

Seashells of Oman

*By Donald and Eloise Bosch
Edited by Kathleen Smythe*



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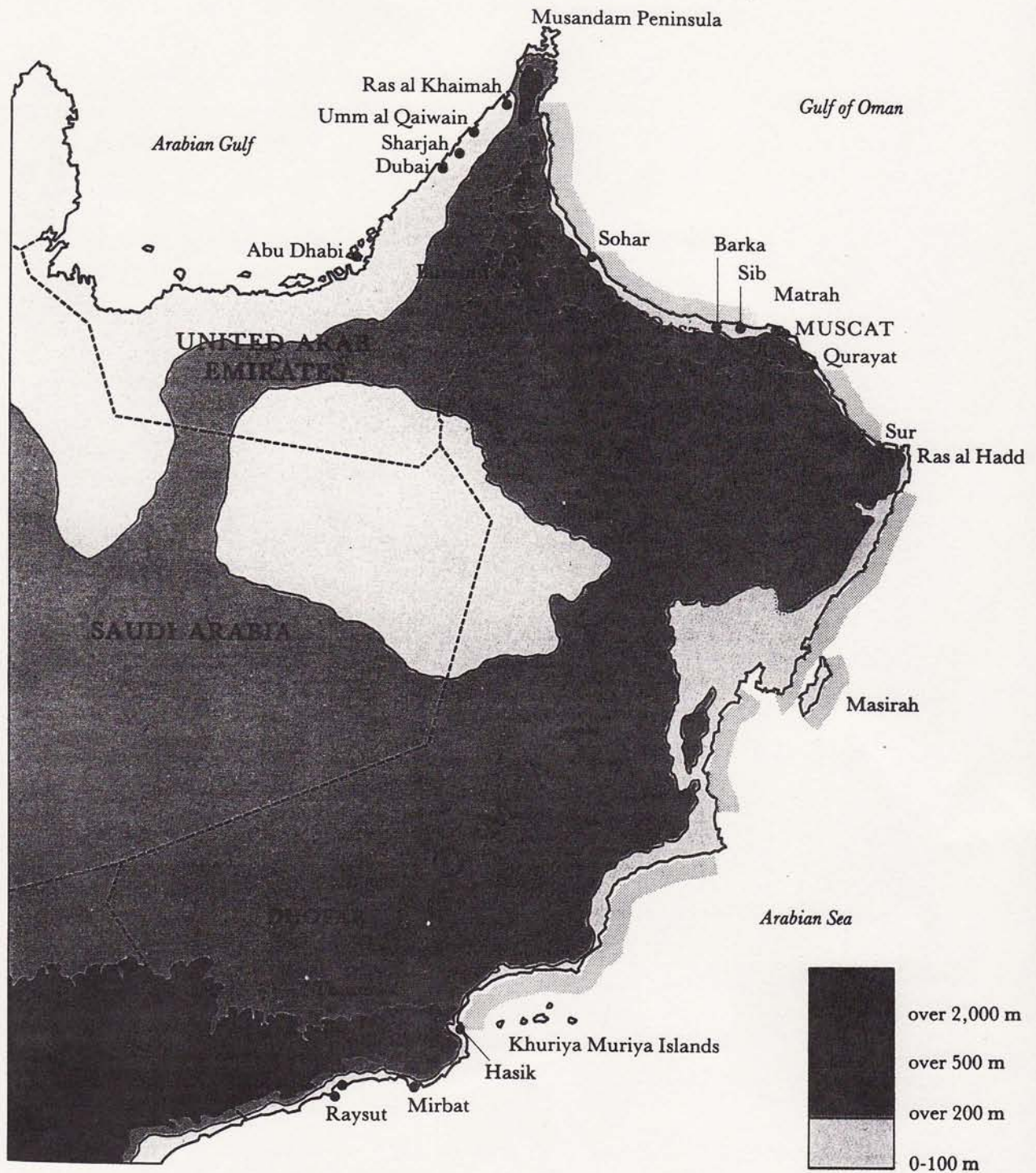
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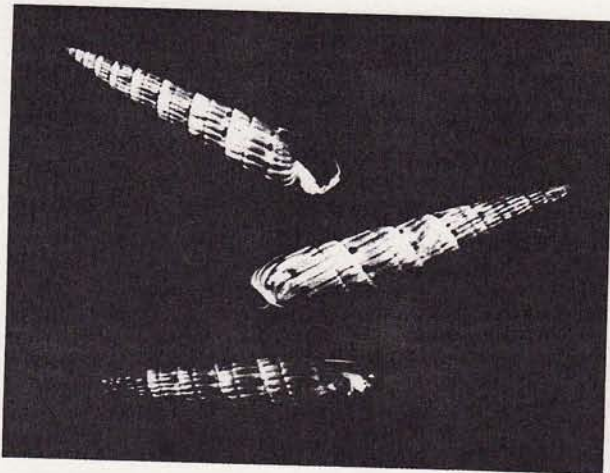
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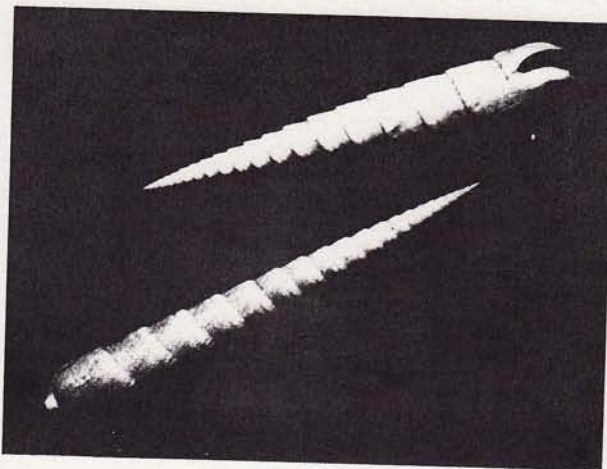
Family Terebridae (Auger Shells)

