

With Micro Molluscs Every Sample is a grab-bag!
by Bill Merilees

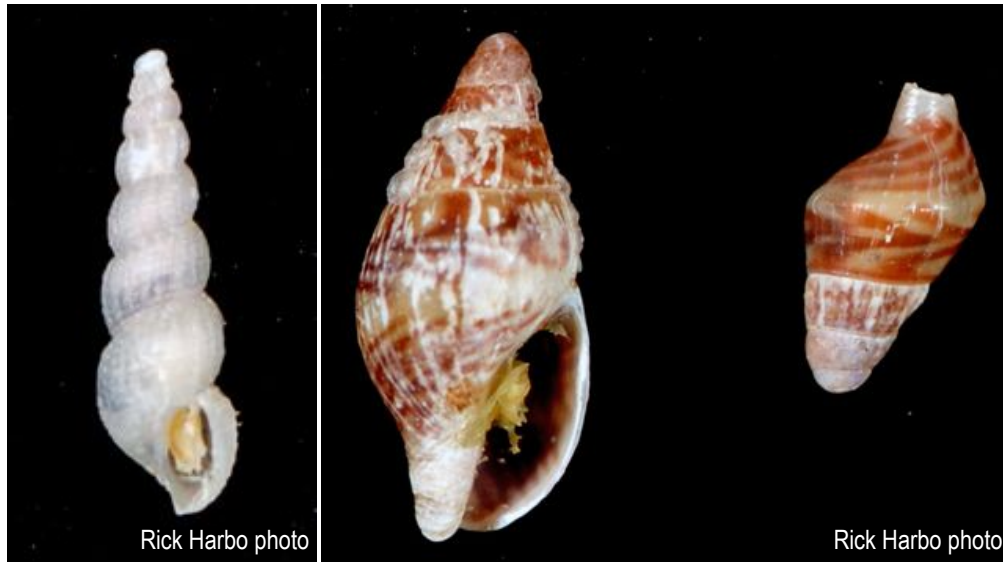
Whether it is a dredge haul or a scraping, you never know what you have until the sample is well and truly sorted. If you do find something that appears unusual it can also take ages before you really **know!**

This was just the circumstance last summer following a visit to Walter Island at Kyuquot, on Vancouver Island's rugged northwest coast. Two 'interesting' snails appeared, one that I was almost certain was 'new'. The other was intriguing for its minute size and very slender spire.

Thanks to material sent me by Jim McLean, the latter was identified as *Graphis shepardiana* (Dall, 1919). On a hunch I checked out Light's Manual for California and much to my surprise (and with a touch of disappointment!) found the other to be *Astyris aurantiaca* (Dall, 1871). Both appear to be significant range extensions, but Jim tells me both have been found previously in British Columbia waters at Barclay Sound, also on Vancouver Island. *Astyris* was surprisingly common, with 2 or 3 being located in most samples collected. For *Graphis* only one individual was found, though a second specimen was located later in the year at Stephenson Point near Nanaimo.

Through the kindness and skills of Rick Harbo, photos of these unusual species are presented here for members to enjoy.

August 15th, 2012



Left - *Graphis shepardiana* can attain a height of 3 to 4 mm.
Right - *Astyris aurantiaca* attains a height of 4.5 mm.