RESEARCHING THE WORLD’S BEADS:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Society of Bead Researchers

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AUSTRALIA AND PACIFIC

The countries covered in this section include: Australia, Easter Island, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, as well as Hawai‘i. See also the two specialized theme bibliographies and the General and Miscellaneous bibliography as they also contain reports dealing with these countries.

Akerman, Kim

Discusses the organic ornaments used by the Aborigines based on archaeological and ethnographic sources.

Allen, J., S.G. Holdaway, and R. Fullagar

Analyses of shell beads and stone drill points from Motupore Island, near Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, contribute to the debate about the specialized role of the site in a prehistoric exchange network as well as to theoretical discussions concerning the relationship between craft specialization and social stratification.

Allen, Lindy, Sarah Babister, Elizabeth Bonshek, and Rosemary Goodall

Presents the results of chemical analysis of a sample of beads on objects from the collections at Museums Victoria in Melbourne, as well as a comparative set of beads on objects from neighboring Papua New Guinea. Done to gain a broader understanding of possible pathways
along which beads and beaded objects made their way into the Pacific during the colonial and pre-colonial eras, and to consider the possibility of common origins with those found in Aboriginal objects.

Amesbury, J.R. and R.L. Hunter-Anderson

Over 400 Conus shell beads and bead blanks of the Pre-Latte period were uncovered at the Chalan Piao site, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

Amesbury, J.R., D.R. Moore, and R.L. Hunter-Anderson

Mentions the presence of Conus shell beads and bead blanks of the Pre-Latte period at the Chalan Piao site on Saipan, and the site of Unai Chulu on Tinian, Mariana Islands.

Amesbury, J.R. and Cherie K. Walth

Surveys the various types of beads and pendants recovered from excavations at Naton Beach, Guam. They cover the period from Pre-Latte to post-contact. Materials include shell, shark teeth, and glass.

Ash, J., A. Brooks, B. David, and I.J. McNiven

Three clear glass beads excavated at a late 19th-century missionary village in the Torres Strait area off the north coast of Australia are very briefly described in Table 3 and illustrated in Fig. 2, E-G.

Balme, Jane
2000 Excavations Revealing 40,000 Years of Occupation at Mimbi Caves, South Central Kimberley, Western Australia. Australian Archaeology 51:1-5.

Fragments of Dentalium shell found in the upper Pleistocene levels of the Riwi Cave deposit have smooth edges at the openings suggesting their use as beads.

Balme, Jane and Kate Morse
Why did Paleolithic people wear shells and why was the practice so widespread in the world? Research in Western Australia shows that specific marine shells were targeted, subject to special processes of manufacture into beads and that some had traveled hundreds of kilometers from their source.

**Balme, Jane and Sue O’Connor**

2017 Traditions and Change in Scaphopod Shell Beads in Northern Australia from the Pleistocene to the Recent Past. In *Not Just for Show: The Archaeology of Beads, Beadwork and Personal Ornaments*, edited by Daniella E. Bar-Yosef Mayer, Clive Bonsall, and Alice M. Choyke, pp. 7-18. Oxbow Books, Oxford and Philadelphia. Discusses the archaeological contexts and chronology of shell beads, with emphasis on scaphopod (tusk shell) specimens, as well as their uses in antiquity and in relatively recent times. Attention is also paid to how the use and value of the beads changed not only through time but also as the beads moved inland from the coast.

2019 Special Issue: Early Personal Ornaments – Bead Making in Aboriginal Australia from the Deep Past to European Arrival: Materials, Methods, and Meanings. *PaleoAnthropology* 2019:177-195; https://www.academia.edu/38510167/. Reviews the raw materials used by Indigenous Australians to make beads. It includes beads recovered from archaeological sites, as well as beads collected before 1940 held in museum collections, and those that are described in pre-1940 literature and other archival material.

**Balme, Jane, Sue O’Connor, and Michelle C. Langley**

2018 Marine Shell Ornaments in North Western Australian Archaeological Sites: Different Meanings over Time and Space. In *The Archaeology of Portable Art: Southeast Asian, Pacific, and Australian Perspectives*, edited by Michelle Langley, Mirani Litster, Duncan Wright, and Sally K. May. Routledge, London. Postulates that the archaeological distributions of marine objects, including shell beads, may be interpreted as reflecting differences in social meaning across time and space.

