



The Epitonium

President's Message

By Dave Green

Here we are in May and we continue to survive and wonder what happens next. The changes in our life styles are unbelievable if you look back over the last few months. I wouldn't say the pandemic has wrecked or destroyed our lives but it has brought significant changes in our daily routines as individuals and families, and a nation. However, we are not alone in this battle. People all over the world are experiencing many of the very same changes and challenges we face here in America, both in our personal and family lives, and our professional lives. As a Human Resources Professional, we started talking about working from home many years ago and no one thought it would work. Today, well over 60 % of our workforce in the United States is working from their homes and corporations are still moving forward and growing. We are living through a pandemic that is changing our lives, the way we work, how we live day to day, and our professional lives like we have never seen before. There is light at the end of the tunnel but we just have to be patient and get to it.

The shell world has been affected just as all other organizations are having to make similar changes in their way of doing things. For the first time in COA history, an annual convention has been cancelled and moved out to the following year. It was the correct decision in so many ways, but we will recover it next year. As you are aware, the 2020 COA convention scheduled for Melbourne in June has

been cancelled and moved out to June of 2021. The COA convention in Galveston has been moved to 2022 and North Carolina to 2023. Several weeks ago, I volunteered to move Galveston to 2022, and the COA Board didn't think too highly of the idea at the time. As time moved forward and conditions with the pandemic continued to get worse, everyone began to think that might be the only alternative. Through some hard work, long hours, and many phone calls, we have been successful in moving all three conventions forward by one year.

Locally, we had to postpone the Texas Shellers Jamboree due to the pandemic, and now we have come up with a plan to combine the Jamboree with the Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show on the same weekend in October. Those who are registered for Jamboree will also have the option of exhibiting in the Shell Show and attending the Jamboree. Call it a two-for-one deal. That would be a first if my memory serves me correctly. With a death toll of over 66,000 and more than a million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States, we can only pray that things will be much improved by October. If not, I can guarantee you that the officers of HCS and the SSS will not hesitate to cancel the events if people are subjected to high risk and possible hospitalization, or worse. We will protect the welfare of our club members and friends at all cost.

In the meantime, please stay safe and continue to monitor the press releases by our local and state officials. Social distancing, wearing masks and washing our hands **Continued Pg 2**

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Corresponding Secretary:
Lucy Clampit
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Visit HCS online at
www.houstonshellclub.com

CALENDAR???

9??/20	HCS Meeting??
9/26/20	HCS Banquet
10/9/20	Jamboree/Shell Show
10??/20	HCS Meeting??
11??/20	HCS Meeting (TBA)
12??/20	HCS Christmas Party
6/17/21	COA in Melbourne, FL
6??/22	COA at Moody Gardens

Continued from Pg 1 saves lives. Let us all do our part in driving this pandemic away so our life styles can return to some type of normalcy, whatever that may be, in the months to come. We are all in this together, as this pandemic is something none of us have ever experienced, and we learn more and more about it every day. Be safe.



No meeting—No minutes in March or April.

HCS Election

The nominating committee (Darwin Alder, Cheryl Hood, and Lucy Clampit) submit the following slate of nominees: President – Dave Green, Vice President – Cheryl Hood, Treasurer Angie Haneiko, Recording Secretary – Rusti Stover, and Corresponding Secretary Lucy Clampit.

We normally vote for new HCS officers at the March meeting. Since that meeting was cancelled, and we will not have another meeting before the end of our 2020-2021 year on My 31, you will receive an email ballot. If you receive a paper newsletter, the ballot is included in this issue of the newsletter. You may write in a candidate if you have his/her permission to do so.

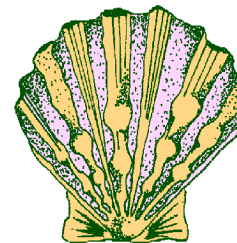
Please email or snail mail your completed ballot to Lucy Clampit by **May 26**. Her address is on the ballot.

Annual Banquet

To celebrate the end of another successful HCS year, we usually have a banquet. Since everything is very uncertain at this time, the banquet has been postponed until Saturday, **September 26** at the Monument Inn. Please mark your calendars.

Jamboree/Shell Show

The Texas Shellers Jamboree has been postponed until the weekend of **October 9-11**. At this time, we are planning to have it at the Lake Jackson Civic Center in conjunction with the Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show. If we are still wearing masks and social distancing, we will cancel and try to reschedule in 2021.



