

The Mollusk Collection at the Academy of Natural Sciences

Gary Rosenberg and Paul Callomon

Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Drexel University
1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

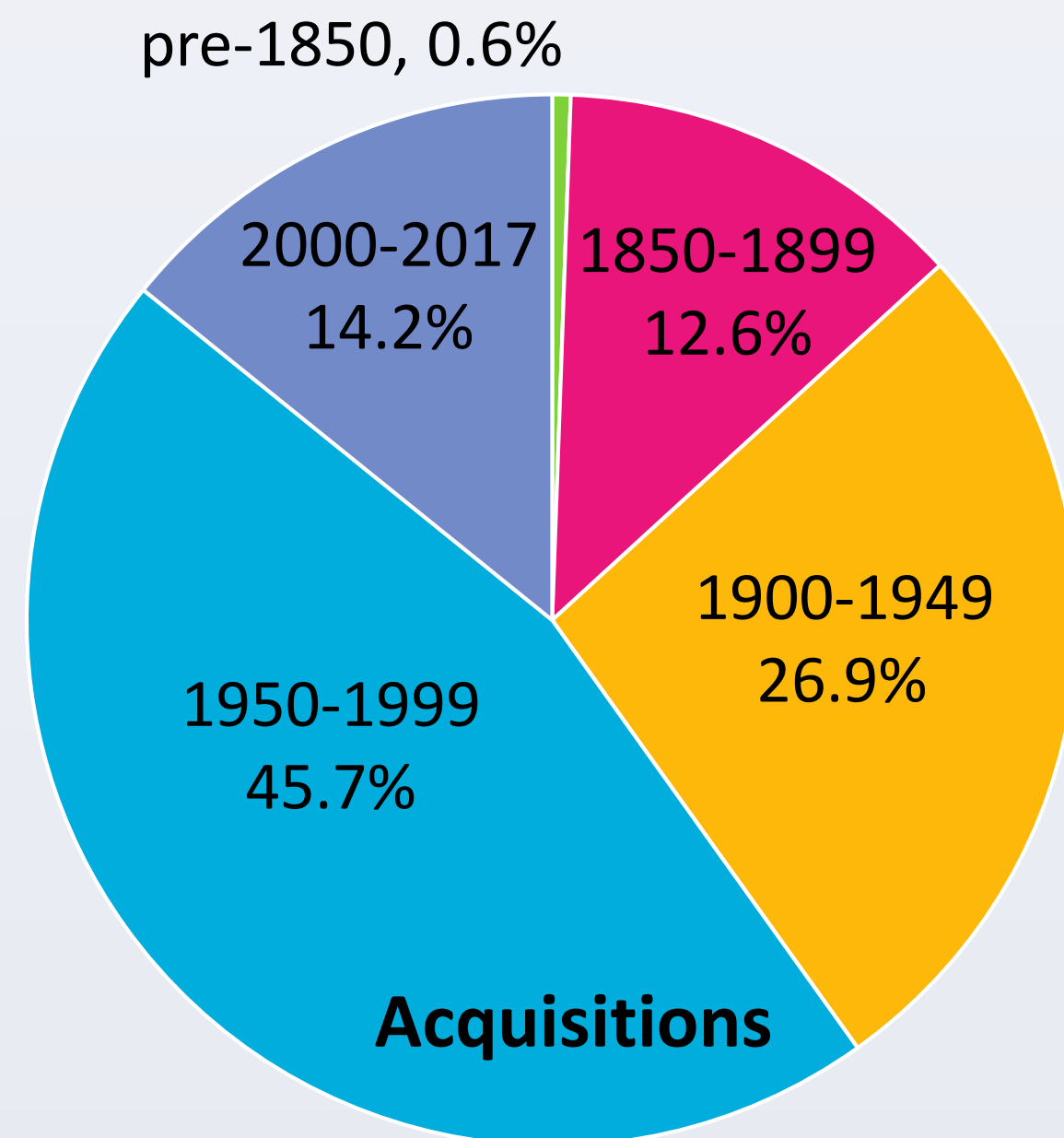


Introduction

The Academy of Natural Sciences was founded in 1812 as a private natural history museum and continued in that status until 2011, when it affiliated with Drexel University. It is now transitioning to being a university museum. The malacology department currently has a curator, a collection manager, an assistant collection manager, two curatorial assistants supported on soft money, a research technician, a part-time undergraduate intern, several volunteers, and three graduate students.

