



The Epitonium

January Meeting

The HCS January meeting has been canceled!

With the rapid spread of Covid, the officers felt that it would be best not to have a meeting. We hope we will be able to meet in February and have our auction in March. Stay tuned.

President's Message

By Leslie Crnkovic

We look forward to your "Shelling Reports" for the HCS Newsletter as we get into the Winter Shelling Season. Best upcoming Low Tides at Freeport are:

2022-01-22 Sat 03:48 CST 0.63 feet High Tide

2022-01-22 Sat 07:14 CST Sunrise

2022-01-22 Sat 11:39 CST -0.59 feet Low Tide

2022-01-22 Sat 17:51 CST Sunset

2022-01-22 Sat 19:29 CST 0.80 feet High Tide

2022-01-23 Sun 00:41 CST 0.22 feet Low Tide

2022-01-23 Sun 05:58 CST 0.49 feet High Tide

2022-01-23 Sun 07:13 CST Sunrise

2022-01-23 Sun 12:18 CST -0.27 feet Low Tide

Tide

2022-01-23 Sun 17:52 CST Sunset

2022-01-23 Sun 19:36 CST 0.72 feet High Tide

2022-01-29 Sat 06:32 CST -1.64 feet Low Tide

2022-01-29 Sat 07:11 CST Sunrise

2022-01-29 Sat 15:38 CST 1.34 feet High Tide

2022-01-29 Sat 17:57 CST Sunset

2022-01-30 Sun 06:00 CST Moonrise

2022-01-30 Sun 07:10 CST Sunrise

2022-01-30 Sun 07:30 CST -1.75 feet Low Tide

2022-01-30 Sun 16:18 CST 1.32 feet High Tide

2022-01-30 Sun 17:58 CST Sunset

2022-01-30 Sun 20:48 CST 1.12 feet Low Tide

2022-01-30 Sun 22:46 CST 1.13 feet High Tide

Looking for the tides? This is my favorite site. <http://tide.arthroinfo.org/sites/usgulf.html>.

(Editor: Please write up your adventures for the newsletter.)

President:
Leslie Crnkovic

Vice President:
Angela Doucette

Treasurer:
Angie Haneiko

Recording Secretary:
Rusti Stover

Corresponding Secretary:
Lucy Clampit

Visit HCS online at
www.houstonshellclub.com

CALENDAR

1/16/22	HCS Meeting Cancelled
2/20/22	HCS Meeting
3/19/22	HCS Auction
5/31-6/4	2022 COA in Galveston
10/14-10/16	2022 Texas Jamboree & Shell Show

February Meeting

At the November meeting, members discussed having the February meeting back at the Weekley YMCA (our previous meeting location), but in light of the Covid issue, we are going to have the meeting at Immanuel Lutheran Church where we are currently meeting.

Field Trip

At the November meeting, members discussed a January field trip to Patty Humbird's beach house. Unfortunately, it is booked until March, so no field trip is scheduled at this time.

MINUTES SUNDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2021

Submitted by Rusti Stover

President Leslie Crnkovic called the meeting to order at the Immanuel Lutheran Church meeting room in the Heights, at 2:10 pm. All club officers were present.

Dave Green made a motion and Tina Petway seconded, to approve the minutes of the October meeting. All approved, motion passed. Treasurer Angie Haneiko gave the treasurers report. Membership Chair Lucy Clampit reported the club has 58 members to date.

Leslie noted the Christmas party will be held on Sunday, December 12, at 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Corner Bakery on I-10 at Echo Lane. Members will eat together and exchange shell-related gifts in the range of 20 dollars.

Darwin Alder reported that the date for setup and decorating the Museum tree is Wednesday December 1st. He also stated please do not show up any earlier than 9 AM to help decorate.

Lucy Clampit reminded everyone that the annual auction will be held on Saturday March 19, 2022 at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Dave Green gave an updated report on COA 2022 in Galveston. Dave is hoping all the international dealers will be able to attend for the Bourse, as Covid restrictions are still a problem in some of the foreign countries. Dave also stated that the December issue of American Conchologist magazine will have all the registration inserts for the convention, and a PDF with all the information, plus the mini shell show and snail parade, will also be available on the COA website.

