

# Aquatic Snail



GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  
ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# AQUATIC SNAILS

FAMILY: Aphididae

ORDER: Homoptera (means "same" wings)

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ soft body similar to slugs
- ◆ encased in a protective spiral shell
- ◆ the 'foot' extends from the shell; the head is at the front of the foot and has two antennae with eyes at the base
- ◆ color and size vary depending on species and age



## Where to Look

Aquatic snails are found in lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. They are usually seen scavenging along the bottom or attached to rocks.

## What It Eats.

Snails scavenge along the bottom for dead plant and animal matter. They also feed on algae, duckweed and other aquatic plants.



## LIFE CYCLE

Life cycles of snails differ by species. Some snails lay globs of nearly transparent eggs. These may be stuck to plant material. After a couple of weeks, they will hatch, and tiny larvae will swim freely around. Soon they begin to grow a shell, which weighs them down and makes them move along the stream bottom.

## Who Eats It?

Aquatic snails are eaten by fish, ducks, turtles, salamanders and raccoons

## Role in the Ecosystem

Snails play an important role in aquatic food chain. They are also important recyclers of organic matter in aquatic ecosystems.



## Did You Know...

Snails leave behind a slime trail as they move along the bottom. Small organisms become trapped in the slime and the snail will return later to feed on these trapped morsels.