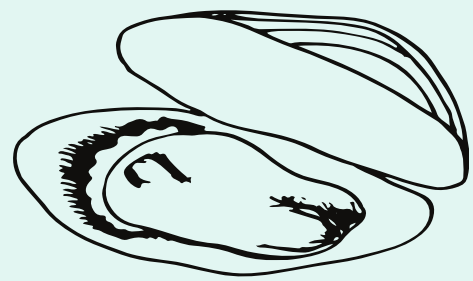


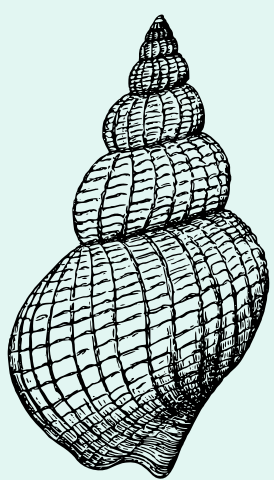
Mollusks

The Pacific Northwest is home to hundreds of species of shellfish and each species has its own unique shells that vary in size, shape, colour and texture. The shells most commonly found in BC belong to four classes of mollusks: bivalves (class Bivalvia), gastropods (class Gastropoda), tuskshells (class Scaphopoda) and chitons (class Polyplacophora).



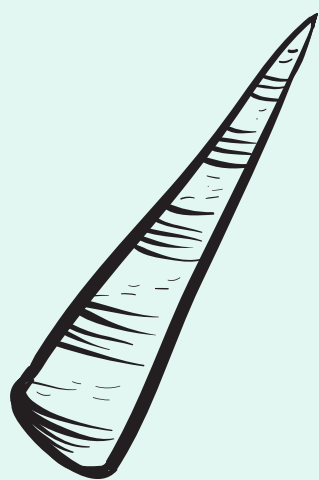
Bivalves

Bivalves have a two-part hinged shell that protects the soft-bodied invertebrate. Some bivalves ingest sediment for food and some have modified gills to filter water and collect food particles.



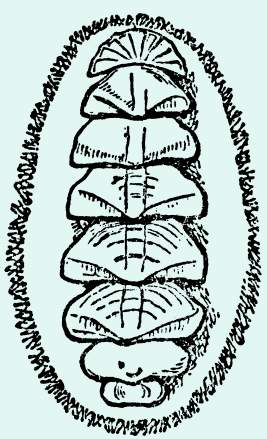
Gastropods

Commonly known as snails and slugs, they are extremely morphologically diverse. They also occupy the widest range of ecological niches of all the mollusks, being the only class to have species inhabiting the terrestrial environment.



Tusk Shells

Tusk Shells live in soft substrates offshore. Because of this and their small size many beachcombers are unfamiliar with them. Their shells are not as common or as visible in the beach drift as other mollusks.



Chitons

Chitons are defined by the eight interlocking plates which protect their backs. These plates are flexible and allow the chiton to curl into a ball for protection from predators.