patagonian littoral, and is common in mixed substrata of gravel and sand. Sampling was performed by SCUBA diving from a boat.

Diet

O. magellanica is a specialised predator of bivalves and other gastropods. Species components of its diet were identified. Each individual that was found feeding was collected in a plastic bag underwater together with its prey. Maximum shell length of the *O. magellanica* were measured, and that of the prey after identification.

In total, 92 *Odontocymbiola magellanica* were analysed. Shell length ranged from 5,7 to 18,8 cm, and the principal food item was the venerid clam *Venus antiqua* 35 % (shell length 45-55mm) at depths between 6-10m. Other ingested bivalves were the mussel *Aulacomya ater* 3% and the scallop *Chlamys madrynensis* 3%. Gastropod prey chiefly comprised *Tegula patagonica* 26%, *Natica isabelleana* 13%, and *Trophon geversianus* 6%. Other gastropods ingested were *Buccinanops cochlidium* 4 % and *Crepidula dilatata* 1%. In only one case (less than 1%), we found cannibalism (a large *O. magellanica* eating a small individual of the same species). In the field, we observed that the captured prey was covered and enclosed with the posterior end of the predator’s foot, “sealing” the animal. Specimens were also were observed ingesting prey by means of the radula.

Oviposition events

Samples were taken from September 2000 to March 2004 in shallow water off Golfo Nuevo, Patagonia. Twenty individuals were dissected monthly, their sex macroscopically identified, their gonad fixed in Bouin's solution, dehydrated, embedded, sectioned at 5 microns, and stained with Harris's haematoxylin and eosin to study gonad histology. During the reproductive season, intensive sampling was performed in order to collect as many snail sizes as possible. Oviposition was studied by collecting the females laying egg-capsules in the field. Egg-capsules with embryos at different stages of development were found in the field from July to January. Egg-laying occurs from July to February, showing two peaks of oviposition, coinciding with increasing water temperature after the winter (8°C) and with maximum water temperature in the summer (15°C). Field observations and analyses of the bursa copulatrix, showed that copulation starts approximately one month before the first oviposition event. This indicates that females could store live spermatozoon until fertilisation. Multiple contributions of spermatozoa could be expected. The egg-capsule has an external calcium layer secreted by a gland located in the anterior portion of the snail's foot. The pedal gland deposits this calcium layer after oviposition. As the egg-capsule develops this layer gradually disappears. At hatching there is no calcium layer, facilitating the escape of the crawling juveniles.

Imposex

Sampling in depths of 6-10 m was performed in Golfo Nuevo, Golfo San José and Golfo San Matias, Patagonia in order to study the occurrence of imposex.

O. magellanica showed between 85% and 100% imposex near harbours with high marine traffic in Puerto Madryn, Golfo Nuevo, and a Relative Penis Size Index (RPSI) between 0.77 and 3.84; in SCUBA-diving zones with recreational traffic the imposex percentage decreased to between 35% and 59%, and the RPSI was between 0 and 0.15; in zones with low marine traffic the percentage of imposex was zero. Although the species is under imposex occurrence in the area, the vagina of the individuals is not obstructed by the vas

deferens; in 2002, we found females with imposex that were spawning. A subsequent study in 2004, near the harbour zone, showed the persistence of imposex in these marine gastropods. In Golfo San José the imposex was nil and in San Antonio Este, Golfo San Matias the imposex was 100 % and the RPSI 0.12. Imposex occurrence confirms the presence of TBT in the areas near harbours.

Books

Listed here are a variety mollusc-oriented books published in the last 18 months, to edify and amuse. Books are listed alphabetically by first authors, with list prices given in US dollars.

Bivalve Molluscs: Biology, Ecology and Culture
by Elizabeth Gosling
List Price: US\$ 129.99
Publisher: Iowa State Press (April 2003);
Hardcover, 443 pages
ISBN: 0852382340

Ocean Oracle: What Seashells Reveal About Our True Nature
by Michelle Hanson
List Price: US\$ 26.95
Publisher: Beyond Words Publishing (October 2004); Paperback, 106 pages and card set
ISBN: 158270113X

Molecular Systematics and Phylogeography of Mollusks
eds. Charles Lydeard, David R. Lindberg, & Geerat J. Vermeij
List Price: US\$ 80.00
Publisher: Smithsonian Books (December 2003);
Hardcover, 328 pages
ISBN: 1588341488

Field guide to the land snails and slugs of eastern South Africa
by Dai Herbert & Dick Kilburn.
List Price: ca. US\$ 50.00.
Publisher: Natal Museum (Sept. 2004), Hardcover, full colour, 340 pages.
ISBN: 0620324155.