History

The first mollusk specimens entered the ANSP collection around 1816, when Thomas Say, one of the Academy's founders, began describing American species. By 1889, when catalogue numbers were first assigned, the collection had grown to about 60,000 lots. Under the curatorship of Henry Pilsbry, the collection grew more rapidly, reaching 186,000 lots by 1950. Growth accelerated again under R. Tucker Abbott, with 30 expeditions across the Indo-Pacific in the 1950s and 60s, and 317,000 lots by 1970. Several serial publications were started at ANSP: *American Journal of Conchology*, *The Manual of Conchology*, *The Nautilus*, *Indo-Pacific Mollusca*, and *Tryonia*.



Current

- 8-10 million catalogued specimens in 458,000 dry lots and 43,000 alcohol lots
- 18,000 type lots representing 10,000 names by more than 600 authors
- About 8,000 primary type lots (holotype, lectotype, neotype, syntype)
- Almost all catalogued lots are databased and served online
- About 25% georeferenced, but not to current standard (our greatest need)
- Backlog of about 50,000 lots to be assessed for cataloguing

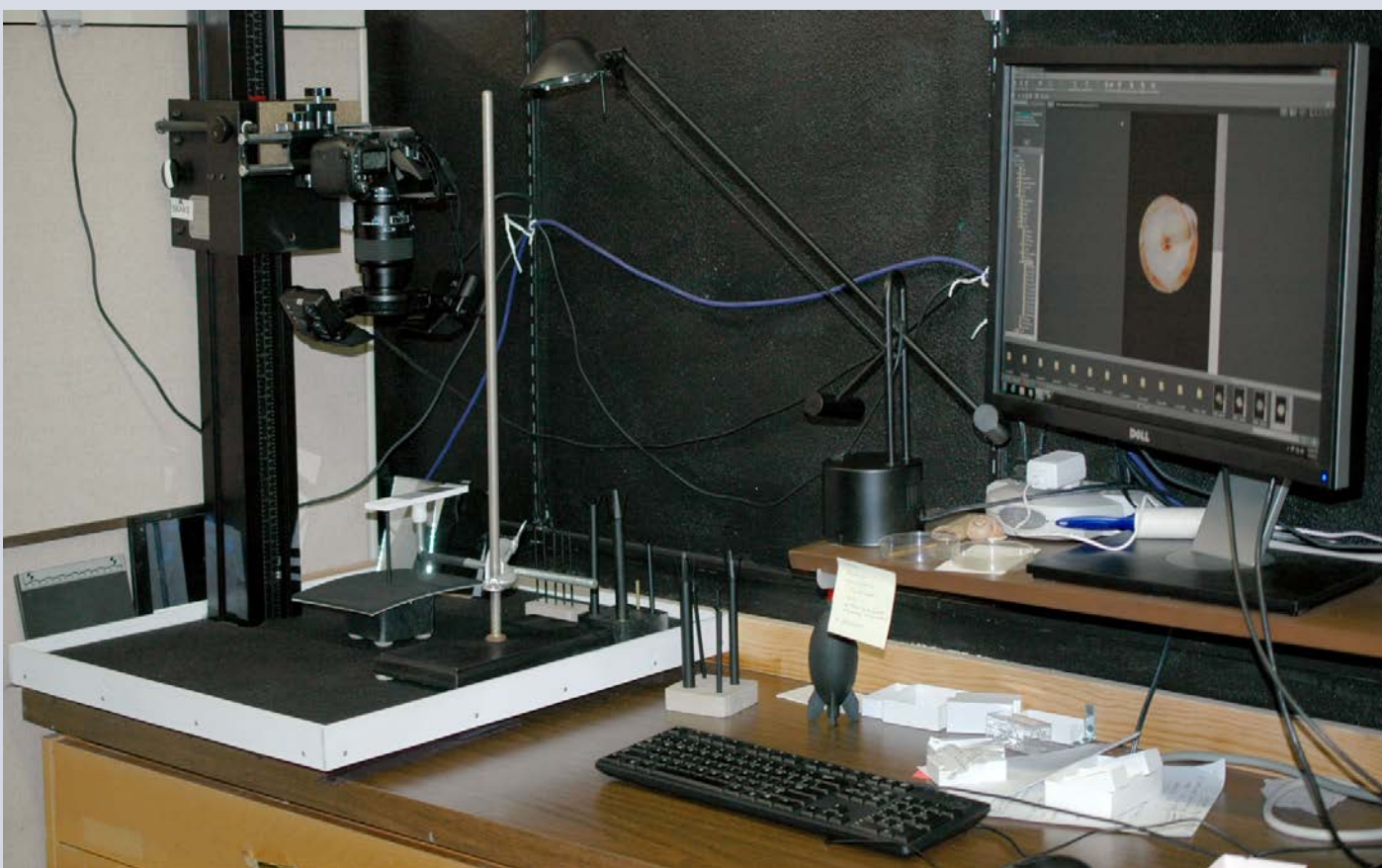
Current projects

- Digital imaging of primary types (funding from NSF); images of >5,000 nominal taxa and labels online (specimens images on this poster are types from this project)
- Rehousing the alcohol collection, image below (funding from NSF)
- Inventory of the dry collection to capture current taxonomic placements
- Cataloguing backlog materials, particularly Unionidae



Photography

Macro rig, for specimens 5-500 mm. Automatic flash unit (macro flash, TTL), computer camera control



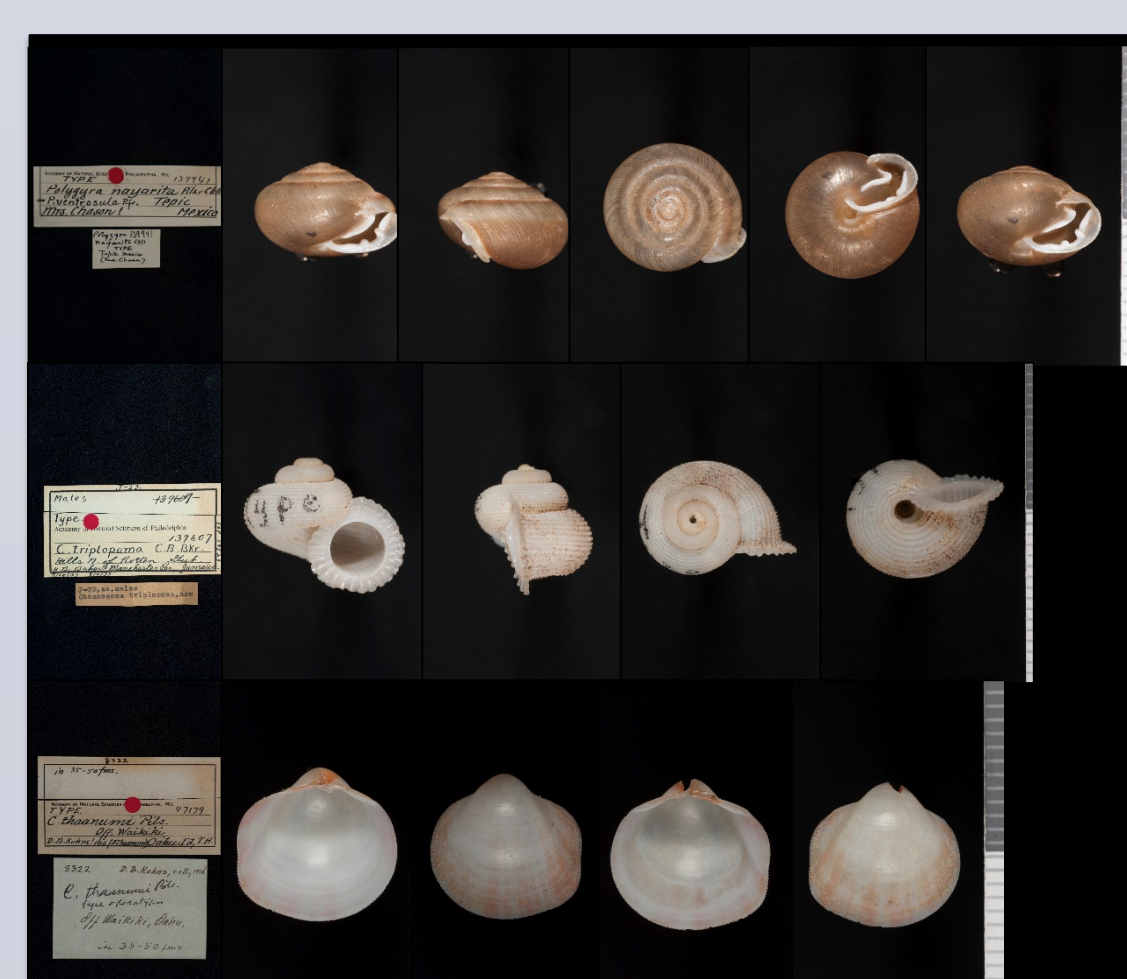
Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM). For specimens under ~2.5 mm, and details



