



Conchology

Guido T. Poppe & Philippe Poppe - Since 1994

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NEWSLETTER: 12 FEBRUARY 2025 - MACTAN ISLAND

Since our latest newsletter there were not many particular happenings in our daily life in Conchology, Inc. It was rather the "boulot-dodo style" as the French call it, but with luck, the essential difference that we enjoy the pleasure of handling many shells, with occasional nice encounters with passing conchologists.

The year started with the classic Sinulog which was as usual: 3 million people gathering on that particular day, with all hotels fully booked, the airport becoming like a busy beehive with plane after plane landing and leaving.

Every evening I make a half an hour walk with Sheila in the safety of our condominium area, in the center of Mactan Island. Lately, there was an explosion of *Achatina fulica* in the early evening after a short rain. Above only a few of the youngsters, but there were at least 50 animals crawling around in total. It is amazing to see how wildlife adapts to areas which are fully build. On Mactan Island there is hardly any grass left, Cebu city and Mactan are basically one mass of concrete with over 3 million people living in all kinds of environments: most survive in one room "houses", but then all classes mix in - and the other hand of the spectrum are huge ten bedroom villa's with 25 meter pools and all the luxury that modern times can offer. About 60 skyscrapers appeared in the last 2 decades, one third of these on Mactan Island. The price of the last parcels of ground for sale varies between 700 and 1000 dollars for one square meter in this little Island.

Wildlife changed but did not disappear. Just three days ago, I saw a one meter young varan at less than 30 meters from our house making an evening walk through the gardens. He was even not afraid to see us... and this morning there were two big lizards and a frog on the border of one of my two koi-ponds. The frog even jumped in the water... and I could not spot him any longer after that. Many species of birds

adapted to the new environment also. Snakes are a pest, even in such a closely build environment, and once or twice a year we see huge snakes caught and killed by the locals. We also see them crossing the streets in the early night. And seldom, people got bitten on this island. It was the case of Julie Tabornal one evening when going home, a huge python tasted her heel. Fortunately, after shaking strongly and and with the help of a friend, the snake could be removed and chased.

In our starting years in Mactan - when the Island was still half green - Philippe and me rented a villa with a huge garden. We kept some classic animals: amazing birds and a few local monkeys. So, people brought us what they caught on the Island and once they arrived with a living king cobra. They put this dangerous beast in a 25 liter empty water jar, and that was half full just with the body of this enormous snake...

Since then, I never venture barefoot in grass I don't know in our beloved Island. As apparently everything survives here....

GOOD NEWS FROM THE MNHN, PARIS



Left: Philippe Bouchet with his Tateid field party in New Caledonia... one of his many recent exploits.

Philippe Bouchet send us as best wishes for 2025 a report on the highlights of the achievements of him and his extensive network of co-workers during the 2023-24 period. Here a few of these.

During his Koumac expeditions, Philippe and his group could generate much motivation amongst a group of New Caledonian seaslug lovers. So, he organised a first "Fortnight of the Seaslugs" in Noumea, in September 2022, repeated in June 2023. Half a year later one more "quinzaine". A total of 1709 seaslug species have been documented in this way in the waters of New Caledonia.

Another exploit were field parties to unrafle Tateid biodiversity in New Caledonia.

But all landsnails from New Caledonia are also targeted. It is estimated that the new explorations increase the 180 endemic known species to as much as 1000, 800 of these are still undescribed.

After New Caledonia, Philippe went with his people exploring once more the region of Guadeloupe. They spend 2 weeks each on the following Island(s): Les Saintes, Marie-Galante and La Désirade. Which meant they had to set up three times the lab...

They collected in this lapse of time probably between 800 and 1000 molluscan species.

Many other activities crossed between the exploring trips and in June 2023 an Olivoidea workshop was organised in the MNHN. Involving Yuri Kantor, Fred Vervaeet, Giorgio Strano...

PHILIPPE BOUCHET KNIGHTED AND PIERRE LOZOUET BECAME CHEVALIER

On 17 September 2024 Philippe Bouchet was made a Chevalier in the national order of the Legion of Honor, and on 26 November 2024 Pierre Lozouet became Chevalier in the order of the Palmes Académiques.

His newsletter Philippe ends with an impressive overview of recent descriptions in 2023 and 2024. He highlights our Vol. I on the COLLONIIDAE with 103 new species, Boyer (2023) with 27 new *Cystiscus*, Monsecour & Monsecour (2024) with 15 new Columbellids of south Madagascar and Herbert (2024) with 30 new Vetigastropods, also from Walters Shoal (southern Madagascar).

Zoosystema (2023) published on shallow water Rissoids from French Polynesia mainly, by Amati, Di Giulio & Oliverio M. Faber described 20 Indo Pacific Rissoinids and Zebinids in *Vita Malacologica*. Kantor, Bouchet, Fedosov, Puillandre and Zaharius revised the recent TURRIDAE.