The Brains and Lives of Cephalopods
by Marion Nixon & J. Z. Young
List Price: US\$ 370.00
Hardcover, 392 pages
Publisher: Oxford University Press (November 2003)
ISBN: 0198527616

Atlas of Mesozoic and Cenozoic Coastlines
by A.G. Smith, D.G. Smith, & B.M. Funnell
List Price: US\$ 21.99
Publisher: Cambridge University Press New Ed
edition (first edition 1994, hardcover; new
paperback edition March 2004); 109 pages
ISBN: 0521602874

*Catalogue of the Marine Gastropod Family
Fasciolariiidae.*
by Martin Avery Snyder
List Price: US\$ 38.50
Publisher: Academy of Natural Sciences,
Philadelphia, Special Publ. 21. (March 2003);
Paperback, 431 pages
ISBN: 0910006571

*Australia's Spectacular Cowries: A Review and
Field Study of Two Endemic Genera: Zoila and
Umbilia*
by Barry Wilson & Peter Clarkson
List Price: US\$ 125.00
Publisher: Odyssey Publishing (July 2004);
Hardcover, 396 pages
ISBN: 0966172027

On the Origin of Phyla
by James W. Valentine
List Price: US\$ 55.00
Publisher: University of Chicago Press (June
2004); Hardcover, 608 pages
ISBN: 0226845486

Nature: An Economic History
by Geerat J. Vermeij
List Price: US\$ 35.00
Publisher: Princeton University Press (September
2004); Hardcover, 448 pages
ISBN: 0691115273

Is Your Address Incorrect??

If your address label is incorrect, or you anticipate a change of address, **please inform the Treasurer.**

Also, can anyone help in giving the present address of the following members? If you have information about current contact details for any of the people below, please pass them on to the Treasurer
jackie.vangoethem@naturalsciences.be

Thank you!

- Prof. Fikret H. BILGIN
Dicle Univ., Science Faculty
Diyarbakir, Turkey
- Mr Nenad C. BOJAT
University of Basle
- Dr. Massimo CRETILLA
Pozzuoli, Napoli
- Dr Beatrice MOOR, Basle
- Mr K.S. PETERSEN
Geological Survey of Denmark
- Dr Gitta Solange SCHMITT
Tallahassee

Treasurer's Report

Report of the Treasurer to the General
Assembly of Unitas Malacologica
for the period
1 January 2001 – 31 December 2003
As presented in Perth, 16 July 2004.

Mr President, dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to give you a report on the financial situation of the UNITAS MALACOLOGICA since the last congress in Vienna in 2001.

Our financial situation evolved again very positively, mainly thanks to an important profit received from Luitfried VON SALVINI-PLAWEN, President of the 2001 Vienna Congress. I'll come back to this later on.

As you know, the Swiss bank account opened in 1962 at the founding of our Society, had been closed in January 2001 (because of very low interest rate and rising bank charges for operations). Moreover the international Trust Fund account, opened in 1990 with a cheque in the amount of 5,000 GBP (donated by the National Museums of Scotland), had been closed in 2002, because of dropping interest rate, while the pound sterling was relatively high valued (more than 25 % higher than in 1990). Thus, the sale of GBP, some 12 years after they were received, realised a considerable benefit.

Practical result is that all bank accounts are now in euro, that my life has become much easier, and that I can present *the legal accounts* to you in an euro format. Before doing that, allow me to share two concerns with you.

1. The total number of members has been much higher before. At the beginning of the nineties it was + 400, it dropped to 350 in 1995, to 300 in 1998, has risen to 340, but dropped again to less than 320 at present.
2. I have a bad feeling since members react not or very slowly on my invitations to pay membership dues. Around 50 % of the addressees did not respond yet on my letters sent out more than a year ago. And also during this congress I have collected very few

money for paying dues (that happened never before).

Hence membership dues are the most significant income for our Society. Of course, many faithful members acknowledge and pay in advance. Some go even further, they pay for a long time in advance, sometimes up to ten years! Their reasoning is, I think, that they meet two objectives: first they have less paperwork and other trouble, secondly UNITAS gains interest on that volume of money received on beforehand.

Therefore my favourite members at present are Heike WÄGELE, who recently paid up to 2014 and Thierry BACKELJAU, who paid, six years ago, *in tempore non suspecto*, up to 2008.

UNITAS MALACOLOGICA CURRENT ACCOUNTS

Income from membership dues was a bit lower than expected. Interest rate is, as you know, very low, although the ARGENTA BANK in Belgium is known to offer one of the best interest rates, *i.e.* 3.25 % netto (since Unitas benefits from tax exempt).