**Beck, Stephen**

2009 Maritime Mechanisms of Contact and Change: Archaeological Perspectives on the History and Conduct of the Queensland Labour Trade. Ph.D. thesis. James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland. Several glass beads (p. 130) were recovered from the wreck of the *Foam* which sank in 1893 on the Great Barrier Reef of Australia.

**Bedford, Stuart**

2006 *Pieces of the Vanuatu Puzzle: Archaeology of the North, South and Centre*. Terra Australis 23. *Conus* beads as well as pendants made from various shell species and a sea-urchin spine were recovered from various sites.
Birmingham, Judy
Illustrates and briefly describes one stone and 22 glass beads from the Aboriginal establishment on Flinders Island.

Burley, David V. and Travis Freeland
Test excavation of an early Lapita colonizing site encountered an abundant assemblage of *Anadara* shell disc beads and preforms, as well as lithic micro-drills for bead perforation. Radiocarbon dates place this assemblage in the interval 2490-2280 calBP.

Burney, David A. and William K. Pila Kikuchi
Ornaments include small cowrie shells drilled lengthwise for necklaces, as well as other drilled shells. A finely polished black basalt mirror, perfectly circular and drilled as a pendant, was found near a large carved bone bead and many drilled cowries, all of which may have comprised a necklace.

Burt, Ben
In the Solomon Islands, laboriously fashioned shell beads served as ornament and “money,” as did porpoise teeth and, from the 19th century, glass seed beads traded from Europe.

Burt, Ben, David Akin, and Michael Kwa‘ioloa
2009  *Body Ornaments of Malaita, Solomon Islands*. University of Hawai‘i Press, Honolulu.
The Kwara’ae and other peoples of Malaita island once wore shell ornaments of various kinds, including strings and straps of shell money-beads. This book describes the materials, techniques, and relationships by which ornaments were produced and exchanged, and then catalogs the great variety of ornaments worn throughout Malaita, fully illustrated in detailed drawings.

Campbell, Janet and Peter Gesner
Describes the clear and amber-colored glass beads (p. 138) found on the wreck of a British ship that sank east of Cape York, Australia, in 1791.
Casella, Eleanore C.
The Ross Female Factory operated in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania, Australia) between 1848 and 1855 for the accommodation of transported female convicts. Seven red-on-white glass beads were found.

Casey and Lowe Pty Ltd.
Excavations conducted at Sydney harbor yielded a variety of glass beads and other ornaments, mostly from the 19th century. Descriptions and images are to be found in Vol. 1, Section 4; Vol. 3, Section 8.2; Vol. 5, Appendix 5.3; and Vol. 6.

Clark, Geoffrey, Michelle C. Langley, Mirani Litster, Olaf Winter, and Judith Amesbury

Clark, Geoffrey and Katherine Szabó
Describes the beads made of shell and fish vertebrae (probably shark) found at Natunuku and Votua.

David, Bruno, Jean-Michel Geneste, Ken Aplin, Jean-Jacques Delannoy, Nick Araho, Chris Clarkson, Kate Connell, Simon Haberle, Bryce Barker, Lara Lamb, John Stanisic, Andrew Fairbairn, Robert Skelly, and Cassandra Rowe
Cited in the archaeological literature as one of the oldest known pottery-bearing sites of the southern lowlands of PNG, the recovered artifacts include shell disc beads, worked cowries, and drilled mammal teeth.

Davidson, Col
Surveys sites in western Australia that have yielded dentalium beads.
DeFant, D.G.
Four ^14C dates were obtained from Conus-shell-bead necklaces associated with the earliest burials and range from 2790 to 2330 B.P.

Dupont, Constanze
On the Micronesian islands of Palau, the exchange of gifts, money, and food is still a lived tradition and a key part of life from birth to death. Most notably, Palauan bead money (udoud er belau) has kept its symbolic importance and is used for certain key occasions.

Feary, Sue
Dated to ca. 7000 years B.P., an Aboriginal site in southeastern Australia yielded 327 pierced kangaroo and wallaby incisors which presumably once formed part of a necklace. They are the first of their kind to be found in Australia.

Francis, Peter, Jr.
A section of the book (pp. 189-190) is devoted to the beads of Palau, Micronesia.

Godden Mackay Logan
Excavations in a poorer neighborhood of Sydney produced about 1,500 glass beads (vol. 4, pp. 42-44). The principal occupation was during the 19th century.

Haddow, Eve, James Flexner, Stuart Bedford, and Matthew Spriggs
Based on archaeological findings and ethnohistoric sources.