Wanda Coker reported on the 2022 Jamboree & Shell Show, and said some Florida and out of state shell club members will also be attending.

Lucy also asked the assembled about holding the February meeting at the Weekley YMCA, as they will not return our 125-dollar fee for one more meeting there. The members said that would tentatively be OK.

Under Field Trips, Patty Humbird offered her beach house for a rest stop and assembly place for a possible January low tide weekend date for beachcombing. More information will be forthcoming.

There being no further business, Leslie asked for a motion to adjourn. Mary Harris made the motion, Dave Green seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

VP/Program Chair Angela Doucette then introduced Bruce Neville, who gave an excellent slide show and talk on Brachiopods, "The Other Bivalves".

2022 COA Convention

The organization will be celebrating its 50th anniversary at the annual convention **May 31-June 4** at Moody Gardens in Galveston, TX. A convention packet with the registration form, etc. was included in the December issue of the *American Conchologist*. If you are not a COA member, all convention forms can be found at: <https://conchologistsofamerica.org/conventions/>. Unless you are a dealer, you do not have to be a member to attend the convention, but you do have to register. The oral auction and Bourse are the only events open to the public.



The gathering will have a Mini-Shell Show and a Texas Parade of Snails. (Entry forms for those events are available on the same website.) Of course, there will be a Welcome Party, Banquet, interesting programs, thousands of beautiful shells to admire and/or purchase, and visiting with old friends and making new ones.

If you plan to reserve a room at the hotel, you need to do it ASAP. The hotel number is: 409-744-4673. Participants staying at the hotel can park free in the garage. Participants not staying at the hotel can park free in the open lots. The hotel does not accept cash for anything. If you buy food, souvenirs, tickets, etc. from the hotel, you will need to pay with a credit card.

Hope you can join us for a fun event!

In Memoriam – Dave Barziza

HCS members send their condolences to Nancy and family.

Dave was born in Houston on June, 19, 1931 and passed away on December 18, 2021 after declining health for the last few years. He attended Reagan High School, and after graduation, he joined the Navy. He later attended the University of Houston and majored in Petroleum Engineering, but he went into the concrete business rather than the oil business.

He and Nancy met when they both went on a hiking trip to the Guadalupe Mountains National Park. They both loved the outdoors and traveling – that eventually included collecting shells.

In the early 1990s they joined the Houston Conchology Society and became active members. They served in various offices and hosted several club gatherings in their home. Most Januarys found club members gathered at their Galveston beach house for a fun day.

Dave worked hard and he played hard. After he retired, he took up wood turning and made many beautiful items, a few of which he donated to HCS auctions. He also became active in mission work and traveled to several countries to help people in need.



HCS Auction

We hope you have your calendar marked for the annual auction to be held on Saturday, **March 19**. As usual, there will be lots of beautiful shells and shell related items. If you are preparing an exhibit for the COA Shell Show or the Sea Shell Searchers Shell Show, we will have some nice, small display cases that would be great for a single shell or small group of shells. This newsletter contains pictures of three of the items: an orange *Lyropecten subnodosus*, a *Perotrochus teramachii* with operculum, and a display dome with a turn table. Perfect for your single specimen entry!

Start saving your money!



HCS Christmas Tree

Thanks to Darwin Alder, Cathy Betley, Angela Doucette and Victoria Craig for making decorations for the HMNS tree. Thanks also go to Tina Petway and a few museum employees who helped to decorate the tree. As usual it was beautiful!

