

Obituary: Stephen Charles Tracey (born Stephen Charles Fenwick) 1943–2024; a life of music and shells

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Steve Tracey (1943 - 2024)

Photo taken in June 2016 while on a dig at Hauteville-Bocage in the Cotentin, France.

The Early Years

Stephen Charles Tracey, originally named Stephen Charles Fenwick, was born on February 26, 1943, in Ilford, Essex, England to Charles Edward and Gladys Jessie Fenwick. His father served as a police detective while his mother was a schoolteacher. He was the elder of two brothers, with his younger brother Jon being seven years his junior.

Steve exhibited an early fascination with nature, amassing collections of rocks and shells that filled his parents' shed and garage. Recognising his potential, his parents ensured he received quality education by enrolling him at Chigwell School. During his formative years, Steve developed an interest in music, learning to play both piano and guitar, and participating in theatrical productions for organizations such as Stradbroke Social Club and St. Andrew's Dramatic Society.

Africa, Travel and Music

Upon leaving school, Steve joined Barclays Bank but pursued his passion for music in his spare time as an arranger and guitarist for Monk and Co., a demo recording group. Seeking adventure, he applied to the bank's foreign services and was transferred to Barclays in Lusaka, Zambia in 1965. While there, the bank issued him a gun for personal protection, fortunately never needed.

In Zambia, Steve developed an interest in coin collecting, particularly British pennies and latterly British one-pound coins, although his primary interests remained music and shells. Leaving the bank, he became the rhythm guitarist, songwriter, singer, and arranger for the band “The Crescendos”, achieving considerable success. The band relocated to South Africa in 1966, where they released their first album. A local music magazine praised Steve’s songwriting talent and charisma.

After briefly joining the band Page 55, Steve returned to the UK before embarking on a six-month contract in Beirut with another band established by Tony Radcliff. He witnessed significant events such as the Israeli attack on Beirut airport. Upon his return to London, he worked at Tangerine Music Studios, contributing to the creation of songs for notable bands like Dana, The Tremeloes, The Yardbirds, and Small Faces. Around this time, he changed his surname from Fenwick to Tracey. A list of some of his musical accomplishments is appended (Appendix A).

Shells and Palaeontology

By 1978, seeking new directions, Steve travelled to Hong Kong and the Philippine Isles. His focus shifted to conchology and malacology, leading him to collect shells while travelling. Returning to the UK, he found British present-day seashells much less exciting than those of Africa and the Far East, so he turned his attention to Eocene fossil shells. To make ends meet, he started making and selling jewellery wholesale, along the English south coast, timing his visits in his VW Combi van with foreshore exposures at low tide. During one such trip to Swanage in 1979, he met Jenny, who would become his long-term partner.

On one of his collecting trips to Bracklesham Bay, he met the late Chris King who, astonished by his knowledge of tiny fossil gastropods, encouraged him to join the Tertiary Research Group. Steve fitted in perfectly, serving in various roles including Field Secretary, Publicity Secretary, and Editor of their research journal *Tertiary Research* and latterly as an Editor of *Cainozoic Research*. He authored articles on Eocene Mollusca and gained a first-class degree in Geology from Greenwich University in 2000. Following graduation, he combined his PhD studies with work at a law firm and later joined the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at the Natural History Museum, London.

In Retirement

In 2008, Steve married Jenny before she passed away from cancer in 2009. Steve never remarried and retired shortly after Jenny’s death to focus on his palaeontology. He became a Scientific Associate of the Natural History Museum, London and concentrated on French Eocene molluscs. As exposures of Bracklesham Beds in the UK declined, he focussed on the Eocene of the Cotentin (northern France), a region he loved. Despite declining health during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, he continued his scientific pursuits until his passing on December 8, 2024.