Hicks, Dan, Sue Hamilton, Mike Seager Thomas, and Ruth Whitehouse

Intoh, Michiko

Irish, Paul
2007 Bundeena Bling? Possible Aboriginal Shell Adornments from Southern Sydney. Australian Archaeology 64:46-49. Perforated black periwinkle (Nerita atramentosa) shells recovered from a midden in southeastern Australia that was in use by ca. 1800 B.P. may have served as beads.

Kirch, Patrick V.
1993 Non-Ceramic Portable Artifacts from To’aga. In The To’aga Site: Three Millennia of Polynesian Occupation in the Manu’a Islands, American Samoa, edited by P.V. Kirch and T.L. Hunt, pp. 157-166. Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility 51. Ornaments include several shell beads and an echinoid-spine bead. They are attributed to the first millennium BC.

Langenwalter II, Paul E. and Liana K. Meeker
2015 Excavation of the Hālawa Cave Rockshelter, North Hālawa Valley, O’ahu, Hawai’i. Hawaiian Archaeology 14:47-64. Recovered artifacts include several shell beads and a dog-tooth pendant.
Langley, Michelle C.
While emu eggs were widely available and exploited across Australia for many thousands of years, experimentation with this raw material identified that the shells were simply too small, too thin, and too fragile to be useful in the production of beads and other items.

Litster, Mirani
Presents an overview of the subject.

Litster, Mirani, Daryl Wesley, and Gretchen Stolte
This chapter advocates a suite of methods for developing an understanding of the glass bead record in Australia, which is slowly emerging as a significant and interesting area of contact research.

Liu, Robert K.
Under Western influence, beads replace human hair in a traditional ornament.

McAdam, Leila E.
The author has synthesized the beaded ornaments held in Australian museums and set up a classification system that has allowed her to determine spatial patterning of beads and to investigate current theories for explaining patterning.

McAdam, Leila and Iain Davidson
Provides information about the different classes of ethnographically known beads and pendants and their distribution across Australia in relation to the natural boundaries of drainage basins. Concludes with a few remarks about the significance of the distributions.
Megaw, J.V.S.
Among the aboriginal artifacts recovered from the Main Rock Shelter site at Curraurang Cove, Sydney, Australia, is a single European glass bead.

Monroe, M.H.
Summarizes the beads and pendants found at 15 early sites (42,000-8000 BP) in Australia.

Over 400 *Conus* shell beads and bead blanks of the Pre-Latte period were uncovered at the Chalan Piao site, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

Morse, Kate
Modified shells, with wear suggesting they had been strung as beads, were among the finds from this Pleistocene site.

Nagaoka, Takuya
Presents a thorough analysis of the recovered shell beads and dolphin-tooth pendants. Two glass beads were also recovered. Archaeometric data are provided for the shell beads.

Nicholls, Jean
An overview of pre-colonial bead finds in Australia and Tasmania. Materials include marine shells such as cone and dentalium, bone, and perforated kangaroo and wallaby teeth.
O’Connor, Sue and William R. Dickinson
The excavation of a rockshelter in Watinglo unearthed the unusual find of four stone disc-shaped beads such as have not hitherto been reported from Papua New Guinea.

O’Connor, Sue, Tim Maloney, Dorcas Vannieuwenhuyse, Jane Balme, and Rachel Wood
2014  Occupation at Carpenters Gap 3, Windjana Gorge, Kimberley, Western Australia. *Australian Archaeology* 78:10-23.
Two scaphopod (dentalium) beads are attributed to the early Holocene, suggesting movement of high-value goods from the coast.

O’Connor, S., M. Spriggs, and P. Veth
While the shell beads were recovered from levels dated to the Pleistocene, they themselves date to approximately 3500 BP and 4500 BP, respectively. The beads were vertically displaced downward or, alternatively, were part of the contents of an intrusive feature which was not discernable during excavation.

Perrette, Claire
This study of 324 shell ornaments (including beads and pendants) associated with the Lapita culture focuses on four major facets of shell artifact production and consumption: 1) raw material choice, 2) shellworking techniques, 3) curation, and 4) implications for value.

Phillips, Caroline and Harry Allen
A small group of blue and amber-colored glass beads was found at Opita in northern New Zealand. Associated bottles date to the 1860-1915 period.