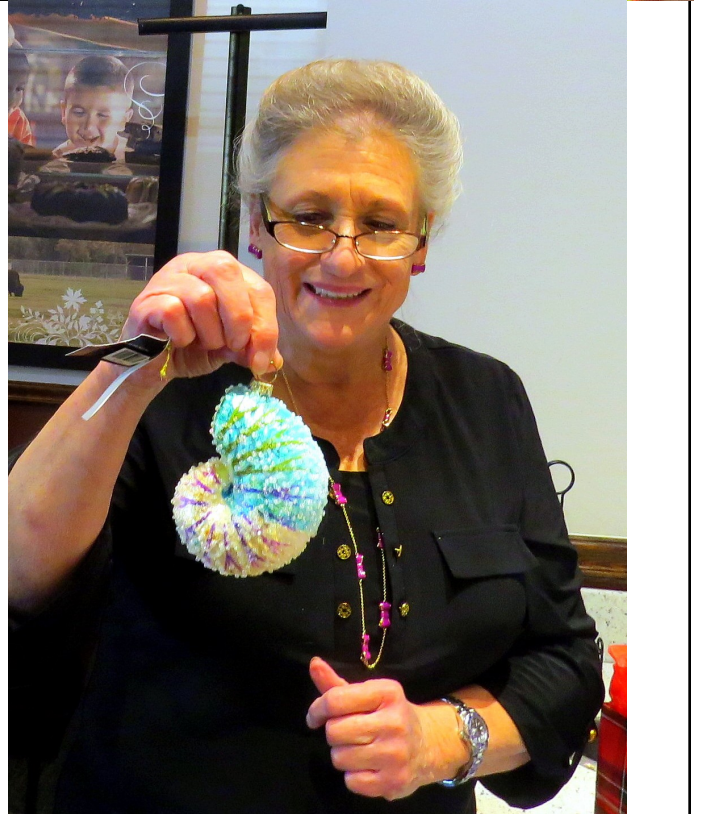
Pictures provided by several participants.



HCS Christmas Party

According to the unofficial count, eighteen members attended the HCS Christmas party on December 12 at the Corner Bakery on the Katy Freeway. Everyone enjoyed being together again, and several participated in the fun gift exchange.

Pictures by Rusti Stover.



At Moody Gardens, hope doesn't float



Elizabeth Conley / Staff photographer

Biologist Brooke Carlson feeds coral using a baster at Moody Gardens Aquarium in Galveston.

Scientists at rescue lab work to fend off disease threatening Gulf coral

By Emily Foxhall STAFF WRITER

GALVESTON — Brooke Carlson checks in at least once each shift on the nearly 100 refugee coral at Moody Gardens. Scientists rescued them in recent years from Florida, where a disease is swiftly killing colonies. Zoos and aquariums nationwide took them in. The coral are the hope for one day building back the reef.

The Florida coral in Galveston now live in three large, blue tanks. Carlson and the team make saltwater for them to live in, stir together refrigerated and frozen food to eat, and monitor how they respond to LED lights that mimic the sun. The process involves both caring for and learning about them; at least one species has never been in captivity before.

“These animals didn’t choose to be here,” said Carlson, squeezing their liquid lunch into the tank with

a turkey baster. “As a keeper, my job is to give them what the ocean would, which is a very big task.”

That so many coral were saved and so many facilities offered to look after them shows how important scientists felt the effort was. Coral worldwide already suffer from climate change. The disease in Florida, called stony coral tissue loss disease, affected almost half the stony coral species there, according to the state. More than 80 percent that got it died.

But the success story in saving some also gave way to further concern. Galveston researchers realized the disease might come closer to home. The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary near Texas has some of the healthier coral that remain. The coral are deep in the Gulf of Mexico and roughly 100 miles off the coast, which might protect them, though it also makes them harder to help.

“We’re just highly concerned that the time is ticking.”

Michelle Johnston, a research biologist with Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary



A coral colony sits in the “hospital tank” in the Coral Rescue Lab at Moody Gardens Aquarium.

Stony coral tissue loss disease spread quickly. People first identified it in 2014 in Florida. It went on to infect coral along the entire 360-mile Florida Coral Reef, which curls along the bottom tip of that state. Scientists hoped the disease wouldn’t reach Dry Tortugas National Park at the westernmost end. It did. That sounded alarm bells at Flower Garden.

Officials with the sanctuary, which is like an underwater national park with protections for the marine life there, put together a plan for what to do if the disease arrives. They’ve prepared to monitor its spread; remove smaller, sick colonies with chisels; and treat larger colonies with antibiotic putty pressed on with gloved fingers.

The biologists hope never to have to pick which coral colonies to save, but protecting all of them from the disease would be impossible.

“It is spreading everywhere,” said Michelle Johnston, a research biologist with the sanctuary. “We’re just highly concerned that the time is ticking.”