At the time of his death, he had written, co-authored or contributed to 24 papers on geology and palaeontology (Appendices B, C), described at least 12 new genera (Appendix D), 59 new species of extinct gastropods (Appendix E) and proposed replacement names for 4 existing species (Appendix F). His contribution to palaeontology was recognised by his colleagues who named 8 extinct species in his honour (Appendix G).

To those who knew him, his wicked sense of humour and infectious enthusiasm for life will live on for ever in their memories.

APPENDIX A. List of music tracks written, arranged, performed, or produced by Steve Tracey under the name Steven Fenwick

Group: The Crescendos

Presenting The Crescendos – (LP) 1966 Arranger, Vocals, Rhythm Guitar.

Don’t let it happen – 1966 Writer

Lost Summer Love – 1966 Producer

Jezebel – Producer – 1966 Producer

What A Shame – 1966 Producer

The Click Song – 1966 Producer

The Girl that I Love Yours and Mine – 1966 Producer

She’s My Woman – 1966 Producer

Sweet one – 1966 Writer

Ma his making eyes at me – 1966 Producer

She’ll be waiting – 1966 Writer

If I had to be – 1966 Writer

Yours and mine – 1966 Writer

Group: Page 55

Slipping and sliding – Writer

Other songs by various artists:

Animal love – 1971 Writer
Major Barmy from the army – unknown Producer
New days, new ways – 1972 Writer
Love is a friend of mine – 1972 Writer
Collie girl – 1973 Writer
Dirty number thirty – 1972 Writer
Ooh la la – 1972 Writer, Producer
Zonder zorgen – 1972 Writer
With hands across the sea – unknown Writer

