



WCM 2025

XXII World Congress of Malacology



ABSTRACT BOOK

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XXII WORLD CONGRESS OF MALACOLOGY XXIX BRAZILIAN MEETING OF MALACOLOGY



"One Planet, One Health, One Challenge"

Molluscs and Global Health: Integrating Science for the Well-Being of One Planet

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**Bridging Tradition and Technology: Advancing Mollusk Collection
Stewardship and Research Society for the Preservation of Natural History
Collections (SPNHC)**

Collections

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**MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL DIGITIZATION OF MOLLUSKS FROM THE EASTERN
SEABOARD OF THE UNITED STATES**

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The ongoing digitization of natural history collections in the USA has made museum specimens widely available to researchers, educators, students, and the general public. Eastern Seaboard (ESB) and DigIn are two coordinated, multi-institutional Thematic Collections Networks (TCNs) funded by the National Science Foundation that are currently digitizing records of marine species. In addition to traditional digitization activities such as georeferencing and photographing, mollusk digitization now includes recording whether specimens were collected alive or dead (vitality), a trait that can refine species distributions by restricting them to live-only records. One of the most innovative facets of the project is the use of Collaborative Georeferencing, a procedure through which collections form groups for mutually reviewing and editing, to combine and share georeferencing data. The collaborating institutions contain > 85% of all the known records of marine mollusks from the Eastern Seaboard of the USA. Working together, we have mobilized over 4 million mollusk specimens into online data portals and made them freely available to users. As part of this effort, ESB and DigIn members worked with the International Working Group on Taxonomic Databases (TDWG) to integrate the new term “vitality” into the Darwin Core lexicon to track live-collected and dead-collected specimens. Future activities may include scoring other ecologically and evolutionarily important features such as evidence of predation and the presence of shell-associated fauna (e.g., barnacles) as well as linking to external datasets with biographical information on collectors. Together, these new traits create extended specimen records and provide new opportunities for ecological research and informal STEAM education. Working collaboratively across institutions has expedited the delivery of high-quality data to online portals and allowed for innovative solutions to common problems. This growing, free, primary resource is available for research, education and outreach activities, and highlights the value of natural history collections.

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