

SOUTH
AFRICAN
Shells
A COLLECTOR'S
GUIDE

10

527 SPECIES DESCRIBED
AND ILLUSTRATED IN FULL COLOUR

DEIRDRE RICHARDS

Consultants
DAVID FREEMAN/ROBIN E. STOBBS



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To my mother, Oona Batchen

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TRITONIDAE (Plate 42)

are the most abundant molluscs in the South African region but so very small that it was not possible to include them here. They are essentially turret shaped and have a notch in the upper (posterior) part of the whorl which is where the waste products leave the mantle cavity. The notch in the whorls reflects this: there is always a noticeable bend in the suture below the suture line. These molluscs are all carnivorous, some with a harpoon-like tooth with which they can dart their prey.

Clavatula confusa (Smith 1906)

False Bay to Natal. Endemic.

Over two-thirds of each whorl, turning obliquely below suture. Brown

Clavatula kraussi (Smith 1877)

False Bay to Natal. Endemic.

Over two-thirds of each whorl, turning obliquely below suture. White with brown zigzags.

Clavatula semicostata Kiener 1848

False Bay to Natal. Endemic.

Similar to *C. kraussi* (377) but the area of whorl above the ribs has small white spots with irregular brown markings.

Clavatula sinuata Born 1778

False Bay to Port Alfred. Endemic.

Usually generally found with tip eroded. The axial ribs turn obliquely just below suture line. Brown with black periostracum. A juvenile is also shown

Clavatula taxus Chemnitz 1923

False Bay to East London. Endemic.

Found on upper whorls. Suture line is rough and overlaps ribs. This is a small species with a white tip.

Clavatula halistrepta Bartsch 1915

False Bay, Endemic.

Oblique ribs terminate in nodules. Buff-orange in colour but most specimens found.

Clavatula sinuata sigillata Reeve 1848

False Bay. Endemic.

Similar to *C. sinuata* (379). Faint spiral threads. A grey-brown shell with a spiral band showing inside the aperture.

Clavatula subventricosa (Smith 1877)

False Bay to East London. Endemic.

Orange. Axial colour lines turning obliquely below suture. White and

Clavatula rosaria Reeve 1848

False Bay to Gonubie. Endemic.

Orange. Alternating brown and white dots on subsutural band, otherwise

385. *Clavatula tripartita* Weinkauff 1877

Port Alfred to Natal. Endemic.

Oblique axial ribs, a smooth area and then a subsutural band with nodules. Buff with brown markings. Ribs and nodules white.

386. *Tritonoturris capensis* (Smith 1892)

False Bay to Natal. Endemic.

Cancellate sculpture with shoulders to each whorl. Buff, although fresh specimens are darker.

387. *Crassispira hottentota* (Smith 1882)

Kommetjie, False Bay to Port St Johns.

Axial ribbing. Dark brown.

388. *Tritonoturris phaula* Kilburn 1977

False Bay to East London. Endemic.

Cancellate sculpture. The whorls are more globular than those of *T. capensis*. White with brown base.

389. *Drillia fultoni* (Sowerby 1888)

False Bay to Jeffreys Bay. Endemic.

Spiral ridges white on buff-green shell. The subsutural ridge is buff.

390. *Drillia diversa* Smith 1892

Port Alfred to East London. Endemic.

The axial ribs two-thirds up the whorls form light and dark streaks on this orange shell.

391. *Drillia bairstowi* Sowerby 1899

Port Alfred to East London. Endemic.

Axial ribs to just below the suture line. Brown with white ribs.

392. *Drillia caffra* (Smith 1882)

Jeffreys Bay to Gonubie. Endemic.

Oblique axial ribs terminating in nodules just below the suture line. Buff to orange.

Family TEREBRIDAE (Plate 42)

Large and beautiful auger shells are found in tropical seas, but the South African species are smaller and not as glamorous. They live in sand below the tide and little is known about their biology. Many have harpoon-like radula teeth, some have no radula, but they are probably all carnivorous.

393. *Terebra capensis* Smith 1873

False Bay to Mossel Bay. Endemic.

Axial ribs interrupted on each whorl by a darker subsutural band. Cream with one or more buff bands per whorl.

394. *Terebra casta natalensis* Smith 1903

Natal.