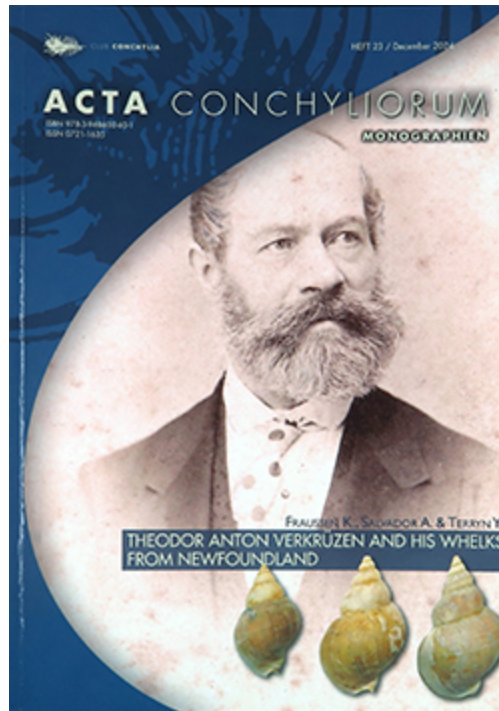
Cossmanniana (2023) brought also a high number of interesting articles from about a dozen authors. One more interesting than another, but for collectors, I think the revision of deep water *Conus* from New Caledonia by Tenorio & Puillandre is the most interesting one.

NEW JOURNALS ARRIVING IN CONCHOLOGY, INC.

The last couple of weeks were all at once very rich in journals arriving. Usually it is painful to get all together from the many journals we paid for and we are supposed to receive... irregular postage has become something common in the last years, worldwide.... But this time things go more than satisfying.



The Festivus 56(4) with lots of Club News from the San Diego Shell Club and others. And peer reviewed articles on fossil cowries, a detailed article on growth affairs in Olives, very technical... Notes on the diet and growth in *Pteropurpura macroptera*. A new species of a fossil allied cowry from Java. Rediscovery of *Murex asperrimus*. The discovery of living *Marginella namaqua* in South Africa. And many photos on an active club life.



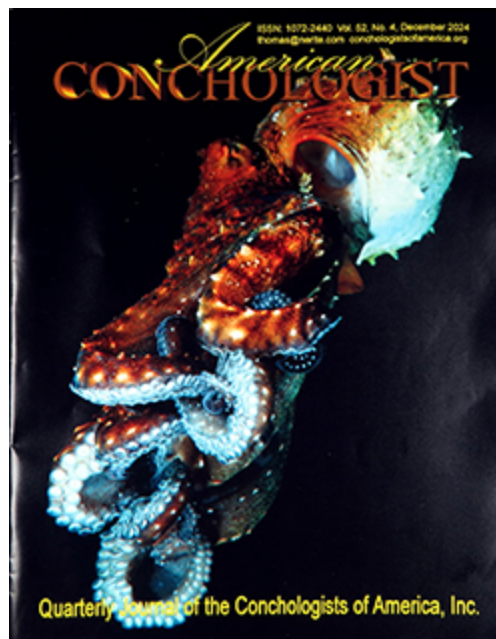
This Acta Conchyliorum from our friends Fraussen & Terry and Salvador A., is more like a book than a number of a journal. It documents in extenso Theodor Anton Verkrüzen and his whelks from Newfoundland. Interesting.



Fehse, Grego, Manousis and Dieste go into the details of *Trivia arctica* and the question if it lives in the Mediterranean. A beautiful monograph with amazing photos.



Is the journal of The Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland. As usual, and very British in concept, this number is an ensemble of a big number of interesting details on Conchology in Brittany and elsewhere. Makes happy and satisfactory reading.



American Conchologist, the quarterly Journal of Conchologists of America, Vol. 52 nr. 4. A lot of interesting topics, like a visit to Shanghai Shell show, the search for an octopus by Charles Rawlings and many other topics. One touchy thing: nice memoriam with photos of Christa Hemmen, Alistair Moncur and John Wolff. I my life I spend quite some time on shell shows with Christa and Alistair, the latter we even traveled together when very very young. John was a big help in many of my articles....



The Bulletin of Malacology, Taiwan. A very interesting number by our Taiwanese friends, much guided by Shih-I Huang. If you love MITRIDAE and Trochids, this number is a MUST HAVE. Many new species and masterly photographic work.

AUCTION RESULTS

Four weeks ago, we started a new system of two auctions a week. One auction concerns 100 shells all starting at 1 euro each. It concerns very nice specimen, carefully chosen out of many. The second auction has 24 shells, starting at very moderate prices, and it here concerns very special shells, much desired, often extremely rare, either because of their special features, or because genuine rarity in collections.

The system was well received by the conchological community, so we continue with enthusiasm exploring in order to find the finest specimens possible for you all. In the meantime, our typical listings where one can buy at fixed prices stay online.

We there have 128000+ specimens that are constantly filled in with new material. A grand playing ground for collectors.

From our latest auctions, we noticed the following three remarkable shells:



Inabanga mappa from 80 mm.

This fabulous *mappa* was caught near Inabanga, on one of the multiple reefs from that difficult to navigate shallow region. I dived in the area, but slightly more to the the northwest, several hundred times, as at 25 meters deep I found some sandflats that were real eldorado spots for shell lovers. The diversity was just unbelievable and even I returned month after month, no two dives were the same. The dorsal line in this *mappa* is of unbelievable beauty: like a river that splits continuously. The shape is perfect, the background pattern of small brown lines so regular...