APPENDIX B. Peer-reviewed scientific articles by or co-written by Steven Tracey

- Tracey, S. 1986. Lower Tertiary strata exposed in a temporary excavation at Well Hall, Eltham, south-east London. *Tertiary Research* 7(4): 107-123, 7 text-figs.
- Bone, D., Todd, J. & Tracey, S. 1991. Fossils from the Bracklesham Group exposed in the M27 Motorway excavations, Southampton, Hampshire. *Tertiary Research* 12(3-4): 131-137, 2 pls.
- Tracey, S. 1992. A review of the Early Eocene molluscs of Bognor Regis (Hampshire Basin), England. *Tertiary Research*, 13(2-3): 155-175, 1 pl., 4 text-figs.
- Tracey, S. 1993. *Gastropods* (contributor), pp 115-133. In: Walker, C. & Ward, D. (eds.), *Fossils*. Eyewitness Handbooks. Dorling Kindersley, London. ISBN 0-7513-1004-2.
- Tracey, S., Todd, J.A. & Erwin, D.H. 1993. *Mollusca, Gastropoda*. In: Benton, M.J. (ed.). *Fossil Record 2*. Palaeontological Association. Chapman & Hall, London. ISBN 0-412-3938-0.
- Tracey, S. & Bone, D. 1996. Aerial photography and Geological mapping of Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex. *Tertiary Research*, 16(1-4): 25-40, 3 text-figs, 8pls.
- Tracey, S. & Todd J.A. 1996. Nomenclatural changes for some Bracklesham Group gastropods. *Tertiary Research*, 16(1-4): 41-54, 2 pls.
- Tracey, S. 1996. Mollusca of the Selsey Formation (Middle Eocene): Conidae, Turridae. *Tertiary Research*, 16(1-4): 55-54, 5 text-figs, 7pls.
- Tracey, S., Todd J.A., Le Renard, J., King, C. & Goodchild, M. 1996. Distribution of Mollusca in units S1 to S9 in the Selsey Formation (Middle Lutetian) Selsey Peninsula, West Sussex. *Tertiary Research*, 16(1-4): 97-139, 1 text-fig, 3 pls, 1 table. [Reissued in April 2023 with corrected pagination.]
- Jeffery, P. & Tracey, S. 1997. The Early Eocene London Clay Formation mollusc fauna of the former Bursledon Brickworks, Lower Swanwick, Hampshire. *Tertiary Research*, 17(3-4): 75-137, 1 text-fig., 15 pls, 1 table. [Reissued in April 2023 with corrected pagination.]
- Pacaud, J.-M. & Tracey, S. 2000. The occurrence of the genus *Fusulculus* Bouchet & Vermeij (Gastropoda, Pseudolividae) in the Eocene of England, with description of two new species. *Tertiary Research*, 20(1-4): 53-58, 1 pl.
- Tracey, S., Donovan, S.K., Clements, D., Jeffery, P., Cooper, J., Rye, P. & Hensley, C. 2002. Temporary exposures of the Eocene London Clay Formation at Highgate, north London: rediscovery of a fossiliferous horizon 'lost' since the nineteenth century. *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, 113: 319-331.
- Hooker, J., Collinson, M.E., Lawson, A.G., Tracey, S. & Skipper, J.A. 2009. The Woolwich Formation of Croydon, S. London, UK: a PETM fauna and flora rediscovered. In: Crouch, E.M., Strong, C.P. & Hollis, C.J. (eds.). *Climatic and Biotic Events of the Paleogene (CBEP 2009)*. Extended Abstracts from an International Conference in Wellington, New Zealand, 12-15 January 2009 (pp. 12-15).
- Tracey, S. 2010. 10. Gastropods. In: Young, J.R., Gale, A.S., Knight, R.I. & Smith, A.B. (eds.). *Fossils of the Gault Clay*. Field Guide to Fossils Number 12: 106-155, 7pls. The Palaeontological Association, London.
- Notton, D., Michel, E., Dale-Skey, N., Nikolaeva, S. & Tracey, S. 2011. 2.5; Best practice in the use of the scientific names of animals: Support for editors of technical journals. In: Smart, P., Maisonneuve, H. & Polderman, A. (eds). *Science Editors' Handbook*. European Association of Science Editors.
- Michel, E., Tracey, S. & Dale-Skey, N. 2011. Best practice in the use of the scientific names of animals: Support for editors of technical journals. *The Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* 68(4): 313-322
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- Janssen, A.W., Janssen, R., Tracey, S., Vaessen, L.M.B. & Van der Voort, J. 2014. Case 3668. *Conus antediluvianus* Bruguière, 1792 (Mollusca, Gastropoda, CONIDAE): proposed conservation of prevailing usage of specific name by setting aside the unidentifiable lectotype and replacing it with a neotype. *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* 71(4): 223-239.
- Symonds, M.F. & Tracey, S. 2014. *Neritilia* (Gastropoda, Neritopsina, Neritiliidae): pushing back the timeline. *Cainozoic Research*, 14(1): 3-7.
- Spijkerman, E., Van Nieulande, F.A.D., Wesselingh, F.P., Reich, S. & Tracey, S. 2015. Pourcy (Paris Basin, France): preliminary assessment of an early Eocene NW European tropical coastal environment from molluscs and vertebrate fossils. *Cainozoic Research*, 15(1-2): 155-180.

- Tracey, S., Craig, B., Belliard, L. & Gain, O. 2017. One, four or forty species? – early Conidae (Mollusca, Gastropoda) that led to a radiation and biodiversity peak in the late Lutetian Eocene of the Cotentin, NW France. *Carnets de Voyages Paléontologiques dans le Bassin Anglo-Parisien*, 3: 1-38, figs 1-132, pls 1-9.
- Tracey, S., Craig B. & Gain, S. 2019. Turridae (Gastropoda, Conoidea) from the late Lutetian Eocene of the Cotentin, NW France: endemism through loss of planktotrophy? *Carnets de Voyages Paléontologiques dans le Bassin Anglo-Parisien*, 5: 101-140, figs 124-154.
- Craig B., Tracey, S., Gain, O., Belliard, L. & Le Renard, J. 2020. Cymatiidae and Charoniidae (Gastropoda, Tonnoidea) from the Middle to Late Eocene of the Cotentin, NW France: a systematic revision. *Carnets de Voyages Paléontologiques dans le Cotentin et le Bassin Anglo-Parisien*, 6: 1-94.
- Gale, A.S., Tracey, S. & Trif, N. 2022. Cirripedes (Crustacea, Thoracica) from the Eocene (Lutetian-Bartonian) of the United Kingdom, France and Romania. *Cainozoic Research*, 22(1): 81-89.

