



# The Epitonium

## Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show

Reminder: The SSSSS is scheduled for **October 13 and 14, 2023** at the Doris Williams Civic Center, 333 Hwy 332 East, Lake Jackson, TX. Recognize any of these youngsters having fun at the 2001 Shell Show? Come join this year's fun!

## President's Message

From Dave Green

**Go and Enjoy the SSS Shell Show**

**No meeting in October, see you in November**

Dave

*(Editor: Can you believe it?! Dave ran out of words!! LOL)*



**President:**  
David Green

**Vice President:**  
Tina Pettway

**Treasurer:**  
Angie Haneiko

**Recording Secretary:**  
Rusti Stover

**Corresponding Secretary:**  
Jerry Clampit

Visit HCS online at  
[www.houstonshellclub.com](http://www.houstonshellclub.com)

### CALENDAR

10/12/23	SSS Shell Show
11/19/23	HCS Meeting
12/10/23	HCS Christmas Party
1/21/24	HCS Meeting
2/18/24	HCS Meeting
3/2/24	HCS Auction
4/21/24	HCS Meeting
5/1/24	HCS Banquet

### 2024 COA Convention

Start making your plans to attend the Conchologists of America convention at the Hilton Melbourne in Melbourne, FL. Field trips will be **June 11**; programs will be **June 12-14**, and **THE BOURSE** will be **June 15-16**.

## September Minutes

Submitted by Rusti Stover

President Dave Green called the Houston Conchology Society meeting to order at 2:05 PM on Sunday, September 7, 2023. Dave opened by saying according to our revised bylaws, the club is required to have one Annual Business Meeting each Meetings season, and this would be it. Dave mentioned the August Board Meeting of the club officers, and stated they had discussed many great topics and ideas for the club. He also thanked the club members for turning out in large numbers at the August Shell auction in San Antonio, to help support another of our Texas clubs. Dave also mentioned the passing of our club member John Haneiko.

A motion was made by Jerry Clampit and seconded by Tina Petway to approve the minutes from April 2023 as published in the newsletter. All approved, motion passed. Treasurer Angie Haneiko gave the Treasurer’s Report. Jerry Clampit also explained some of the club expenses for each year include our electronic media for our website and newsletter, and our storage room, besides possible grants and other smaller expenses.

Under reports by officers, Membership Chair Lucy Clampit mentioned there are just a few outstanding membership dues. VP/ Program Chair Tina Petway was asked for a rundown of upcoming programs. Dave Green had a printed list so he enumerated, also saying that there will be no meeting in October, because it would fall on the same weekend as the Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show in Lake Jackson. He encouraged all members to attend and/or exhibit at the show. Dave also mentioned that Mary Harris has agreed to host the Christmas Party at her house on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>. The club provides meat for the party and more details will be forthcoming.

Under Old Business, none was forthcoming. Under New Business, Tina Petway asked that the T.E. Pulley Award, to be given at the October Shell Show in Lake Jackson, which had been named in her honor this year, be changed to honor our recently deceased club member John Haneiko. Angela Doucette made the motion, Cathy Betley seconded, all approved, motion passed.

President Dave Green had a box of the new business cards with a larger club logo, designed by Les Crnkovic. The cards have two QR codes on the back for our website and Facebook page. They will be on a table at the October shell show, and he encouraged members to also take a few for distribution. **Continued on page 3**

Lucy Clampit also showed off some printed larger QR codes for our website, and asked if there was somewhere at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, in conjunction with the Shell exhibits at the museum, that they could be displayed. Tina Petway said she would look into it.

Cathy Betley, this year's chairperson for the Museum Holiday Tree, made a motion to ask for 300 dollars in funds for decorations, and also stated this would be the last year she would be chairing the tree project. Jerry Clampit seconded, all approved, motion passed.

Jerry Clampit mentioned that the Jacksonville, Florida shell club website has many wonderful articles for programs. Steven Coker mentioned that COA is managing the website now.

Wanda Coker spoke briefly about the upcoming Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show in Lake Jackson. Setup is on Thursday morning, October 12<sup>th</sup>, and the show is Friday and Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Wanda mentioned this year's show is going to be a little smaller, and an all-Texas show.