The members of this family are often called Auger Shells because of their obvious resemblance to an auger or drill. The shells are long and narrow with a high pointed spire, many whorls, a small aperture and a horny thin operculum. Their slender shape is well adapted for their predatory habits since they can burrow through sand easily. They can be found in sand in shallow water, often leaving a trail behind them on the sand above as they burrow through it. They are carnivorous. Some species have a poison gland; the venom is capable of killing their prey but, unlike the *Conus* family, this venom is not dangerous to man.



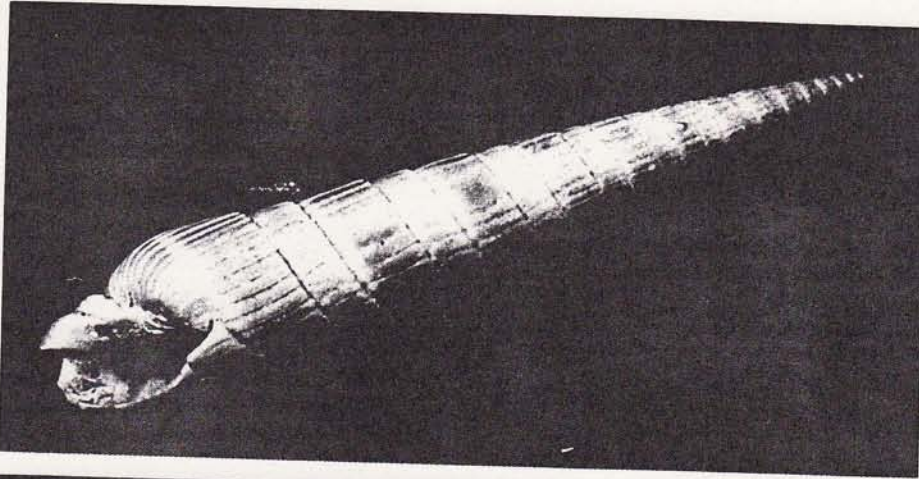
Duplicaria duplicata
(Linnaeus, 1758)

The shell has a deep spiral groove below the suture and fine longitudinal grooves. The color varies from grey to purplish-grey or cream and there is a row of dark dots above the suture. Up to 70 mm. Distribution general. Common.



