

The 3rd International Cone Meeting

António Monteiro

On the weekend of 3-5 October, the 3rd International Cone Meeting took place in Madrid, Spain, as widely advertised. It is a great pleasure to be able to report that it was a big success, just like the two previous ones.

The local organization, that included Dr. Manuel Jimenez Tenorio, Dr. Rafael Zardoya and Dr. Rafael Araújo, from the Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, was absolutely impeccable and everything went along smoothly, without the slightest glitch. To them, our best thanks and compliments are due!

The list of participants included (in alphabetical order):

Alain Robin
Alistair Moncur
André Poremski
António Monteiro
Armando Verdasca
Benito Muñoz Sánchez
Bill Fenzan
Carlos Afonso*
Christfried Schoenherr
Christophe Roux
Dâmaso Monteiro
Emilio Rolán
Emma Harris
Eric Monnier
Fernando Serafim
Gabriella Raybaudi-Massilia
Gavin Malcolm
George & Lucy Muehleisen
Georges Richard*
Günther Herndl
Jan Kåre Nymoen
Joaquín López Soriano
José Coltro
Loïc Limpalaër
Manuel Jimenez Tenori
Michaël Rabiller
Mike Burrell
Nicolas Puillandre

Paul Kersten
Paulo Granja
Peter Bedbur
Rafael Zardoya
Ramiro Fiadeiro
Sara Rocha
Stephan Veldsman
Trevor Young

* Registered but could not attend at the last minute
In all, thirteen different countries were represented.

The invaluable help and support of the Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales was of course much appreciated.

The director, Dr. Santiago Merino Rodríguez, was present at the reception that took place in the evening of Friday, 3rd October, and addressed a few words of welcome to the participants.



Entrance to the Museum

The logotype of our meeting was present everywhere, directing attendants to the rooms where it took place

The collaboration of the Sociedad Española de Malacología was also of paramount importance in many aspects of the organization. Dr. José Templado said a few words in the opening session, in representation of the President of the Sociedad, who was unable to attend.

The registration of participants started Friday afternoon and the mini-bourse was set in place, which allowed several of those present to make important acquisitions for their collections. As a matter of fact, there were many interesting specimens offered for sale, including a number of great rarities!



Partial views of the mini-bourse

During the afternoon, the first guided tours of the collections of Cones in the Museum were organized, including the many type specimens housed there – the number of which actually place the MNCN in the front line of Natural History museums in this regard. These visits, in groups of about ten, because of space

restrictions, were repeated in the following days, always conducted by Dr. Rafael Araújo.

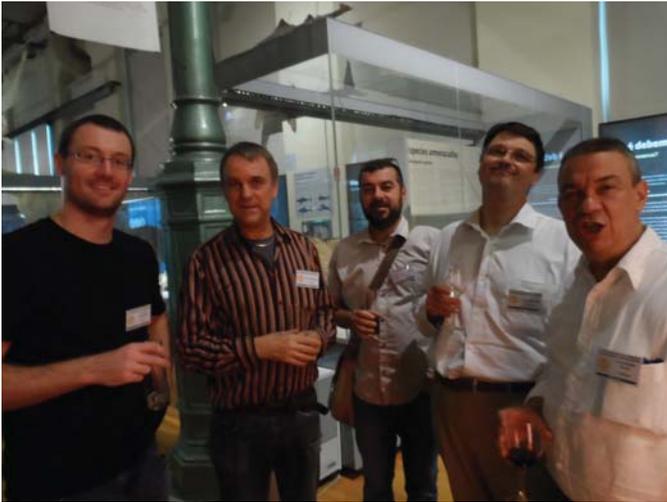


Visiting the collections; left to right:
Paul Kersten, Alistair Moncur, Rafael Araújo

In the evening, practically all participants had already arrived and we had the welcoming reception. It was a very pleasant occasion, giving everybody a chance to mingle and talk. Old acquaintances and friendships were renewed, some new ones were built, which of course is one of the main aspects of a meeting such as this.



Jan Kåre Nymo and wife, Gabriella Raybaudi Massilia



Part of the French delegation; left to right:
Nicolas Puillandre, Eric Monnier, Michaël Rabiller,
Loïc Limpalaër, Christophe Roux



Left to right: Mike and Neva Burrell, Marguerite and
Trevor Young



Alain Robin and wife Kouka



Left to right: Emilio Rolán Mosquera, José Templado,
Rafael Zardoya



Manuel (Manolo) Tenorio and Dâmaso Monteiro

Saturday morning, the sessions began, in the old auditorium of the museum, actually a room full of character, where the Sociedad Española de Malacología has also held a number of meetings.

I had the pleasure of making the overture and in that first address a short but heartfelt tribute was paid to the memory of Mike Filmer, who sadly left us only a few

months ago.

Before an interested and attentive audience, the program proceeded according to plan.



Views of the auditorium

Our Guest of Honour this time was my excellent friend of many years, Dr. Emilio Rolán, to whom a souvenir commemorative plaque was offered, engraved with the following text:

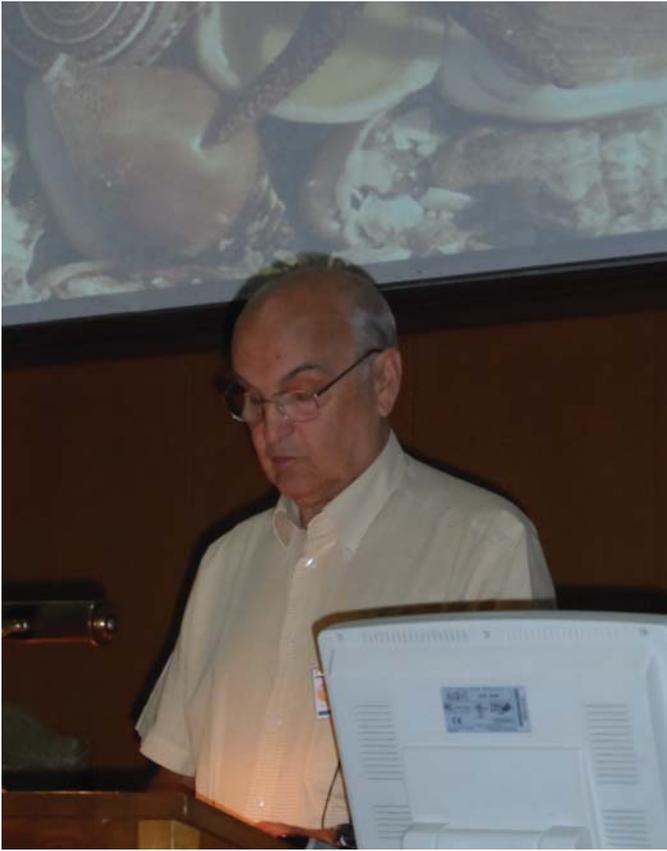
«To Dr. Emilio Rolán Mosquera, on the occasion of the 3rd International Cone Meeting, acknowledging his outstanding role and his unfailing interest in the study of Cones, which inspired generations of researchers and collectors.»

Emilio then presented his talk, titled “Cones and other shells – a career in Malacology”, a sort of autobiographical summary of his work with shells. For the record, a brief profile will be useful:

Emilio Rolán Mosquera was born at A Guarda, Galicia, Spain, in 1935, and since early childhood developed a vivid interest for outdoor activities such as swimming, hunting, fishing and scuba diving, as well as a great love for divers aspects of Natural History.

His shell collection was initiated during his three-year stay in Pobra do Caramiñal as a pediatrician, from 1962 to 1965, after which he moved to Vigo to proceed with his professional career. By then, he had begun to correspond with other seashell collectors, worldwide, which allowed his collection to grow by exchanging specimens; at the same time, he joined several international malacological societies. In the beginning of the 1970s, Emilio Rolán became one of the founding members of the Sociedad Española de Malacología.

From 1970 onwards, he travelled to many different locations to collect seashells, having for instance visited Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, Kenya and Tanzania, Morocco and Egypt, Algiers and Turkey, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, Cuba and Senegal, Venezuela and Peru, China and the Philippines, and many others, including the Cape Verde Islands.



Emilio Rolán during his presentation

Emilio Rolán's scientific research began after his first visits to Cape Verde, in expeditions that included several other Spanish, Portuguese and German collectors. At the time he worked with António Monteiro, Luís Burnay, Dieter Röckel, etc., developing a particular interest for Cones, of which he described a number of new species, either alone or with other co-authors. From this extensive work resulted the preparation of a PhD thesis, completed in 1992. In the same year, he was elected president of the Sociedad Española de Malacología.

In 1998, Rolán retired from his position as a doctor, head of Pediatrics and professor in the Escola de Enfermería do Centro Médico Povisa, and associated professor in the Medical Faculty at Santiago de Compostela, and was able to work full-time in Malacology.

He has published extensively, including books on the malacological fauna of the Ria de Vigo and the Cape Verde Islands, and countless papers in which he described a huge number of new species. Besides his extensive bibliography in the Malacology, Rolán has also published several books in other genres, including ethnography, memoirs and even poetry.

A number of species were named after him, such as *Euthria rolani* von Cosel, 1982, *Belgrandiella rolani* Boeters, 1986 and *Conus rolani* Röckel, 1986.

The extensive shell collection (about twenty thousand lots with a total of nearly one and a half million specimens), amassed along the years, is currently housed in the Natural History Museum "Luis Iglesias", in the University of Santiago de Compostela.

The morning session ended with the talks by Dr. Rafael Araújo (MNCN), who gave valuable precisions about the malacological collections of the museum ("The Cone collection at the MNCN-CSIC") and by Prof. Rafael Zardoya (MNCN-CSIC) and Manuel Tenorio, on "The extraordinary diversity of Cape Verde cone snails". Cape Verde Cones being quite popular – and occasional controversial – among collectors, this talk was awaited with great interest and certainly met everybody's expectations.

The group then dispersed for lunch in nearby restaurants, meeting again at the museum afterwards. Bill Fenzan chaired the afternoon session, which began André Poremski's talk titled "*Jaspidiconus*, a Complex Complex", a delightful presentation that highlighted the variability of a particularly difficult group, whose final classification certainly needs much further study.

Before the afternoon's coffee break Alain Robin talked about "New species at the bottom of your drawer: New cones from Oman and Western Australia", detailing the processes that had led to the recent description of



Bill Fenzan opening the afternoon session on Saturday José Coltro was the following speaker, with his presentation “Brazilian *Conidae* Biodiversity”, a very informative talk on the zoogeography of Brazilian species.

three new species in the “*achatinus* group”.

To end the afternoon session, Michaël Rabiller, from the Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle in La Rochelle, France, made a short summary of the activities he had developed in workshops for local school children, which had taken place on Friday and Saturday. His presentation was titled “Explaining Cones to young people” and it must be said that his workshops – which reportedly met with a great success – were an important and valuable aspect of the 3rd International Cone Meeting. A relatively large number of children and

youngsters was introduced to the world of Malacology in general and to the study of Cone shells in particular, and who knows if some avocations may have been awakened?



Michaël Rabiller in his workshops

For Saturday evening was scheduled the official dinner, which took place at the Holiday Inn Bernabéu, the hotel where most participants were lodging. The dinner was served as a buffet and the quality was quite good. Everybody was in an excellent mood, enjoying the food and above all the conversation!



Views of the workshops



Manuel Tenorio giving a helping hand in one of the workshops



As a mark of a perfect organization, the locale of the dinner was clearly advertised in the hotel's closed TV circuit:



Chris Schoenherr and wife

The hotel's closed TV circuit with information about the official dinner

Here are a few photos taken during the dinner:



Gavin Malcolm and wife Edna



Peter Bedbur and wife Kornelia



Bill Fenzan



Armando Verdasca and wife Nora



Günther Herndl and Gabriella Raybaudi-Massilia



Left to right: Armando Verdasca, António Monteiro, Fernando Serafim



Paul Kersten and wife

On Sunday morning, after a good night's sleep, everybody returned to the Museum, for the final session, which was chaired by Manuel Tenorio.



Manuel Tenorio taking the stand

In the first part of the session, two talks were scheduled. The first one was by Nicolas Puillandre, who talked about “The Conotax project: Taxonomy, venoms and evolution of the *Conoidea*”. His presentation showed a vast work already done with the *Conoidea*, and a huge amount of work yet to be accomplished, which, in fact, was quite inspiring.

The second talk before the morning’s coffee break was “Biogeographic patterns in South African cone snails”, by Stephan Veldsman, a summary of the distribution of South African endemic species.



Nicolas Puillandre during his presentation



Stephan Veldsman during his presentation

Finally, the meeting ended with two more presentations. Gavin Malcolm talked about "Cone Collector... community communications", presenting the results of the survey he had prepared a few months ago and a few suggestions and recommendations; you will read more about that elsewhere in the present number of TCC.

André Poremski rounded things up with a presentation and partial demonstration of “CHROMA: App Software for Cone Collectors”, whose vast possibilities greatly interested everybody.



Gavin Malcolm during his presentation

After the sessions, the mini-bourse was still open for a short time and around 13:30 h the 3rd International Cone Meeting was definitively over. A great success, as I said above.



António Monteiro and André Poremski



Paulo Granja and his cousin Ricardo

As in previous occasions, group photos were taken – more than one actually, because not everybody was actually at the entrance of the museum the first time round. (see next page)

Notice that blue remains the most popular colour on the clothes of participants, perhaps as a subconscious tribute to the blue seas where our precious Cone shells live

The TCC project began in October 2006, that is to say, precisely eight years ago. It started modestly – as things should, from my point of view – as a newsletter about Cone shells, to be distributed among collectors, but thanks to the interest of many and the efforts of some, it soon took larger proportions.

André Poremski's collaboration changed an eminently amateur publication, a sort of fanzine, into a professionally laid out magazine, benefitting from top quality graphic arrangement. At the same time, André created our website at www.theconecollector.com, where we were able to upload not only the successive numbers of the magazine, but also the quite important sections by Mike Filmer and Paul Kersten, a few surprises being in store there, about which you will



read elsewhere in the present number of TCC.

The numbers of our magazine *The Cone Collector* are also uploaded in a number of websites belonging to friends, whom we thank for their help in spreading our work amongst as large as possible a number of interested readers.

The enthusiasm generated around our project and the generous and dynamic collaboration of Bill Fenzan and Manuel Tenorio allowed us to engage in even more ambitious initiatives: the International Cone Meetings.

We have managed to put them together as strictly amateur organizations, for which we could enlist the support of important Natural History Museums: the Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde in Stuttgart (2010), the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in La Rochelle (2012) and the Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales in Madrid (2014). We are very thankful to these prestigious institutions for their invaluable support and hope to find equally suitable partners in the future.

More than everything else, the TCC project contributed to the creation of a true Cone Community – as aptly mentioned by Gavin Malcolm in his presentation. We are now much more than a mere bunch of Cone lovers; without any strict official organization we have become a true community, structured by bonds of comradeship and friendship and linked by our interest in the collection and study of Cone shells, certainly one of the most fascinating groups of Molluscs.

The survey that Gavin organized gave us many suggestions – all quite pertinent of course – for improvement and we will try to comply henceforward. It also confirmed that much of what we have done so far has met with the general approval of the community, which is extremely gratifying for all those involved in the projected and obviously for me in particular. It does give us the strength to carry on and endeavour to

do better and better each time.

I will leave you with a few more candid photos taken in Madrid and illustrating the excellent ambiance during our entire meeting.



Examining the rarities at the mini-bourse



At the beginning of a session



Kouka, Christophe, Loïc, Eric and Alain at lunch time



Another view of the mini-bourse



Some interesting while relaxing at the entrance to the museum: Günther Herndl, André Poremski, Manuel Tenorio, Christophe Roux, Eric Monnier, George and Lucy Muehleisen, Nicolas Puillandre, Loïc Limpalaër, Michaël Rabiller



During the workshops



Benito Muñoz Sánchez, Rafael Zardoya, André Poremski, Manuel Tenorio



Gabriella Raybaudi-Massilia and António Monteiro



Eric Monnier



Gabriella, Günther, Eric and Loïc

I thank all those who made photos available: Paulo Granja, Günther Herndl, Michaël Rabiller, Benito Muñoz Sánchez and Stephan Veldsman.