Fine axial ribs, more distinct just below the suture line. White with buff to brown banding. Tip dark brown to blue.

395. *Terebra diversa* Smith 1901
Port St Johns to Natal.
Faint axial sculpture. Buff-brown with white subsutural band marked with dark spots.

Family CONIDAE (Plates 43, 44 & 45)

The cones are a large family all having the same basic shape but varying in habitat and diet, and thus colour patterns. The cone shape is formed as each new whorl almost covers the preceding one. The outer lip remains thin and the aperture is narrow and long. This outer lip is often damaged in beach shells.

They live in crevices among rocks or corals just below the low tide line or lie half covered by sand awaiting their prey which they attack by shooting out a dart that injects a paralysing poison. The majority of South African cones live on reef worms but cones in other parts of the world feed on other invertebrates or even small fish. The poison of the fish-eating cones is dangerous to man but none are found in the South African region. While alive, cones are always covered by a dull brown periostracum which conceals the true colour and patterns on these handsome shells.

396. *Conus musicus* Hwass 1792
Natal.
Small nodules on spire. A white shell with regularly arranged brown spots.

397. *Conus ebraeus* Linnaeus 1758
Port St Johns to Natal.
Distinctive black-brown markings make this shell easy to identify.

398. *Conus miles* Linnaeus 1758
Natal.
Cream with orange axial streaks. Dark brown around anterior end and on band around centre of whorl.

399. *Conus infrenatus* Reeve 1848
Jeffreys Bay to Gonubie. Endemic.
A white shell with spiral lines of buff-white spots and large buff bands.

400. *Conus bairstowi* Sowerby 1889
Jeffreys Bay to Gonubie. Endemic.
White with square yellow-brown blotches. These marks are a dark purplish brown on fresh specimens.

401. *Conus zeylanicus* Gmelin 1791
Natal.
This large cone is white with mottled spiral markings.

402. *Conus miliaris* Hwass 1792
Durban.
Orange spots between nodules on spire. The main body whorl is buff-orange with fine spiral lines which may be raised into rows of small nodules.

403. *Conus lividus* Hwass 1792
Natal.
Olive-green with yellow spire.

404. *Conus tinianus* Hwass 1792
Cape Agulhas to Natal. Endemic.
All these shells have rounded shoulders and are broadly ovate tend to be arranged spirally rather than axially. The selection shown demonstrates the variety of colour forms that can be found shorter-spined than *C. mozambicus* (408).

405. *Conus natalis gilchristi* Sowerby 1903
Natal. Endemic.
A white shell with two orange-brown bands of zigzag markings and orange-brown colour on spire.

406. *Conus natalis* Sowerby 1857
Port Alfred to Natal. Endemic.
White with fine brown zigzag lines.

407. *Conus coronatus* Gmelin 1791
Port St Johns To Natal.
A blue-grey shell with spiral lines of brown and white dots. Triangular mottling around spire and body whorl.

408. *Conus mozambicus mozambicus* Hwass 1792
Orange River to Still Bay. Endemic.
A variable species with several synonyms. A long, torpedo-shaped shell. Grey-white with brown bands and mottling. The second shell covered by the periostracum.

409. *Conus mozambicus lautus* Reeve 1844
Cape Agulhas to East London. Endemic.
An orange-pink, very rounded cone with dark and paler brown bands.

410. *Conus pictus* Reeve 1843
Jeffreys Bay to Port Alfred. Endemic.
This shell is orange with mottled buff spire and three bands on body whorl frequently found.

411. *Conus algoensis algoensis* Sowerby 1843
Table Bay. Endemic.
A heavier spire than *C. a. scitulus* (412) or *C. a. simplex* (413). almost covered by brown blotches. Beach shells remain dark brown.

412. *Conus algoensis scitulus* Reeve 1849
Hermanus to Cape Agulhas. Endemic.
White with brown band below shoulder and further brown mottling. Fine, regularly arranged, characteristic brown spots. On the body whorl the band becomes orange and the rest often blue.

413. *Conus algoensis simplex* Sowerby 1857
False Bay. Endemic.
Orange-brown below shoulder and orange-brown zigzag lines. Beach shells bleach plain white.

PLATE 42