APPENDIX C. Published abstract

- Todd, J.A. & Tracey, S. 1998. *Polyphyletic origin of the agglutinating habit in cerithioid gastropods*. p. 325. In: Bieler, R. & Mikelsen, P.M. (eds). *Abstracts. World Congress of Malacology, Washington. D.C. 1998*. Unitas Malacologica, Washington D.C., http://www.ucd.ie/cobid/unitas/congress/WCM1998_O-Z.pdf (p.325).

APPENDIX D. New extinct gastropod genera named by Brian Craig and Steve Tracey

Papilliconus Tracey & Craig, 2020
Gemmulopsis Tracey & Craig, 2020
Cassitriton Craig, Tracey & Gain, 2020
Eusassia Craig & Tracey, 2020
Microsassia Craig & Tracey, 2020
Microtriton Craig & Tracey, 2020
Nassitriton Craig & Tracey, 2020
Planitriton Craig & Tracey, 2020.
Parasassia Craig & Tracey, 2020
Protocharonia Craig & Tracey, 2020
Protoplex Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella Craig & Tracey, 2020

APPENDIX E. Fossil species named by Steve Tracey alone or with others

Bivalves

Miocardiopsis venablesi Tracey, 1992
Semeloidea curryi Jeffery & Tracey, 1997
Siliqua kingi Jeffery & Tracey, 1997
Abra (Syndosmya) cygnea Jeffery & Tracey, 1997

Gastropods

Acteocina venablesi Tracey, 1992
Eopleurotoma fowleri Tracey, 1996
Eopleurotoma hollowayi Tracey, 1996
Eopleurotoma fusellina Tracey, 1996
Gemmula (Gemmula) pastoralis Tracey, 1996
Gemmula (Gemmula) veteratoris Tracey, 1996
Gemmula (Gemmula) wrigleyi Tracey, 1996
Entomope semipunctata Jeffery & Tracey, 1997
Solariorbis lawsoni Jeffery & Tracey, 1997
Epalxis kempfi Jeffery & Tracey, 1997
Gemmula jefferyi Tracey, 1996 [See appendix F]
Fusulculus alienopriscus Picaud & Tracey, 2000
Fusulculus curryi Picaud & Tracey, 2000
Hemiconus pissarroii Tracey & Craig, 2017
Hemiconus trisulcatus Tracey & Craig, 2017
Hemiconus lateralis Tracey & Craig, 2017
Hemiconus auriculatus Tracey & Craig, 2017
Hemiconus constantinensis Craig & Tracey, 2017

Papilliconus papillatus Tracey & Craig, 2017
Papilliconus radulfovillensis Tracey & Craig, 2017
Eoconus veteratoris Tracey & Craig, 2017
Cassitriton magnificus Tracey, Craig, & Gain, 2019
Eopleurotoma bella Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma bicincta Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma vauvillensis Tracey & Craig, 2019
Epalxis toddi Tracey & Craig, 2019
Epalxis symondsi Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma scitula Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma. hastula Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma boxleyi Tracey & Craig, 2019
Eopleurotoma christinae. Tracey & Craig, 2019
Gemmula garviei Tracey & Craig, 2019
Gemmula tuckeri Tracey & Craig, 2019
Gemmulopsis nigellensis Tracey & Craig, 2019
Coroniopsis mortoni Tracey & Craig, 2019
Microsassia inconspicua Craig & Tracey, 2020
Microtriton biplicoides Craig & Tracey 2020
Microtriton dollfusi Craig & Tracey 2020
Monoplex gradatus Craig, Tracey & Gain, 2020
Nassitriton conicus Craig, Tracey & Le Renard, 2020
Parasassia globosa Craig & Tracey, 2020
Parasassia polysarcoides Craig & Tracey, 2020
Protoplex gervillei Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella angulata Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella bacata Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella caputdraconis Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella crassilabrum Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella decussata Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella lacertina Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella multivittata Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella puncticarinata Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella radulfovillensis Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella scalaris Craig & Tracey, 2020
Sassiella vincta Craig & Tracey, 2020

