



## Shells

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.07.01  
by Nancy Wyskiel

This unit will be used to teach sixth-grade students about the phylum Mollusca. I suggest teaching this unit during the spring for approximately three weeks. The primary objective will be to concentrate on marine mollusks in the New Haven area. I will use my personal collection as a teaching aid. Through this unit I hope to spark an interest in shell collecting among my students. I will try to guide students in an organized manner on how to begin to collect and to enhance their powers of observation by identification of the many different varieties of shells that can be found in our area.

Mollusks are an important group of invertebrates in the animal kingdom. They are classified in the phylum Mollusca, and are divided into 6 classes and subdivided based on differences in anatomical features such as the foot, mouth, and breathing organs. The classes are gastropoda, pelecypoda (bivalves), amphineura (chitons), cephalopoda, scaphopoda (tusk shells), and monoplacophora. The major concentration in this unit will be on the classes gastropoda and pelecypoda because of their occurrence in the New Haven region.

To increase students' awareness of shells and the living organisms that once inhabited them I have provided information on growth, feeding, locomotion, and reproduction. Body parts will be studied through diagrams and explanations of the physiology of these animals. To aid in this study I have included a separate glossary for uncommon terms such as radula, byssus, and carnivorous.

(Recommended for Science classes, grade 6)

### **Key Words**

*Calcium Cycle Ecology Environmental Science*

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