We were lucky to purchase a few months ago the personal collection of *mappa*, *tigris*, *talpa*, *Conus litteratus* and *leopardus* of a shell supplier. He stocked the best in these 4 species for several years and released all for a golden price to our company. I could not refuse, and the result is the amelioration of our photo database with many once in a lifetime pieces in these shells and the amelioration of the collections of our customers....

This amazing *mappa* found it's place, through 12 bids, in an advanced German collection at the auction price of 515 euro.



Cymbiola imperialis

This *imperialis* measured 241 mm, which is nice and big for the species. Combined with a very wide aperture and a fabulous color, with upstanding huge spines near the end of the aperture. From Zamboanga. It went for 501 euros, through 10 bids and was won by an American collector.



Hexaplex trunculus

From southern Spain, Malaga. This well sized *trunculus* measured not less than 91.4 mm. This masterpiece combines beauty, size and nice shape. The three together are very rare in this species. The pattern consists of well contrasted dark and pale bands. In the aperture a soft orange-pinkish glaze. With operculum. This *trunculus* got 16 bids and reached 325 euro, which is possibly a record for the species. Well deserved. It went to an American collection.

THIS NEXT WEEKEND PRESTIGE AUCTION



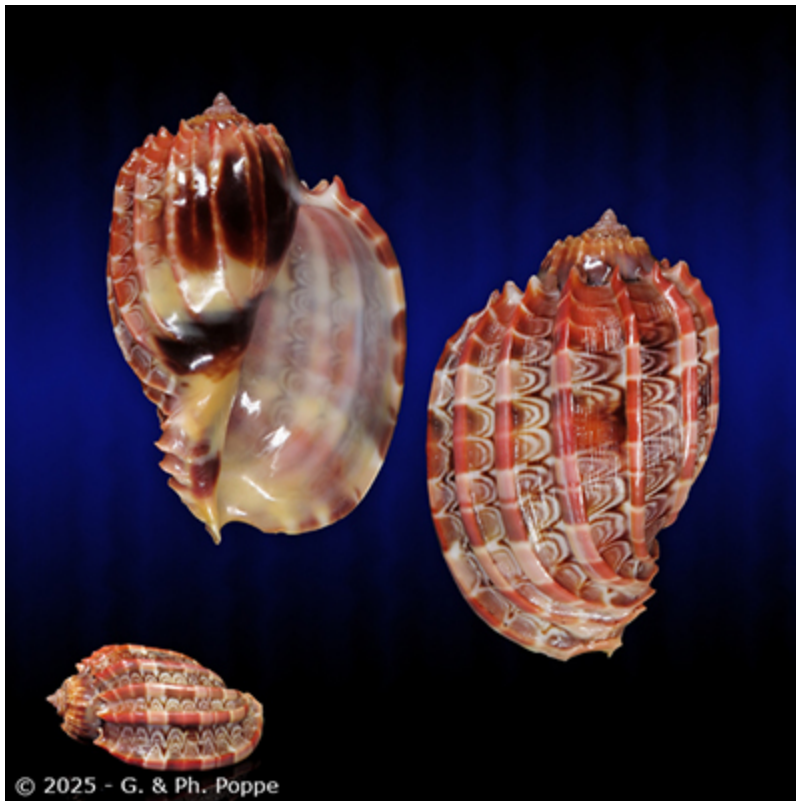
This 77 mm black beauty is a tiger cowry that has been found in the Inabanga region of Bohol. It is an extremely rare form, 97 % black, and they seldom come better than this one. Only one as such every so many years....



The form regenfussi in the Strategoconus generalis.

What we have here is an extraordinary *generalis*, with features rarely seen in the species. The background color is snowy white but overlaid by two bands of a warm orange brown. Three white bands remain visible: on the spire, mid-whorl and near the siphonal canal. These are decorated with an intricate pattern of zigzag lines. These zigzag lines start on the top whorls, go over the shoulder and drip-off with streaks in the upper part of the orange brown. They form zigzags mid whorl, and they melt down together in a very dark siphonal canal at the bottom, the end of the shell. The spire and general shape of this *generalis* are beautiful and elegant. A piece with many superior qualities and rare as such.

The species lives from east Africa all the way to Japan and Australia. Also found on the Solomons and even New Caledonia. This specimen is from Indonesia. There are very few Indonesian *generalis* in collections worldwide.



This is a superb *Harpa cabriti* from Madagascar, the very searched after dwarf form in great beauty of 58 mm. Unfortunately, we never got many of that particularly beautiful Harp.

We wish you great bidding on the currently running regular auction <https://auction.conchology.be/> and the next prestige auctions. A great shopping on our lists and we wish you also much pleasure and blessings that may come over you as a shell lover!

Sincerely Yours,

Guido T. Poppe
For Conchology, Inc.

You can contact us: philippe@conchology.be
guido@conchology.be
sheila@conchology.be

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