The money by closing the international GBP account had to enter through the Financial Post account, and went out (rounded up) to the TRUST FUND. It is not considered as a true income, since it does not influence the total assets.

Donations were received from individual members (those received in 2003 are booked in 2004). Members who gave €50 or even a little more are: Ruud BANK, Karl-Heinz BECKMAN, Jörgen KNUDSEN, David LINDBERG and Fred WELLS. [I hope they don't mind I mention their names here, my reason is just to give a good idea to others...]

Expenditure: three Newsletters were issued by Yuri KANTOR, Editor, while Edi GITTENBERGER continues to arrange for printing and mailing. One issue of Tentacle has been printed at very low cost by Robert COWIE since it was electronically posted, by snail mail only to non web connected members of the Mollusc Specialist Group (under IUCN).

Council meetings are not that expensive since it is not custom for councillors to apply for

financial help. An important amount has been transferred to the TRUST FUND, as well as the donations received over the period 1999-2002.

Regarding credit card payments, I had to abandon that prehistorical plastic object, which you have to roll over a threefold sheet, many times unsuccessfully, and I adhered to the electronic processing towards payment. This include a one time cost of almost €90 and a small charge for every operation (on top of the 2.25 % charge).

Unitas has at present three accounts: a saving and a daily account in the ARGENTA BANK, and an account allowing international transfers at low costs (FINANCIAL POST).

The available assets of Unitas Malacologica currently amount to €5,844.48, which represents a decrease of €1,910.80, and is enough to function adequately for the next three years period.

THE TRUST FUND

Over the period 2001-2003, income came from interests (note the drop in 2002 due to the reduction of the capital after payment of the travel grants in 2001), from transfer from U.M. current accounts and from donations.

In particular I mention here a late donation from Claus MEIER-BROOK on behalf of German malacologists (received in 2001) and a really impressive profit resulting from the Vienna Congress arranged by Luitfried. On behalf of UNITAS thank you *very much* Luitfried.

Expenditure over that same period:

- travel grants for 20 participants to the Vienna Congress in 2001 (most received a grant of €400),
- student prizes for best oral and poster communication (2 x €300),
- issuing Tentacle nr 10,
- three research awards of €1,000 (the one in 2002 split over three persons),
- the return to UM being an internal movement since the money came back in the amount of €7,000 (2003).

The excess of income is €15,453.75 added to the capital present at the start of the three years period, gives total assets of €49,999.70, being predominantly on the saving account.

Over the past 10 years the assets of Unitas were (rounded up):

- 31.12.1994 → €29.000
- 31.12.1997 → €35.500
- 31.12.2000 → €42.000
- 31.12.2003 → €55.800.

Given this favourable situation, Council decided last year (September 2003) to augment the travel grant budget for Perth to €20,000, the budget for student prizes in Perth from €600 to €1,000 and to triple the number of research awards (instead of one award of €1,000 at the years between congresses, now two awards of €1,000 every year).

Of course our finances have to be followed up carefully and Council has asked the treasurer to light red alarm as soon as he feels that the assets are going down in a structural way.

A healthy financial situation is the backbone of a Society.

IN CONCLUSION

My final point is the proposed use of the UNITAS money during the period 2004-2006. The expected income is in the order of €18,000 (membership, interests, small donations).

Expenditure can be split up as follows:

- a) Unitas Malacologica current activities, *inter alia* mailing, printing and mailing of UM-Newsletters, cover of Council Meetings: budget = €6,000;
- b) Trust Fund activities such as congress travel grants, research awards, student prizes at congresses, Tentacle issuing, unsolved congress problems (if appropriate): budget = **€12,000**.

I most sincerely thank all these who have been so helpful in influencing our present financial situation so favourably. I thank in particular Guido POPPE, who is developing activities in Cebu, for his donation, last week, of €1,000 to the Trust Fund. I'll miss Yuri KANTOR, who served UNITAS, in being the Editor of three

issues of our Newsletter. I thank Yuri for this service and also Edi GITTENBERGER, who continues to assure printing and mailing of our Newsletter.

I thank all Council members, Luitfried, Paula, Hiro, Marco and Pablo, for their help and interest, and in particular Peter MORDAN, outgoing Secretary, with whom it was a real pleasure to work. And finally, allow me to address my sincere appreciation for the excellent preparation and careful budgetising of this World Congress of Malacology in Perth. It is a real pleasure Fred working with you, and I must say that communication between President, Secretary and Treasurer, especially over the past twelve months was frequent, transparent and constructive. It was a privilege working with you both in team.

I am now looking forward to work with the new team. Please note that it will be my last term as your servant.

I thank you all.

