



# The Epitonium

## President' Message



by Darwin Alder

We would like to thank Mr. Max Anton for a fabulous program to kick off the New Year.

We invite you to come and hear Lucy Clampit's fantastic program about Strombidae on Tuesday, February 17, 2009, at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Social time and refreshments begin at 7:00 pm, and the meeting begins at 7:30.

The annual Auction is Saturday, March 14. Please tell your friends and neighbors and plan to attend this magnificent, yearly event.

Our end of the year banquet is scheduled for May 16, 2009 at the Monument Inn near the Lynchburg Ferry and the San Jacinto Monument. Mary and Dennis Harris have tickets available for \$15.00 each. Last year was a fabulous event and we hope to continue the tradition.

The Texas Jamboree is in Corpus Christi in May, and the COA convention is in Clearwater Beach in July. These will be great celebrations worth attending.

Thanks to all for making the club such a success!

## February Program



"Where Have All the Strombus Gone?: Update of Strombs from the Americas" is the title of the PowerPoint program that Lucy Clampit will be presenting at the February meeting. During the past few years, many of the genus names in the family Strombidae have changed. Lucy will bring us up to date on the changes to species that are found on both coasts of the Americas. Come and enjoy some of her pretty and unusual shells as well as pictures of the live animals and their cute little eyes.

## 2009 Auction

Mark your calendars for the annual auction on Saturday, March 14 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in the Heights area. The auction committee is busy organizing another great event. A few auction items are pictured in this newsletter. The March newsletter will contain more pictures, a list of oral auction items and a map. The first silent auction will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will be followed by the first oral auction at 11:00. Invite your friends and family to attend. It is always a fun occasion!

The committee is still accepting donations. Please bring them to the February meeting or contact Lucy Clampit at: [lclampit@comcast.net](mailto:lclampit@comcast.net) or 713-468-0610.

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

## CALENDAR

2/17	HCS Meeting
3/14	HCS Auction
4/21	HCS Meeting
5/1-3	Texas Jamboree
5/16	HCS Banquet
7/19-23	COA Convention



Auction Item

## January Minutes

Submitted by Rusti Stover

The January 20, 2009, meeting of the Houston Conchology Society, held at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, began at 7:30 pm with a great program given by our youngest member Max Anton. Max showed a slide presentation titled "The Land Snails of Israel: A Study in Biblical History & Malacology". Max talked about his travels and enthralled a huge crowd of visitors (almost 50 guests and members!) with many land snail specimens he gathered on the December trip to Israel with his family.

The regular meeting followed the special program. President Darwin Alder called the meeting to order at 8:20 pm. Tina Petway made a motion and Mary Harris seconded to approve the minutes from the November 2008 meeting. All approved, motion passed.

Treasurer Mary Harris reported we have a balance of \$9,601.32 after an outflow expense of \$300.00 for the Museum Christmas Tree.

Under Old Business, Darwin reported that Frank Petway will chair the Nominating Committee and Dave Barziza will help. Harr p will be contacted for additional help if needed. Darwin reported all officers from this past year agreed to serve for one more year, except for Program Chairperson Leslie Crnkovic, who cannot due to his college classes. So one position needs filled. If a new program chairperson cannot be obtained, thoughts are to have a Program Committee instead.

The Annual Banquet is set for Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at the Monument Inn, as everyone enjoyed that location last year. Tickets will be \$15.00 apiece.

The Annual COA convention will be held in Clearwater Beach, Florida this year. Information will be in the new COA Bulletin. Rusti Stover and Janey Nill will be driving to Corpus Christi on Tuesday January 27<sup>th</sup> to find out information on the upcoming Texas Sheller's Jamboree, and Rusti will be giving a program for the Coastal Bend Shell Club meeting. Rusti will report on the Jamboree in the next newsletter.

February's program will be given by Lucy Clampit.

The Annual Auction will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in the Houston Heights area on Saturday, March 14, 2009.

There being no further business. Mary Harris made a motion to close the meeting, Frank Petway seconded, and president Darwin Alder closed the meeting.

## Mildred Harry

Longtime HCS member Mildred Harry recently passed away at the age of 94. Her late husband Doctor Harold Harry was an authority on oysters and taught at Rice University. After his death, she was instrumental in establishing the club's Harold Harry educational grant. She maintained her HCS membership after she moved to Louisville, KY, so she could be near family. Club members extend their condolences to her family.