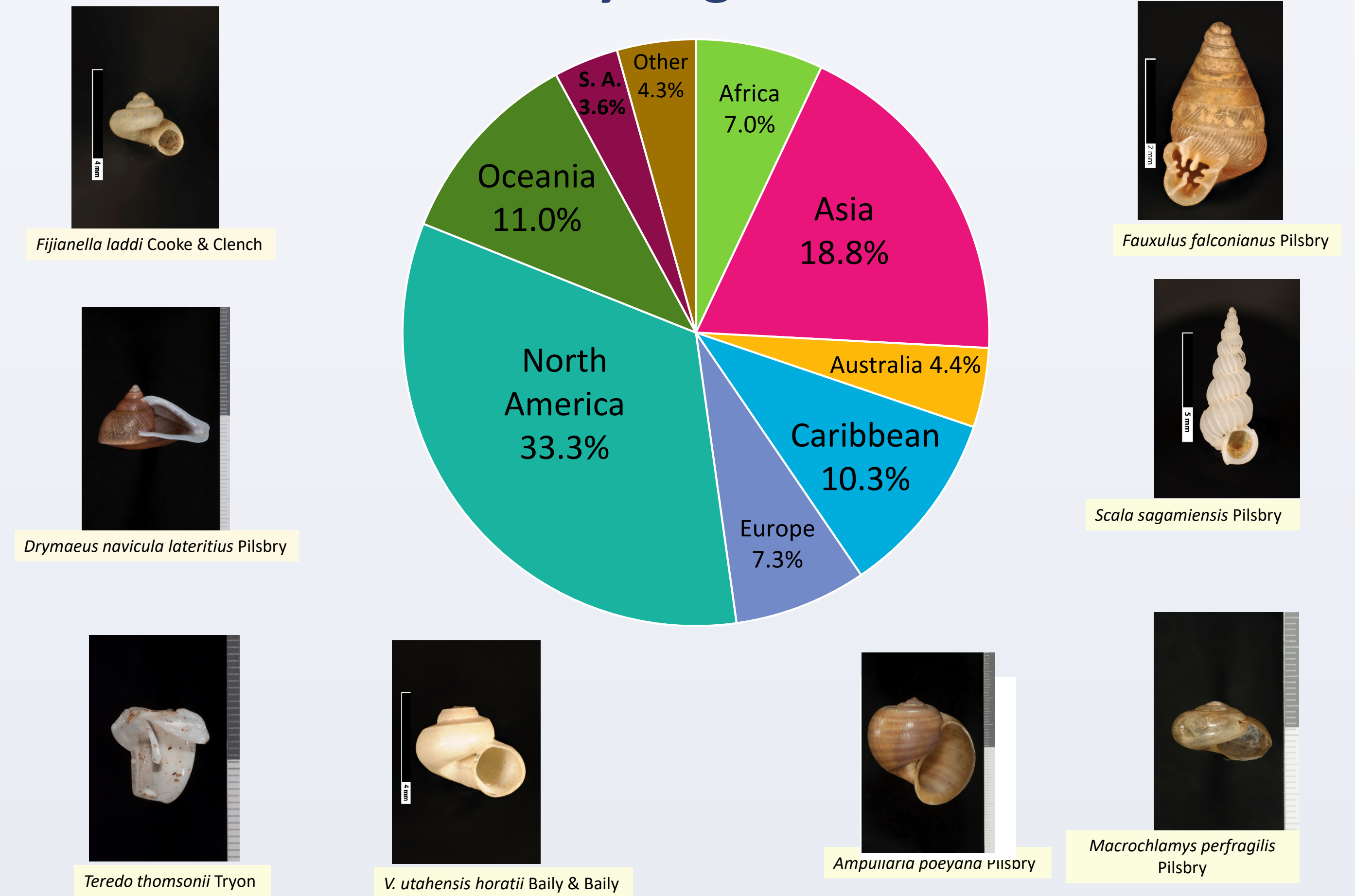
Z-stacking rig, for specimens 2.0-5.0 mm. Automated computer-controlled Z-stacking; manual lighting