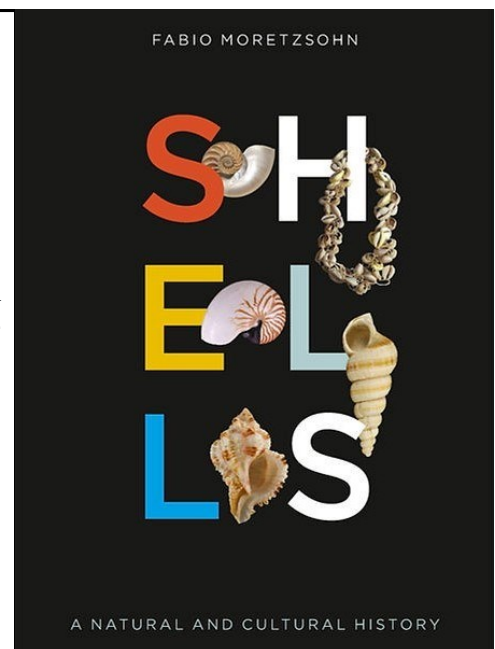
Before adjourning the meeting for the program about this year's COA convention in Wilmington, NC, given by Lucy Clampit, Dave Green mentioned the excellent article in our September newsletter, by members Paula and Greg Rutledge, about their long road trip to the convention, and encouraged all to read it if they have not already.

With no other business forthcoming, Mary Harris made a motion to close the meeting, Les Crnkovic seconded, all approved, and President Dave Green adjourned at 2:45 PM.

## Shells, a New Book by Fabio Moretzsohn

Published posthumously, "Shells" delivers great and current information on shells and the animals that make them. The 176-page volume would have been released three years after the untimely passing of my friend and colleague Dr Fabio Moretzsohn in early 2020. Fabio was an Assistant Professor at Texas AM in Corpus Christi, Texas. There is a wealth of data in his book on intriguing aspects of the biology and ecology of mollusks, and thorough coverage of little-known information on cultural and spiritual practices involving shells. The book is well-documented, with cross-references to recent scientific and general works on the subject.

Fabio's narrative flows impeccably, and readers will enjoy his easy style even when explaining more involved aspects of the animals' natural history. Smithsonian's Emeritus Research Zoologist Dr M.G. "Jerry" Harasewych helped edit the manuscript and prepare it for publication after Fabio's death. Jerry also contributed the two last chapters, including "Shells in a Changing World," another cautionary, well-documented briefing about the severe alterations inflicted by humans to the natural environment and how mollusks are being affected by these changes. This book is a must-have in the library of any shell enthusiast. Fabio's widow and his daughters will receive royalties from the sales of the book, which will be released on September 11, 2023 through Amazon and other sellers.





Dr Fabio Moretzsohn

**Editor's notes:** Review written by Dr. Jose Leal and included in the "Curator's Corner" in the August National Shell Museum newsletter. Used with permission of the author.

Fabio was a valuable asset to Texas Malacology and Conchology. He was one of the authors of *The Encyclopedia of Texas Shells*. He visited the Houston Museum of Natural Science frequently to photograph and research the shell collection. He was a great help reviewing the accuracy of texts for the new Strake Hall of Malacology. It's wonderful to see that the book he started has finally been published. (It is available on Amazon.)