Jackie L. Van Goethem
Treasurer

Membership

Current annual subscription to Unitas Malacologica is €16. However, members are encouraged to subscribe for three years (€48).

Please pay your membership dues in EURO (€) at: *Belgian Postcheque*, B - 1100 Brussels, on the account number 000-1539068-66 of Unitas Malacologica, c/o RBINS, Vautier Street 29, B-1000 BRUSSELS.

For international transactions you can use IBAN code: BE07 0001 5390 6866 (account number)

BIC or SWIFT code: BPOTBEB 1 (to characterize the Belgian Postcheque Bank)

Visa, Eurocard and Mastercard are accepted as are international *postal* money orders (available from your post office), payment by bank draft in EURO currency, drawn on a *Belgian bank*. Receipts are not sent unless requested, except for cash transactions (which also are accepted).

A membership application form can be obtained from the **Treasurer**.

Council of Unitas Malacologica

President

Prof. Dr Thierry Backeljau

Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Vautierstraat 29, B-1000 Brussels,
BELGIUM

t. +32 2 627 43 39

f. +32 2 627 41 41

e. Thierry.Backeljau@naturalsciences.be

Secretary

Dr. Dai G. Herbert.

Department of Mollusca, Natal Museum
P. Bag 9070, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, SOUTH
AFRICA

t. +33 345 1404

f. +33 345 0561

e. dherbert@nmsa.org.za

Treasurer

Dr. Jackie Van Goethem

Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences,
Vautierstraat 29, B-1000 Brussels,
BELGIUM

t. +32 2 627 43 43

f. +32 2 627 41 41

e. jackie.vangoethem@naturalsciences.be

Past President

Dr. Fred E. Wells

Western Australian Museum
1 Francis Street, Perth 6000, Western
Australia, AUSTRALIA

t. +61 8 9427 2809

f. +61 8 9427 2882

e. fred.wells@museum.wa.gov.au

Members of Council

Dr. Pablo Enrique Penchaszadeh

Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales
Bernardino Rivadavia, 1045 Buenos Aires,
ARGENTINA

t. +54 11 4576 3300 ext. 266

f. +54 11 4982 4494

e. penchas@bg.fcen.uba.ar

Dr. Marco Oliverio

Dipartimento di Biologia Animale e dell'Uomo
Viale dell'Università 32, I-00185 Rome, ITALY

t. +39 06 4991 4307

f. +39 06 4958 259

e. marco.oliverio@uniroma1.it

Dr. Somsak Panha

Department of Biology, Chulalongkorn
University
254 Phyathai Road, Patumwan, Bangkok
10330 THAILAND

t. +662 218 5237

f. +662-215-4804

e. somsakp@sc.chula.ac.th

Dr. Guido Pastorino

Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales
Avda. Angel Gallardo 470 3er piso lab. 57,
C1405DJR Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA

t. +54-11-4982 6670

f. +54-11-4982 4494

e. rvpastor@criba.edu.ar

The Future of Your Newsletter!!

Dear Member,

This is the important page.

Your feedback, and financial considerations, will determine what you read on these pages.

1. In future, the newsletter will be distributed primarily by e-mail, with paper distribution on request, and to our affiliated organisations. Each issue will be distributed as a PDF attachment by e-mail to individual members, made publicly available on the UNITAS website, and announced to the major malacology list-servers (CONCH-L and MOLLUSCA). This means: **if you want to get the Spring issue of UMN in the mail, please tell me**. We will distribute by e-mail if we have your address are happy to serve your preference.

2. An electronic newsletter may be published more frequently. Starting with this issue, the newsletter may be published on a quarterly basis: Autumn (September), Winter (December), Spring (March) and summer (June). This is also (obviously) dependent on submissions. Or you may read a lot about the National Museum of Ireland!

3. **Questions:** *Would you like to see in upcoming issues . . .*

Natural history articles	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Book reviews	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Open queries (e.g. identification of shells)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Interesting mollusc facts	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Literature summaries (e.g. annual review of major papers)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Personal notices (births, marriages, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Professional announcements (grants and awards, meetings and conferences)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Announcements of dissertations and theses	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Anecdotal accounts from field work	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Art (drawings, illustrations, or cartoons)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Other (what you would like to see, or particularly would like to see omitted or removed): specify:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

I hope that all members have observed recent political examples of the importance of active democracy. Please take that lesson to heart, and send your responses to these questions either by post or e-mail:

Julia Sigwart
National Museum of Ireland
Natural History Division
Merrion Street
Dublin 2
Ireland

<julia.sigwart@ucd.ie>

Go raibh maith agat Merci Danke Siyabonga Dankie Gracias Grazie Khop khun
Thank you!