APPENDIX F. Replacement names

Haustator fowleri Tracey & Todd, 1996 for *Turritella bicincta* J. de C. Sowerby, 1850 *non*-Wood, 1842
Cerithiella fowleri Tracey & Todd, 1996 for *Cerithium cancellatum* J. de C. Sowerby, 1850 *non*-Lamarck, 1804
Conorbis aliger Tracey & Todd, 1996 for *Conus alatus* Edwards, 1857 *non*-Fischer, 1807
Gemmula (Gemmula) jefferyi Tracey 1996 (replacement name for *Pleurotoma callifera* Edwards, 1861 *non*-Conrad, 1835)

APPENDIX G. Extinct species named in honour of Steve Tracey

Nassarius fenwicki Kilburn 1972 [Gastropod]
Gemmula traceyi Tucker & Le Renard 1993 [Gastropod]
Idmidronea traceyi Taylor & McKinney, 2006 [Bryozoan]
Monsneritina traceyi (Symonds, 2009) Symonds, 2024 [Original name: *Pseudodostia traceyi*] [Gastropod]
Conasprella traceyi (J.K. Tucker & Stahlschmidt, 2010) Puillandre *et al.*, 2015 [Original name: *Pseudoconorbis traceyi* aka "Conus" traceyi] [Gastropod]
Pseudosassia traceyi Vicián & Z. Kovács, 2022 [Gastropod]
Clithon traceyi Garvie & Symonds, 2022 [Gastropod]
Magadis traceyi Symonds, Gain & Belliard, in prep./press [Gastropod]

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- Kilburn, R.N. 1972. Taxonomic notes on South African marine Mollusca (2), with the description of new species and subspecies of *Conus*, *Nassarius*, *Vexillum* and *Demoulia*. *Annals of the Natal Museum*, 21(2): 391-437.
- Puillandre, N., Duda, T.F., Meyer, C., Olivera, B.M. & Bouchet, P. 2015. One, four or 100 genera? A new classification of the cone snails. *Journal of Molluscan Studies* 81: 1-23.
- Symonds, M.F. 2009. The Neritopsidae and the Neritidae of the Bracklesham Group (Early and Middle Eocene) of the Hampshire Basin. *Cainozoic Research* 6(1-2): 37-51.
- Symonds, M.F. 2024. Three new species of *Clithon* (Mollusca, Gastropoda, Neritimorpha, Neritidae) are described from the Solent Group (late Eocene and early Oligocene) of the Hampshire Basin, England. *Cainozoic Research* 24(1): 15-24.
- Taylor, P.D. & McKinney, F.K. 2006. Cretaceous Bryozoa from the Campanian and Maastrichtian of the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains, United States. *Scripta Geologica* 132: 1-346.
- Tucker, J.K. & Le Renard, J. 1993. Liste bibliographique des Turridae (Gastropoda, Conacea) du Paléogène de l'Angleterre, de la Belgique et de la France. *Cossmanniana*, 2(1): 1-66.
- Tucker, J.K. & Stahlschmidt, P. 2010. A second species of *Pseudoconorbis* (Gastropoda: Conoidea) from India. *Miscellanea Malacologica* 4(3): 31-34.
- Vicián, Z. & Kovács, Z. 2022. Middle Eocene Tonnoidea (Caenogastropoda) from the Hungarian Paleogene Basin. *Fragmenta Palaeontologica Hungarica*, 37(1): 13-47.