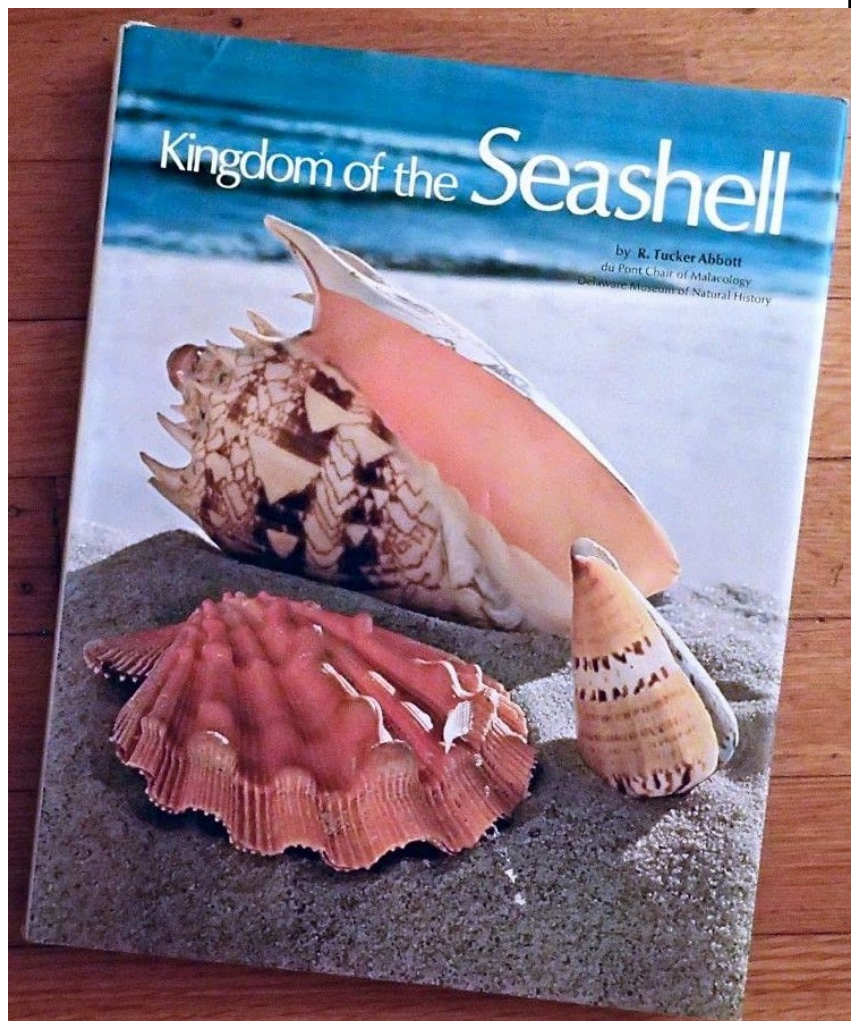
## *Kingdom of the Seashell*

By Lucy Clampit

The editor cut her shell collecting teeth with this classic book written by the great R. Tucker Abbott and published in 1972 – about the time she started collecting shells. It is not an identification book but a comprehensive survey of all things seashell.

From the book jacket: "It delves into all of the shells' intriguing facets – from their biology and their influence upon art, medicine, religion, archeology and commerce to the practical aspects of shellfisheries and to the rewarding aspects of shell collecting." (Used copies are available on Amazon. Photo from Amazon)

In my opinion, Fabio Moretzsohn's new book *Shells – A Natural and Cultural History* might be the new *Kingdom of the Seashell*. It covers many of the same fascinating topics. I just received my copy, and I'm looking forward to reading it!

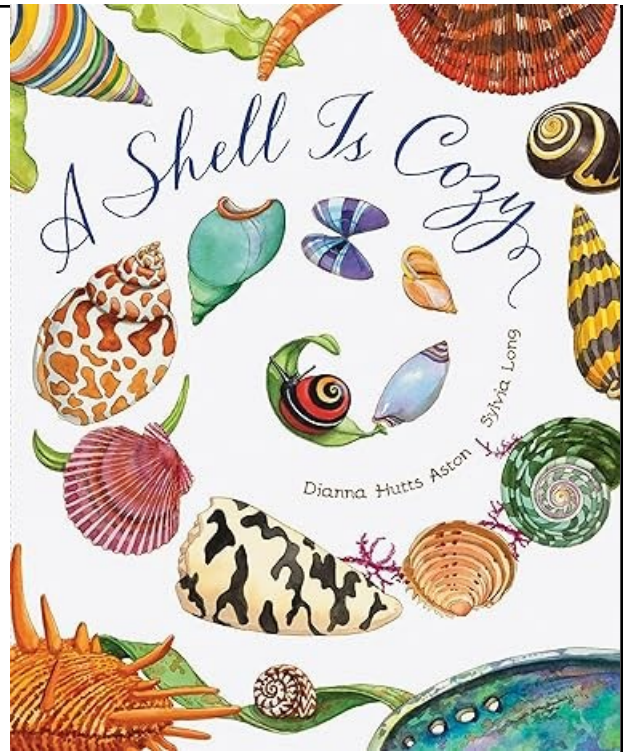


# Book Review for *A Shell is Cozy*

By Tina Petway

Finally, a new book about shells for children has been published. Written by the multi-Award-winning author, Dianna Hutts Aston, this newest children's book will bring smiles to any youngster or friend lucky enough to have it. Dianna's books have been published in many other languages around the world and this newest one is truly stunning. *A Shell Is Cozy* is a beautiful introduction to mollusk shells of all kinds using Dianna's own magical way of telling a story. The beautiful illustrations by Sylvia Long enables the viewer to visually experience the world of shells as no other book has done.