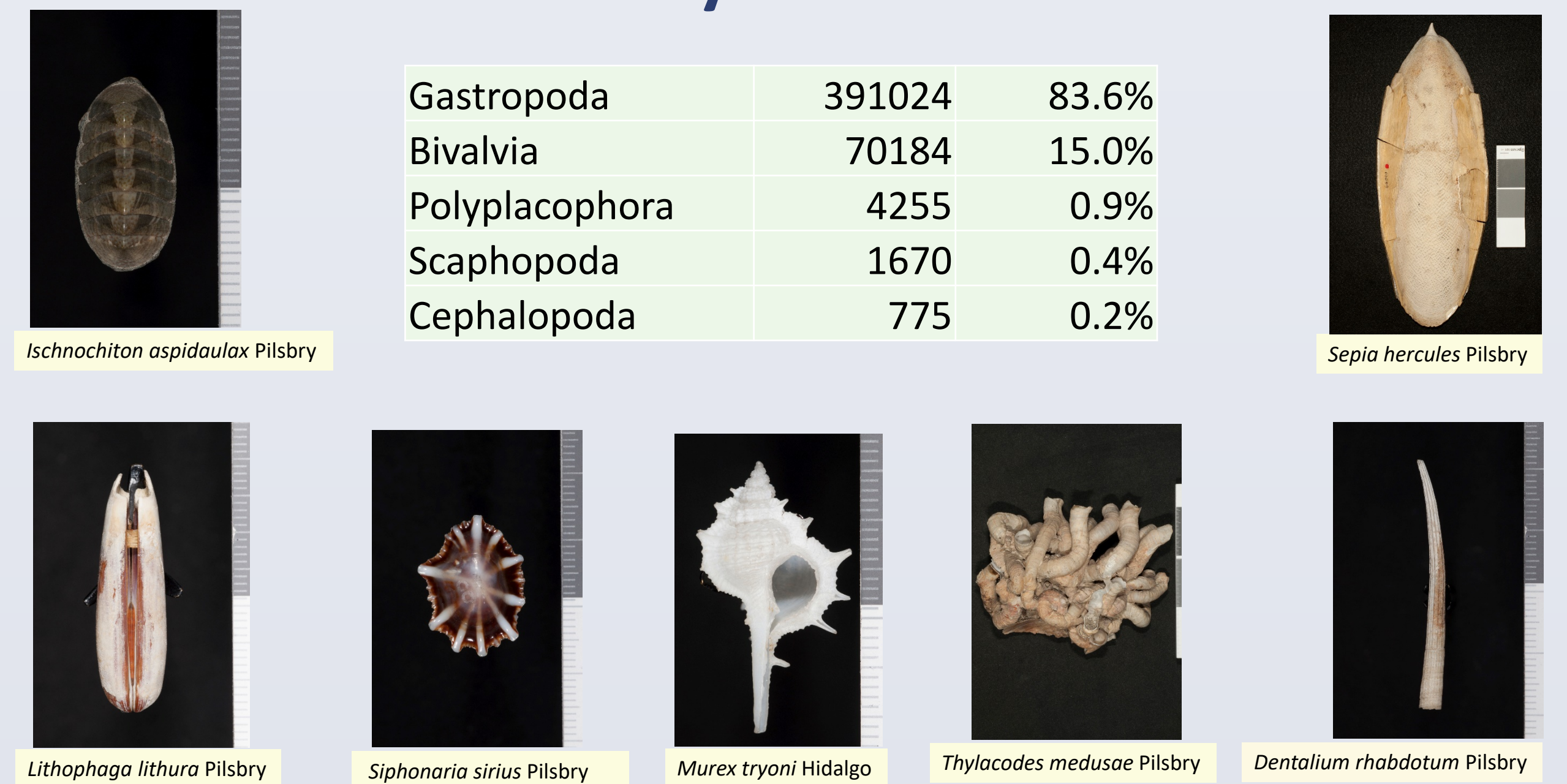
Typical image sets.