Scientists aren’t sure what exactly causes the disease, or how it spreads. Sanctuary divers are trained to spot the telltale white lesions. They’ve also shared webinars on what to watch for with operators of the boat that often takes out tourists. Divers are asked to disinfect their gear. Mariners are supposed to be careful with how they replace ballast water, which is held within ships to stabilize them, as it may be a source of the spread.

Others are also getting involved: Sanctuary staff are collaborating with a North Carolina scientist who’s working on an alternative treatment for the disease. And researchers are planning to look at which Flower Garden coral may be susceptible and whether they can help repopulate the Florida reefs if they remain healthy.

Moody Gardens may take in Flower Garden coral, too. For the Florida effort, researchers prioritized 20 species that were most susceptible. They hoped to save 200 of each species. Johnston cautioned

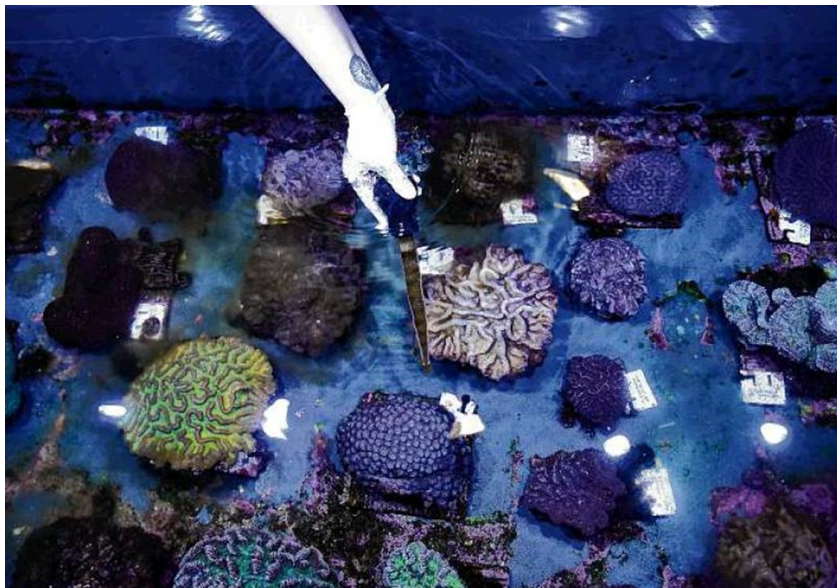
that nothing had been finalized with Moody Gardens, and they would start small. They need funds and the ability to get offshore without significant COVID-19 restrictions. The aquarium would need a separate space for them.

Moody Gardens' sprawling Galveston Island location includes a hotel, golf course and convention center. It also has the iconic pyramid-shaped aquarium, where this work is being done. The facility spent some \$31,500 to transform an underwater photo gallery there into a coral rescue lab for the Florida animals. The first colonies arrived in 2019 on a truck, packed in Styrofoam boxes in bags of water. Rescued Florida coral also live at the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi and at the Fort Worth Zoo.

Carlson spends so much time staring at them, she sees their nuances. They are wrinkly and bumpy and feathery, various shades of brown, green, pink and purple. She knows which prefer to be directly under the light and which prefer the tank edges. She watches to see if they prey on each other or if they look sick. On a recent weekday, she patiently spent about 20 minutes feeding the coral in just one tank.

Sometimes Carlson plays Disney music while she feeds them, though coral don't have ears. She might talk to them too. That day the lab was quiet except for the hum of equipment. She wore socks with Pokemon fish and a belt with sharks. There is a lot of pressure to care well for these coral, she acknowledged. But that made the work rewarding. The water got more murky as she added food. The coral might get extra chunky treats for Thanksgiving. For now, they were getting full. emily.foxhall@chron.com

Houston Chronical: November 24, 2021



Photos by Elizabeth Conley / Staff photographer

Nearly 100 coral have been rescued from Florida, where stony coral tissue loss disease is decimating colonies. And now scientists fear the disease is coming closer to home.

The Epitonium is published monthly September through May and is an official publication of the Houston Conchology Society. Items of interest concerning shells and shelling are welcome for publication. Credit will be given to contributors when known unless anonymity is requested.

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.

During the pandemic, all meetings have been canceled until further notice.

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 Angie Haneiko, 11407 Blackhawk Blvd., Houston, TX 77089.

HOUSTON CONCHOLOGY SOCIETY

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