This book is available in the Houston Museum's Gift Shop as well as their on-line gift shop. Dianna will be at the Museum in the Spring of 2024 to inspire us all with a Book Reading and Signing event. I will make sure that advance notice of the date is given as the event draws closer. I highly recommend this wonderful book to any and all whether young or adult. Enjoy!!!



(Editor: Our own Tina Petway was a consultant for the book. Photos from Amazon)

## Boone/McHenry Grand Winner

I would like to introduce Kelley Savage who was awarded the Connie Boone/Dr. John McHenry Grant. Her qualifications are outstanding. Her credentials and research concerning the Conservation and Reconstruction of Oyster Reef systems at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi have made her selection for this Grant an easy one for me. As her research progresses, she has promised to keep us informed of her findings and successes and it is my pleasure to present her to you, the sponsors of this prestigious Grant.

Tina Petway (Associate Curator of Malacology and Marine Invertebrates Houston Museum of Natural Science)



*(Editor: Thank you note below and pictures are from Ms. Savage)*

Dear Tina,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to express my gratitude for being selected as a recipient of the C. Boone/Dr. McHenry Grant for 2023 and to officially accept the grant award. I'm excited to be recognized for our work on oyster reef carbon sequestration and to have the opportunity to make a positive impact on oyster reefs. With the acceptance of the grant, I wanted to discuss the next steps and how to proceed with the award.

I have attached photos of me with an oyster reef core in the field, a photo cutting open the core, and a photo of about 200 out of 5,000 sediment subsamples. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need any other information or photos from the project.

Sincerely, Thank you once again!

Kelley

## Product Report: Beachcomber Mac Wagon

By Lisa Alderman

I really like going to Sea Rim State Park and am not comfortable driving on the beach. If you've been there, you know that once you start down the beach, you're a long way away from anything. I tend to walk 6+ miles when I'm there which takes several hours. Trying to determine what I might need and how to easily carry it, while weighing as little as possible, is difficult. After a recent trip where my bucket ended up weighing over 11 lbs. and I was very thirsty by the time I made it back to my vehicle (four hours later), I needed to determine a way to bring more along with me.



The solution is the Beachcomber Mac Wagon! It's heavy duty (holds up to 150lbs! That's a lot of shells!), Collapsible (easy to transport in my SUV) and all terrain with its fat tires. Now I can bring along several buckets, extra water, an umbrella, bug spray, sunscreen, hat and snacks! It's light weight, maneuvers well in the sand and has an adjustable length handle. It's easy to unfold/collapse and has a storage cover for the collapsed canvas wagon. It does not stand up though when collapsed, so I have to use something to keep it upright in the garage. Oh, I almost forgot, it has two cup holders on the front.

## 2024 HCS Auction

The Auction is scheduled for **March 2, 2024**. Please mark your calendars. The Auction Committee is already hard at work, so start saving your money. Here is an item to whet your appetite – a **large** *Lyropecten subnodosus*.



## Texas Pearl Rush?!

By Lucy Clampit

Several days ago, while I was perfecting my procrastination skills and scrolling through Facebook, an interesting article appeared on my FB feed. Did you know that in 1909 there were rumors in Shreveport, Louisiana that a person could become rich by finding giant pearls in the mussels growing in Caddo Lake? Caddo is the only natural lake in Texas and is located in northeast Texas. and northwest Louisiana.

In 1916 an article that appeared in the *Indianapolis News* claimed that there were millions of dollars' worth of high-quality pearls to be found in the lake. They were reported to be of all colors – white, pink, yellow and gold – and all sizes. Needless-to-say, people from all walks of life, both honest and dishonest, descended on the lake. Shanties and tents were set up on the banks. More than \$100,000 worth of pearls were collected in 1912 alone. That is more than \$3,000,000 worth today!