## Texas Seashell Jamboree by Rusti Stover

"A Shower of Shells", the Texas Sheller's Jamboree 2009, will be held on Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>, Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup> and conclude with an oral auction on Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, at the Comfort Suites Central hotel in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Friday will be registration, check in, a silent auction plus one program during the day. That evening there will be an appetizer-style buffet welcome party.

Saturday there will be 4 programs during the day, a break for lunch (provided), and several silent auctions. Shell vendors will also be selling their wares. Saturday night will be the banquet, a sit-down dinner, featuring a special guest speaker with an excellent program.

Either Friday or Saturday, not sure yet, there will be something fun and different for all to participate in, something other than a shell show. It is a great new idea the club members thought would be enjoyed by all. More info in upcoming brochure.

Sunday will be the oral auction, and the jamboree concludes at the end of that, around noon.

You might want to call the hotel and reserve a room soon. Rooms also feature a small refrigerator and microwave. A free breakfast is available each day for hotel guests. The rates will be published in the brochure the Coastal Bend Shell Club will be sending out soon. I do not want to quote what I am not sure of. The hotel's Web site is: [http://www.comfortsuites.com/hotel-corpus\\_christi-texas-TX842](http://www.comfortsuites.com/hotel-corpus_christi-texas-TX842).

There will also be T-shirts available for sale.

Corpus Christi is having their Buccaneer Days festival during this weekend also, so that would be an activity for all to see before heading home on Sunday.



## Gulf Coast Beach Trip – January 24, 2009

by Cathy Betley

As a follow-up trip to our excursion on New Year's Day, Darwin, Victoria and I set off again on a cool, overcast day. We started at the south jetty near Quintana Park and worked our way north. There was some indication that we might find an epitonium or two at the jetty beach, but no luck. After a brisk beach walk, we hit the road again and drove through Freeport, across to Buc-Ee's (still open) and headed south toward Surfside. The little store at the traffic light in Surfside (southwest corner) is open but the road straight to the beach seemed a little soft, so we decided to see if we could make it to San Luis Pass inst

It's about 15 miles from the traffic light in Surfside to the Bright Light Store and Bait Shop (not open) at the west side of the San Luis Pass Bridge, and the trip was interesting. It looks like the State of Texas wants to keep the Blue Water Highway open for the residents and possibly the fishermen and tourists, but part of the trip is a detour on to the beach. Starting at the traffic light in Surfside and going two miles north, we saw that the Stallman Park Building seems to be listing to the west. Some energetic volunteers were lining the dune line, or what's left of it, with natural Christmas trees to, hopefully, make more dunes. Most of the dunes from Quintana all the way to High Island have been reclaimed by the gulf waters. At about the 7 mile mark from the traffic light, we were directed on to the beach by a detour sign and drove on m hard sand for about two miles and then we detoured back to what's left of the roadway. Many holes and sections of the road have been patched and there are some places where only one vehicle can pass so the other vehicle has to wait its turn. After another 6 miles on what is left of the roadway, we arrived at Bright Light. Houses on the west side of San Luis Pass seem a little worse for wear, and it also seemed that some of the power is sti not available.

We accessed the beach by a make-shift road and sort-of shelled from the car to see if we could find a good place to stop. Opposite from the beach houses at the west pass, my two Nanook-of-the North bundled-up passengers enjoyed their beach walk. I shelled from the car to see if I could find any other locations to try, but there were mostly just old scallops and oyster shells. We didn't have time to check Treasure Island but the entrance is protected by a security service, so there must be some residents and repair activity in the neighborhood.

We stopped at the east side of San Luis Pass but the b as basically clean of shells. A few fishermen were trying their luck, and the usual teenagers were spinning a few donuts in the sand.

At the beach behind Woody's the gulf waters, at low ti still barely feed the pond. It will be interesting to see, with high tides, what sort of life and activity will exist in the pond later this year. Coastal Creations was open with lots of customers, and the construction of the new apartments or condominiums between the shop and the end of the sea wall was on-going.

After a great lunch at Casey's, we tried the west jetty at the Galveston Channel, but the beach was clean of shells. Some government agency has a huge sand pumping project at the park (large dike with pipe to a dredge barge in the channel), but we could drive along the tide line to the jetty. Either because of the water conditions or the sand project, there was a section of deep sea water along the jetty, so it was almost impossible to see if there were any shells next to the jetty. With all the changed conditions, both man-made and natural, we didn't press our luck with too much beach walking in that area.