Registration has been closed until a final decision is made this summer. If we decide to proceed with the Jamboree as scheduled, registrations will be accepted again. We will keep you posted, so please check your email.

If the Jamboree is canceled, those who have already registered will receive a refund. If you would like a refund now, please contact Angie Haneiko at: angiehaneiko@att.net or 281-481-5155.

Membership Dues

The HCS membership year ends on **May 31**. A renewal form will be sent to you by email or is included in the paper copy of this issue of the newsletter.

If you receive a paper copy of “The Epitonium”, please include an extra \$5.00 with your membership. Through the years, the price of paper, ink, stamps, etc. has increased considerably. Since most members now read the newsletter on the HCS website, we have not had to increase dues, but it is costing the club money to mail paper copies.

NEWSLETTER TITLE

Inside this cover:
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Newsletter Tips:
 • Add a photo to your newsletter
 • Add a photo to your newsletter
 • Add a photo to your newsletter
 • Add a photo to your newsletter

Newsletter 3-column template for business school or private use.
 Subtitle of main newsletter header as title

Add new article with:
 • Add new article with
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In the fall, we will be printing new membership directories, so please **fill out the entire form** even if your information has not changed. We want to be sure we have accurate information.

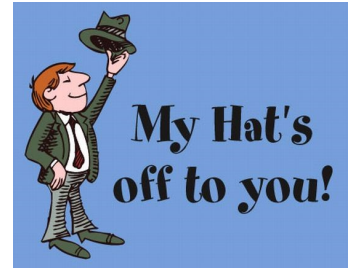
Please send your dues to Treasurer Angie Haneiko **by June 1**. Her address is on the form. It would be nice if she could deposit all of the checks at once.

COA

The 2020 COA convention was scheduled for the middle of June in Melbourne, Florida. The COA Board did not want to endanger anyone’s health, so they canceled the convention, and rescheduled it for the same time period at the same location for 2021. The 2021 convention had been scheduled for Galveston, but it has been postponed until 2022.

Congratulations, Darwin!

In the late 1980s or early 1990s, Darwin picked up a crabbed shell at the Fish Pass Jetty on Mustang Island in Nueces County, TX, and it is now named for him.



Ed Petuch (a professor at Florida Atlantic University) received that shell and other broken Thais from Darwin some time ago. Ed decided that that shell was different and started the process of naming it. In February of this year, Darwin found another specimen on Matagorda Island, and he listed it on his eBay site. Ed saw the shell, bought it, and, along with David Berschauer (from California), named the shell for Darwin! The name *Stramonita alderi* was published in the May issue of “The Festivus” – the journal published by the San Diego Shell Club.



The article about the shell and the picture below are reprinted with the David’s permission.

David would like more specimens of the shell, so he encourages TX shellers go through their collections to see if they have any.

SYSTEMATICS

Class	Gastropoda
Subclass	Orthogastropoda
Superorder	Caenogastropoda
Order	Sorbeoconcha
Infraorder	Neogastropoda
Superfamily	Muricoidea
Family	Muricidae
Subfamily	Rapaninae
Genus	<i>Stramonita</i> , Schumacher, 1817

Stramonita alderi Petuch and Berschauer, new species

(Figure 1A, B)

Description. Shell subfusiform, biconic, with inflated body whorl and high, elevated spire; shoulder sharply-angled, bordered by 10 evenly-spaced, large rounded knobs; subsutural area of shoulder and spire whorls sloping, slightly concave; body whorl heavily sculpted with 24 large raised spiral cords, with 2 largest cords encircling shoulder and around mid-body and bearing 10 proportionally very large rounded knobs; spiral cords intersected by 10 widely-spaced, low, rounded longitudinal varices, with intersections producing small, rounded knobs on larger spiral cords; aperture proportionally very large and flaring; inner edge of labrum with 16 thin, elongated teeth (on holotype); shell base color bright yellow-orange, overlaid with variable amounts of dark blackish-brown longitudinal flammules, primarily on the varices, producing a zebra-type pattern; large rounded knobs at intersections of varices and spiral cords often colored bright orange; early whorls dark chocolate brown; columellar area and entire aperture pale orange, becoming pale yellow-orange along edge of labrum.

Type Material. HOLOTYPE - Length 33.8 mm, width 21.6 mm, Mustang Island, Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas, LACM 3800.

Type Locality. Found dead on an oyster-covered rock at low tide, carried by a hermit crab, Mustang Island Jetty at the mouth of Fish Pass, Mustang Island, Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas.