Pitman, Heidi T. and Lynley A. Wallis
The resin derived from spinifex grasses was primarily used as an adhesive by Indigenous Australians but was also formed into beads. Museum specimens date primarily to the late 19th century.
Przywolnik, Kathryn
Among the items discussed are shell beads and bale-r-shell pendants.

Salleh, Anna
Reports on the significance of 30 glass beads excavated from the Wellington Range in northwestern Arnhem Land, Australia, and attributed to the 18th century.

Sand, Christophe
Excavations in rockshelters on several islands yielded beads made of shell, urchin spines, greenstone, and glass.

Shaw, Ben and Michelle C. Langley
Shell beads and other objects from five prehistoric sites on two islands (Rossel and Nimowa) in the Louisiade Archipelago are analyzed to determine how they were manufactured and used.

Sinoto, Yoshihiko H.
The Fa’ahia site yielded two beads similar to “reel” beads in Maori ornaments. One is made of whale bone; the other, stone. The objects are attributed to the period AD 700-1150.

Smith, Claire and Heather Burke
Summarizes the finds of the earliest beads in Australia (p. 35).

Smith, Ian, Angela Middleton, Jessie Garland, and Tristan Russell
A variety of wound glass beads were recovered from a mission site in northern New Zealand. It operated during the 1814-1832 period.
Spennemann, Dirk H.R.
Many of the burials investigated were accompanied by necklaces and belt strings of plastic beads.

Szabó, Katherine
Presents a detailed account of shell artifact production at various sites attributed primarily to the Lapita culture. The findings suggest widespread relationships in shell-working practices across the study area that have a considerable time depth. Beads were made principally from *Conus* shells.

The Lapita Cultural Complex denotes a tightly cohesive and distinctive culture that settled the area east of the Solomon Islands called Remote Oceania between 3400 and 2900 years ago. Among their ornaments were annular beads fashioned from *Conus* shells (p. 120-121). A single *Spondylus* bead from the early New Ireland site of Kamgot has also been identified with a further two beads of either *Spondylus* or *Chama* identified within recently excavated samples at St Maurice-Vatcha on the Isle of Pines, New Caledonia.

Thangavelu, Anbarasu “Eddie”
Table 5.2 lists the various shellfish species used to produce the beads found at the Caution Bay site, as well as sites elsewhere in Papua New Guinea.

Valentin, Frederique, Matthew Spriggs, Stuart Bedford, and Hallie Buckley
Discusses the shell, stone, glass, and whale- and pig-tooth beads and pendants found at various sites in the Vanuatu island group. These generally comprised necklaces and bracelets.

Walth, Cherie K.
*Conus* and *Spondylus* shell beads as well as glass beads were found with Pre-Latte/Latte period burials.
Weisler, Marshall I.
A male burial attributed to the mid-15th century was accompanied by 147 red disk beads made from a large bivalve (*Spondylus cf. varius*), a shell species now believed to be extinct. The condition of the beads, from very well preserved to highly eroded, suggests that they were heirlooms and acquired over a long period of time.

The recovered ornaments include *Spondylus* and *Conus* shell beads, Golden cowrie (*Cypraea aurantium*) pendants, a *Spondylus* nose ring, ground bivalves (*Cardium orbitum*) possibly used as charms, and several styles of *Conus* shell rings. The material is broadly attributed to the 1st-11th centuries.

Wesley, D. and M. Litster
The recovery of an assemblage of glass and stone beads from six archaeological sites within the Manganowal estate in the Wellington Range, northern Australia, supports the case for the introduction of these items to Arnhem Land in the pre-Mission era context.

A preliminary analysis of the bead assemblage recovered from seven archaeological sites in western Arnhem Land, Australia, supports the case for the introduction of these items to indigenous communities starting with Southeast Asian trepang fishermen from Makassar, Sulawesi, before the European settlement of northern Australian in the 1820s.

Wickler, Stephen
A variety of shell beads and perforated gastropods that could have served as ornaments were recovered.

Wright, Duncan et al.
2013  The Archaeology of Post Contact “Entanglement” on Mabuyag, Western Torres Strait. Manuscript report [Queensland Archaeological Research].
Ten glass trade beads were excavated at two villages on Mabuiag (Mabuyag) Island in western Torres Strait off Cape York, Australia. Attributed to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the beads are mainly small red-on-white specimens, along with white, light green, and dark blue.


Detailed morphometric and use wear analysis is presented for a group of painted shark vertebrae beads, alongside Aboriginal oral traditions, and assessment of similar artifacts held in museum collections across Australia.