Darwin wanted to see the Bolivar area, so we continued east with a ferry ride and went all the way to High Island. More debris has been cleaned up, but it will be many m before the east side looks settled again.

One bar and one little store were open in Crystal Beach, so there were definitely signs of renewed life.

After driving north to Winnie for some gas, our trip back to Houston was smooth and uneventful. Victoria said "For me, it was a perfect English summer day, gray, overcast and bone-chilling. But then, I don't think that there is such a thing as a bad day at the beach . . . unless, of course, you are hit by lightening."

Hopefully, we'll have another report after a slightly warmer trip in February without lightening.

(Editor's note: The February 5 edition of the Houston Chronicle reported that Bolivar's Crenshaw Elementary/Middle School has reopened with less than one third of its pre-Ike enrollment.)

## 2009 Conchologists of America Convention News!

Clearwater, Florida: Suncoast Conchologists, Clearwater, Florida's shell club known for innovating the popular "Shellers' Jamborees," is hosting the 2009 COA Convention—July 19-23, with Pre-Convention Field Trips on July 18.

Holding the COA Convention on a cruise ship has often been suggested, as has a return to a beach location; Suncoast Conchologists is combining the two with the theme **Cruising the Suncoast**...an imaginary cruise aboard the *Silver Alatus*. *Strombus alatus* is the club's signature shell and 2009 is their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And here is our logo...you will be seeing a lot of this in the coming months:



Our home port for this imaginary cruise will be the Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort located on Florida's Gulf coast on 10 acres of white sandy beach. It features 416 staterooms, two beachside pools, and a hot tub, casual dining overlooking the Gulf, or lunch poolside. A large variety of other restaurants, shops and entertainment are located shore side within **easy** walking distance of the Hilton, including the new Beach Walk and Pier 60 where nightly "Sunset Celebrations" are held.

Our special cruise rate is \$159.00 + 12% tax for up to 4 persons per room with a king bed or two doubles. This rate is available 3 days prior to and 3 days after the convention. You can book a stateroom online now through June 22, 2009 at: [www.clearwaterbeachresort.com](http://www.clearwaterbeachresort.com) by **entering the Group Convention ID Code: SHELGS**. Or, by phone, call 1-727-461-3222 or 1-800-753-3954. You **MUST** mention that you are with Conchologists of America. Self-parking is complimentary for one car per room for guests registered at hotel.

Staterooms include a mini-refrigerator, in-room safe, high-speed internet access, 27" cable TV, coffee maker, hair dryer, iron and ironing board. Other amenities at the hotel include: ATM, gift shop and newsstand, exercise room, laundry and valet service and coin laundry. Rentals for beach cabanas, umbrellas, bicycles, scooters, jet kites and parasailing are available.

Five pre-convention field trips are being offered on Saturday morning, July 18: a "Behind The Scenes" tour of the Florida Aquarium, an early morning dive trip into the Gulf, (limited to the first six who sign-up), a trip to Weeki Wachee Springs—"The City of Mermaids," a visit to Tarpon Springs for a boat trip on the Anclote River, shopping, and time to enjoy some local cuisine, and a fossil trip where you will be collecting shells from the Pliocene and Pleistocene periods at a pit south of the Bay area.

Additional shore side excursions are planned for Tuesday afternoon and evening. One is an afternoon dolphin excursion with a stop for beachcombing or snorkeling, or your choice of an evening dinner cruise around Clearwater Harbor aboard the *StarLite Majesty*, or a shallow water wading/shelling trip to take advantage of a -0.5 tide in Tampa Bay.

COA 2009 will feature the Suncoast Silver Spectacular **Show**—here is your chance to show off your marine collectables of all kinds. Of course, you can expect all the other exciting events that go along with every COA Convention. You will be hearing more about everything in the coming months!

We are in need of your tax deductible donations, either in the form of shells and shell-related items or cash contributions that will be used toward the many **necessities** that are a part of every convention. Remember, a portion of the proceeds from each convention is used to support grants and research. Shell donations should be clean with proper data. Please mail your donations to: Katherine Smith, 3227 MacGregor Drive, Palm Harbor, Florida 34684-2347. All donations received prior to June 22, 2009 will be listed in the Convention Passport Program.

If you have not seen our convention CD or our four-color convention brochures, let us know at [COA2009@aol.com](mailto:COA2009@aol.com)!