Distribution. Known only from jetties and rock outcrops along the coastal lagoons and estuaries of Texas. Tunnell *et al.* (2010: at p. 212) states that *S. alderi* prefers “hard substrates; usually rocks or jetties exposed to the ocean at depths of 0-4 m.”

Etymology. Named for Darwin Alder of Houston, Texas, who collected the holotype.

Discussion. This small but distinctive muricid has previously been referred to as “*Stramonita cf. rustica* (Lamarck, 1822)” by Tunnell *et al.* (2010: at p. 212) **Continued on Page 5**

Continued from Page 4 in their book *Encyclopedia of Texas Seashells*. Their photographs were the only known color illustrations of this elusive mollusk and little is known about its range and relative abundance along the Texas coastal lagoon systems. The inclusion of this *Stramonita* species within the Texas malacofauna is also of interest, as *S. rustica* had previously only been known from Florida, the Caribbean Sea, and Brazil (Clench, 1947: at p. 82; Abbott, 1974: at p. 180) and was not considered, classically, to be part of the Texan coastal fauna (a typical specimen of *Stramonita rustica* is shown here on Figure 1E, F for comparison). True *S. rustica* consistently has a pure white aperture, which contrasts greatly with the pale orange aperture seen in *S. alderi* (Figure 1B). The new Texas species also has a much more colorful and ornate shell, being ornamented with stronger and more prominent spiral cords and in having prominent bright

yellow-orange bands containing darker orange knobs. The shell ornamentation of *S. rustica* is much more reduced and less-developed, consisting of low thread-like cords and small, rounded knobs, and it is a much drabber shell, being colored in shades of brown and gray and lacking the bright orange bands and knobs of *S. alderi*. The new Texas species also has finer and more numerous teeth within the aperture than does *S. rustica*, numbering 16 on the holotype as opposed to 8-10 on typical *S. rustica* specimens.

The new Texas muricid is actually morphologically closest to the southeastern Florida endemic, *S. buchecki* Petuch, 2013 (Figure 1C, D), which also has a distinctive orange aperture. This small, previously overlooked, species inhabits coastal lagoons and tidal creeks all along southeastern Florida, from Martin County south to Broward County, and is found in the same type of oyster bed environments that are preferred by *S. alderi*. The Florida endemic differs from its Texan congener in having a less-sloping shoulder and spire whorls, in having a more strongly-stepped and scalariform spire that is ornamented with larger knobs, in having large patches of blue and olive-green on the body whorls, and in lacking the prominent orange bands and knobs. *Stramonita buchecki* also differs from *S. alderi* in having fewer and proportionally larger apertural teeth, averaging only 7-8 on most specimens. Both the Texan *S. alderi* and the Floridian *S. buchecki* occur together on oyster beds with the larger, and more widespread Carolinian Province *S. floridana* (Conrad, 1837). These two Carolinian Province endemics, along with the widespread *S. rustica* and the St. Helena and Ascension Island endemic *S. bicarinata*, form a species radiation of small rapanines that co-exists with, but is different from, the larger *Stramonita* species such as those typified by *S. haemostoma* (Linnaeus, 1767), *S. floridana*, and *S. brasiliensis* Claremont and Reid, 2011. The *S. rustica* complex may eventually prove to be a separate subgenus all to itself.

Editor's note:

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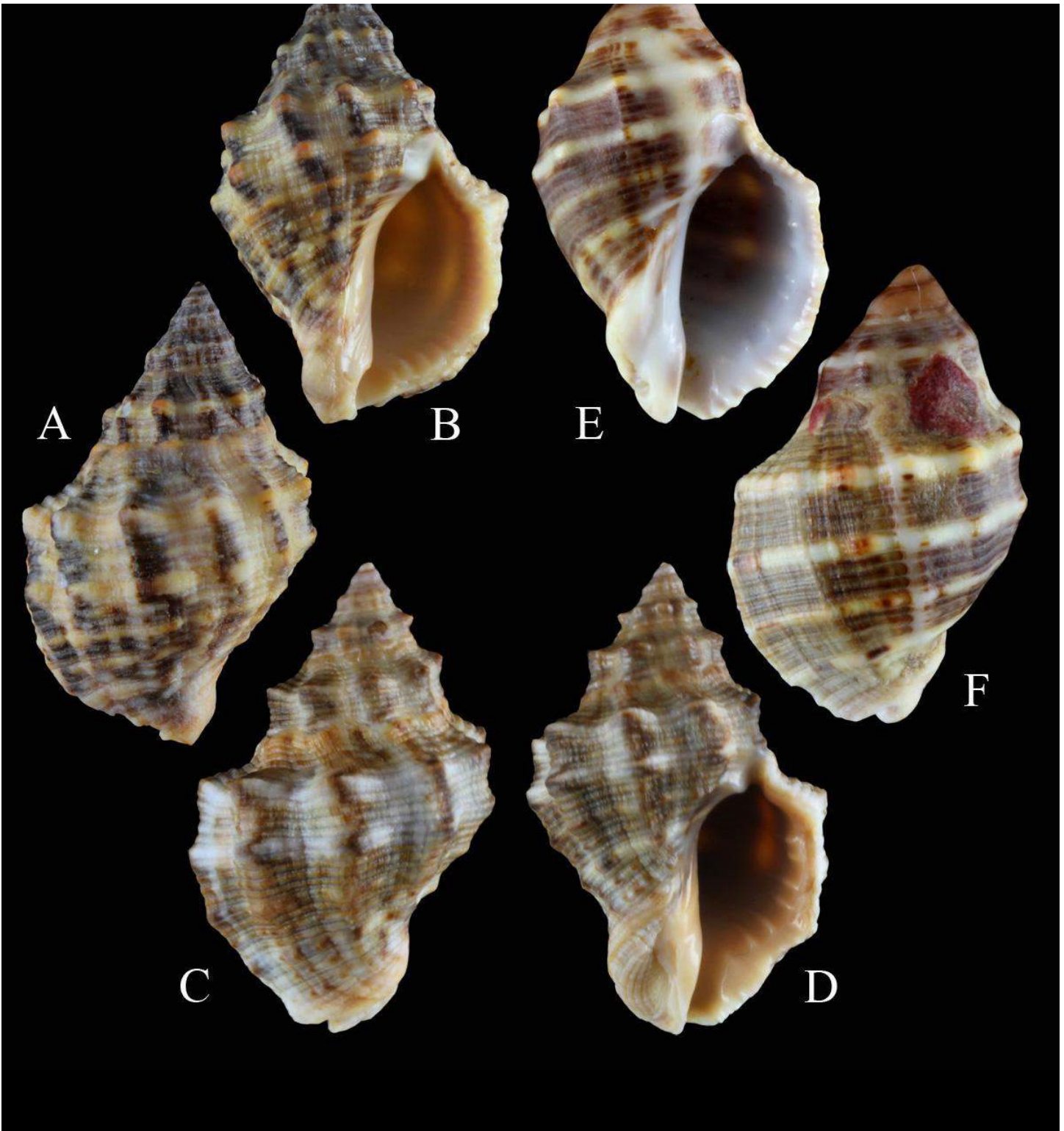
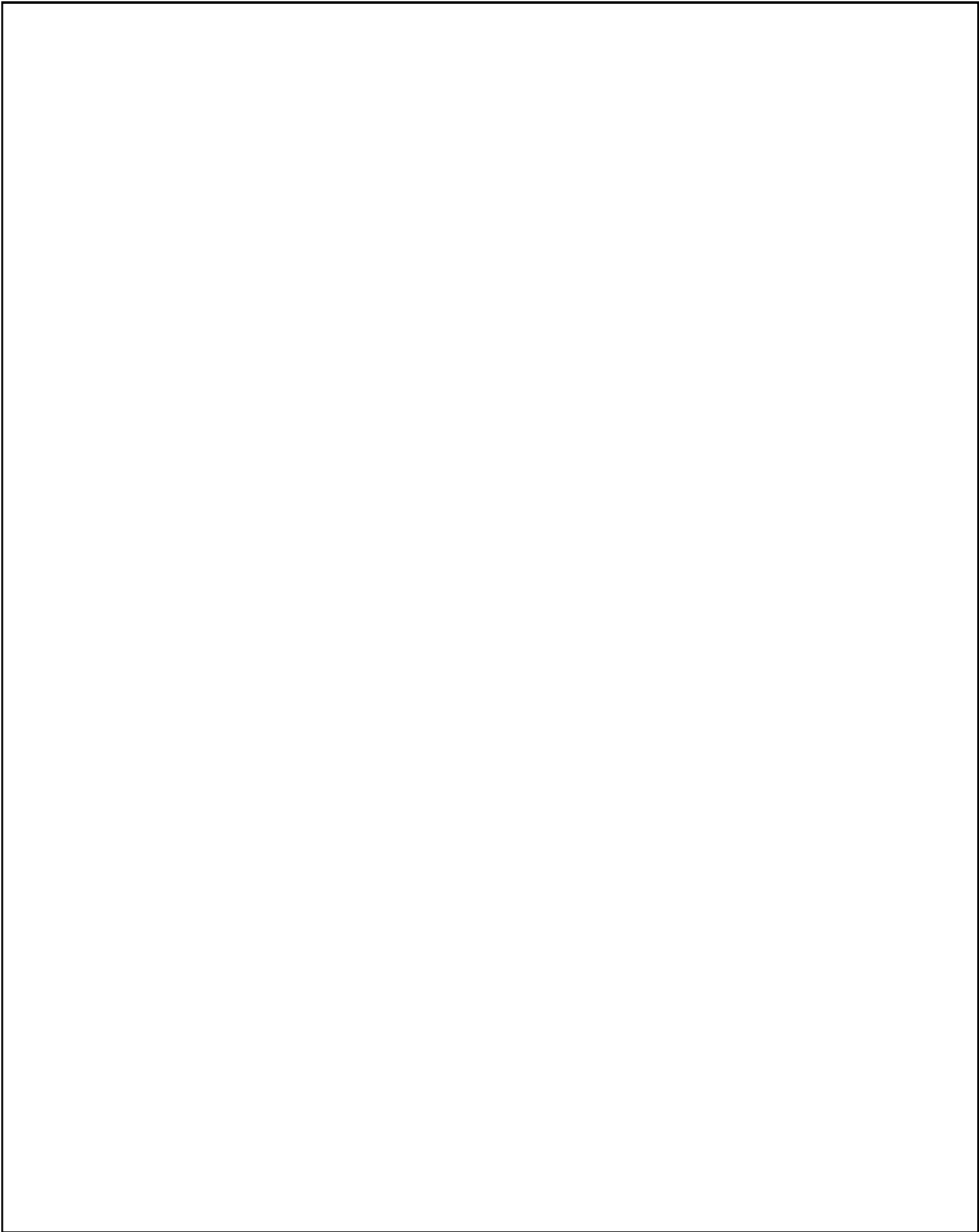