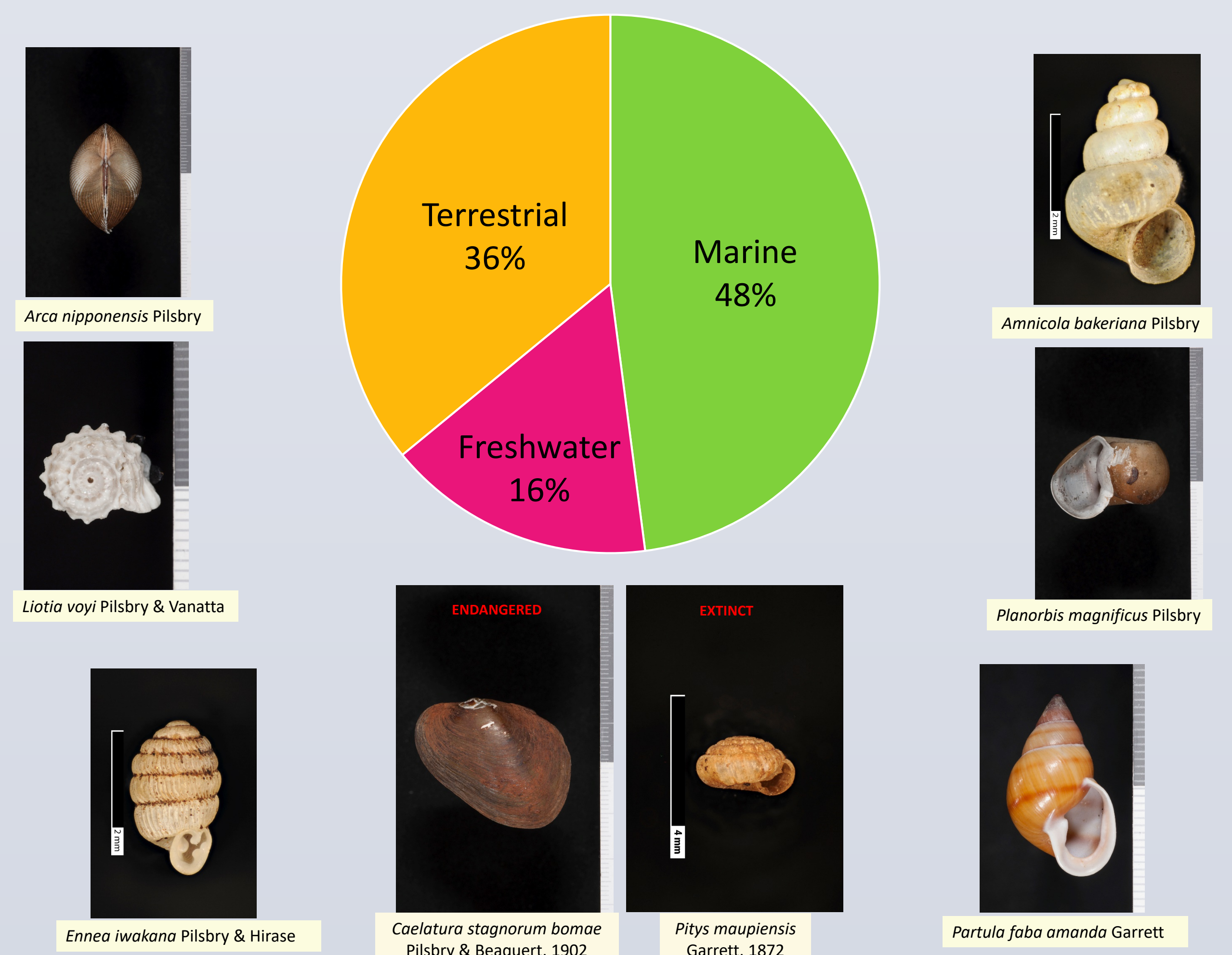
By Region



By Class



By Habitat



Online data (<http://clade/ansp.org/malacology/collections/>)