A sort of pearl madness had swept across the country during the 1800s. By the end of that century, there had been pearl rushes in New Jersey and Florida, and along the Mississippi, Ohio and Arkansas Rivers. So, Texas was a little late with its “great pearl rush.”

A few entrepreneurs had started using the discarded shells to make pearl buttons. Unfortunately, the Caddo mussel shells were too thin to make durable buttons. (The National Pearl Button Museum in Muscatine, Iowa is well worth a visit.)

The Texas rush ended when oil was discovered below Caddo Lake during the 1900s. The lake was dammed at Mooringsport, Louisiana in 1914 to raise the water level to accommodate oil drilling equipment, so the shells could no longer be easily reached.

If you would like to explore the area, there are tours out of Uncertain, Texas. Captain Danny Sullivan of Mudport Backwater Tours loves to tell tourists about the “pearl rush.”

The original article was written by Jaelyn Tripp for KTALnews.com a TV station in Shreveport.

If you would like to read more about the “Texas pearl rush” here is the link to the article:

<https://www.ktalnews.com/dont-miss/caddo-lake-once-held-millions-of-dollars-in-pearls-heres-what-happened/>. (Used with the permission of the TV station.)

Some information is from the book *Freshwater Mussels of Texas*.

Next month, I will bore you with more information about Texas pearls. Stay tuned.

## Beautiful Shell Art

(This was posted on Facebook by JP Barbier in July. Used with his permission.)

“A very rare work of ancient art over a century old on a *nautilus macromphalus*, sculpted by a convict from the infamous prison of New Caledonia (1864 - 1924). Size of 130mm. There are still very few specimens left in private or museum collections.”

Pictures on the next page.





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Permission is granted for reprinting articles, provided credit is given to *The Epitonium*, the writer, and the Houston Conchology Society and a copy of the reprint is sent to the editor of the newsletter.

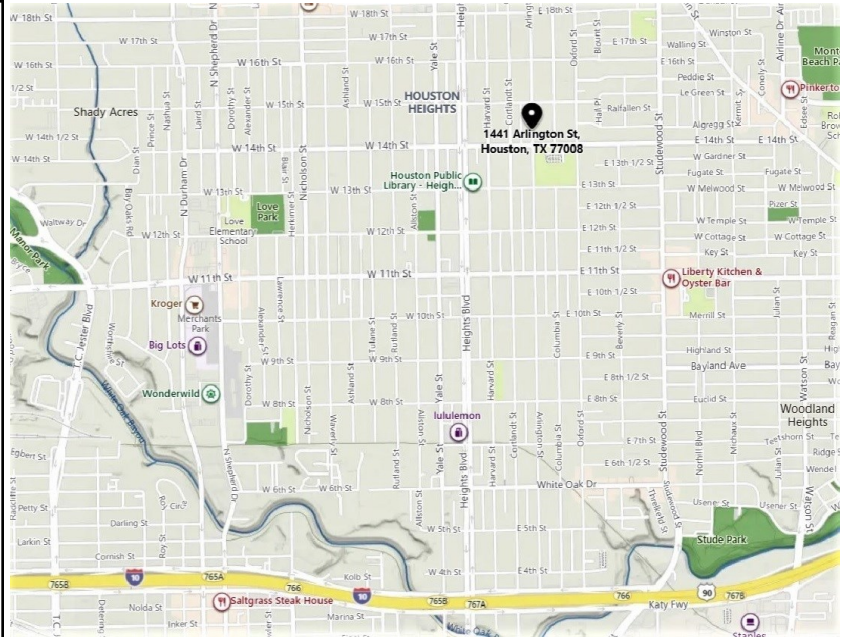
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The Society holds regular meetings on the third Sunday of September, October, November, January, February and April. There are seasonal events and a yearly shell auction scheduled in the other months.

**VISITORS WELCOME!!!**

Membership year extends from June 1 through May 31.  
Annual membership dues: Family \$20; Single \$15; Junior (under 18) \$6.

Make checks payable to Houston Conchology Society and send to HCS Treasurer, 11407 Blackhawk Blvd., Houston, TX 77089.



**Immanuel Lutheran Church**

**306 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street**

**HOUSTON CONCHOLOGY SOCIETY**

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