Figure 1. *Stramonita* Species (Muricidae) from the Carolinian and Caribbean Provinces.

A, B= *Stramonita alderi* Petuch and Berschauer n. sp., holotype (LACM 3800), length 33.8 mm, collected dead on Fish Pass Jetty, Mustang Island, Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas; **C, D=** *Stramonita buchecki* Petuch, 2013, length 26.3 mm, Singer Island

Worth Lagoon, Palm Beach County, Florida; **E, F=** *Stramonita rustica* (Lamarck, 1822), length 25.0 mm, Piñones, Puerto Rico.



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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 Tuesday of September, October, November, January, February and April. There are seasonal events and a yearly shell auction scheduled in the other months.

VISITORS WELCOME!!!

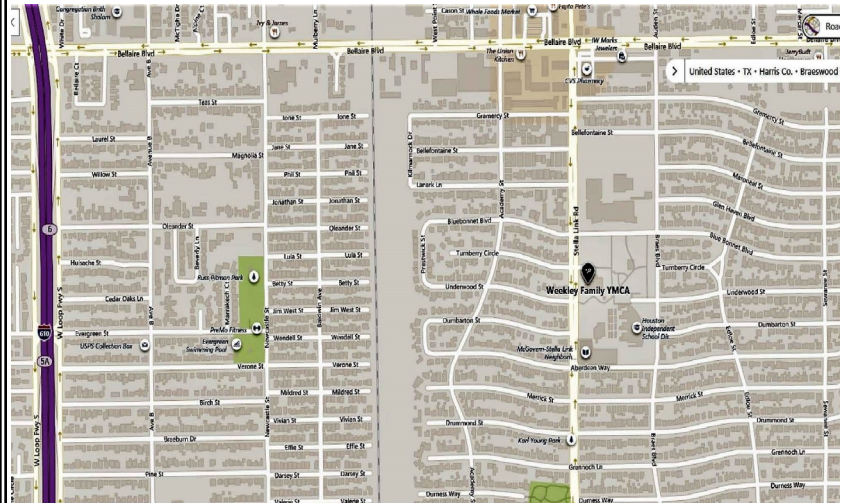
Membership year extends from June 1 through May 31.

Annual membership dues: Family \$12; Single \$10; Junior (under 18) \$6.

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

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