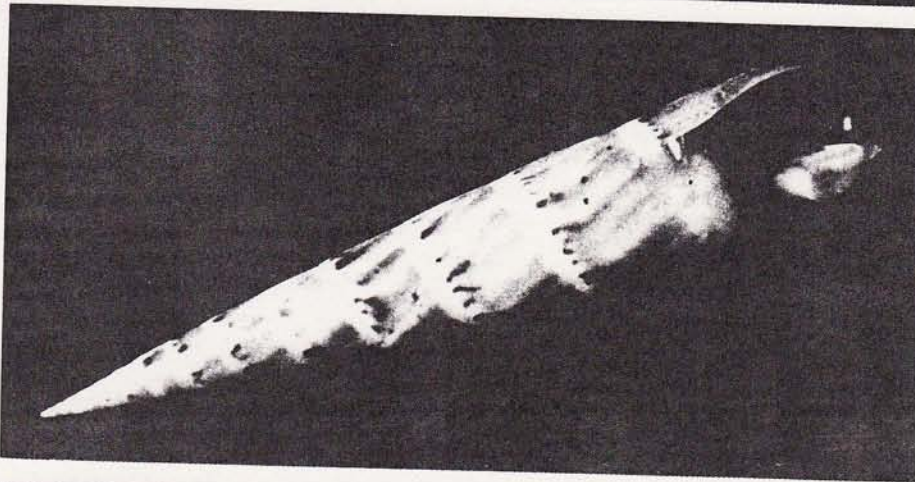
Terebra cingulifera
Lamarck, 1822

Each whorl has two fine grooves. There is a deep suture and the shoulders are angled. The surface is finely longitudinally striate. Up to 75 mm. Distribution general. Uncommon.



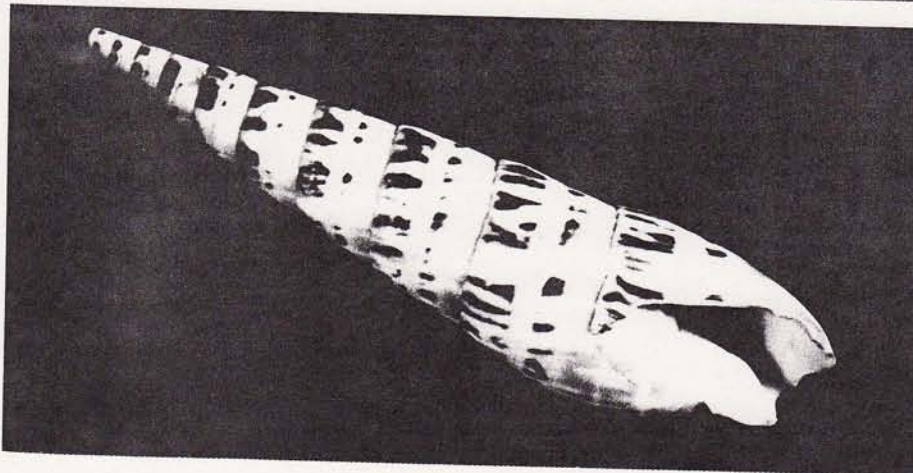
Duplicaria species

This species is similar to *Duplicaria duplicata*, but is consistently heavier, larger, uniformly colored and the longitudinal grooves are closer together. The color is blue-grey. Up to 110 mm. It can be found in the sand at low tide all along the Batinah coast. Distribution general. Common.



Impages hectica
(Linnaeus, 1758)

A slender, glossy shell with a slight sutural groove and fine wavy striations diagonally across the whorls. There is a coarse columella plait. It is unusually beautiful with a variable design of fine reddish-brown longitudinal lines on ivory or white and usually with a row of darker dots or dashes below the suture. Up to 65 mm. Distribution general. Common.



Subula maculata
(Linnaeus 1758)

The shell is large, heavy and thick with a glossy surface and a striking design of dark brown on ivory or cream. The aperture is small in comparison with the length of the shell. Up to 170 mm. We have found this species only at Masirah, where it is rare although it is common elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific.