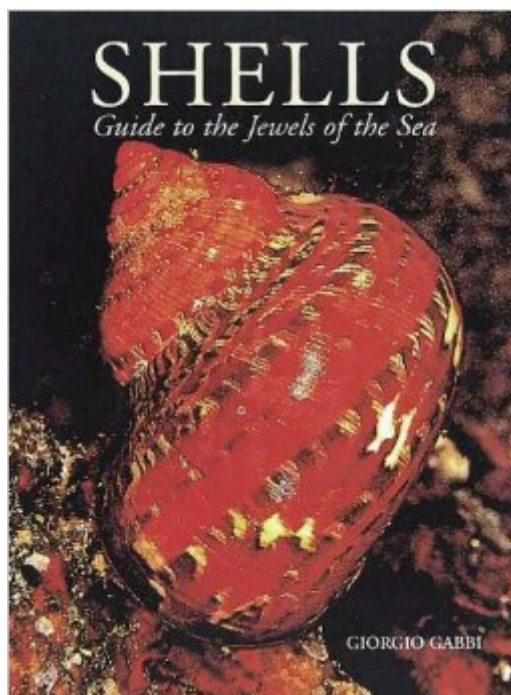


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# Shells: Guide To The Jewels Of The Sea



## Synopsis

With their exotic shapes and radiant colors, shells are among the most captivating of all nature's creations and have been highly valued by man since prehistoric times. Some cultures, recognizing their durability, used shells for trading; many, admiring their exquisite beauty, have featured them in their art and jewelry. This visually stunning book explores the remarkable variety of shells and offers an extensive guide to the world in which they thrive. Mollusks, the animals without backbones for which shells serve as protection and shelter, are second only to insects as the most widespread creatures on earth. These adaptable animals are vividly captured by underwater photography in their natural habitats, from the coral theater of the warm seas to the richly vegetated underwater meadows. The illustrations reveal the shells just as divers would encounter them. Using full-color diagrams and charts, *Shells* explains the complex anatomies of various mollusks as well as the intricate construction of their shells. For shell collectors of all levels, this book is full of practical advice. It explains how to classify, catalog, and preserve shells in collections that are both beautiful to look at and respectful of nature. In a comprehensive guide section, four hundred different types of shells of the world are described and illustrated, ranging from the most numerous to the rarest. This book, with its up-to-date text and in-depth portrait of the jewels of the sea will be invaluable to naturalists, divers, lovers of marine life, and shell collectors at any level.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an excellent book. I was impressed by the photos of different marine mollusks in their native habitats, often engaged in complex feeding activities (especially note *Colubraria* feeding on a parrot

fish through it's mucus bubble). It's very nice to see, for a change, a book dedicated to the living organisms that we as Conchologists often tend to forget when engaging in this hobby. I have an extensive collection of shell books and would say to the best of my knowledge this book simply has some of the finest mollusk habitat photography of any book I've seen. I wish they included a bit more text; I felt that a little more info with those excellent photos this would have made this a classic text. Instead it is an excellent book for the amateur collector looking for more than the typical identification of shells book. That maybe a mis-characterization as there was information in the text that was new to me (and I have been in this hobby for 30 years), but a lot of the text seemed 'wanting'. Well worth a look see.

This is actually a book about the living molluscs, and not the shells themselves. Some of the best underwater photography I have ever seen to date is to be found here and in large format. The text is mostly biological and comprehensive. The species guide, which is included in the last 50 pages is actually almost next to useless. It is incomplete, the drawings (no photos here) are not always good enough and the descriptions have mistakes. Anyway, if you've ever wanted to see an A3-format photo of *Tridacna Gigas*, two *Cypraea*s breeding, a *Colubularia* sucking on a shark or a *Conus* eating a live fish in a series of photographs, this is the book to buy !

The modern scuba diver has evolved into a contemporary creature who is aware of the underwater environment and the negative impact he is able to assert unless he is careful down there. On behalf of all serious scuba divers everywhere I wish to assert; We are not frogmen, we are not spear-fishermen, we do not wear flippers, we do not breathe Oxygen and WE DO NOT collect sea shells. This book would have you believe otherwise. Shell collecting was practised in the 19th Century - long before the advent of underwater films and photography which allowed people to see the difference between a living creature in its shell on the seabed and a dead case in someone's collection. Yet again, we have a low-quality product from a publishing firm who refuse to afford another so-called author any form of biography or explanation. Consequently, we simply do not know whether or not Giorgio Gabbi is a schoolboy, student, experienced scuba diver or holder of a Phd in Marine Biology. Without that knowledge, the book has no credibility whatsoever. Furthermore, there are no meaningful references and no bibliography whatsoever. My conclusion, therefore, is that little of the content may be trusted. As mentioned in my reviews about other books from these publishers; The translations from parent Italian to English is often derisive. More alarming, however, are the sentiments on the book's back cover - where comments are placed in

order to attract the browser into making that all-important purchase. Those comments also give the non-diver a false impression of what it is we are about. Worded in the present tense as though it were still happening, it reads; "Traded like coins, collected like precious stones, revered like amulets, shells are the mysterious ladies of the Ocean: Coloured and luminous, chiselled or smooth, they elicit curiosity in divers and enthuse collectors." Like I said, out of date! In short, this is yet another mass-produced item from White Star Publishing of Italy, who have a reputation for specialising in quantity over quality and the reader should not be fooled by some excellent photography. NM

Excellent book and I keep it on my coffee table so I can review it often. I collect sea shells from a very good dealer. Thanks.

Good both as technical reference as well as for display

Perfect

Nice book

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