



Freshwater Snail

The snail belongs to the phylum *Mollusca* (moll-uss-kah), which comes from the Latin word, *Molluscus*, meaning soft.

	▼
Pollution tolerance	Very sensitive Sensitive Tolerant Very tolerant
Size	3 - 25 mm long

What they look like

Freshwater snails are similar to slugs but have a spiral shell encasing their soft bodies.

Where they live

Freshwater snails live in calm parts of streams or ponds, attached to plants or rocks.

What they eat

Algae, and dead and decaying plants in the water. Their tongue has layers of teeth, which scrape food particles into the mouth.

Pollution tolerance

Very tolerant, rating 1
Freshwater Snails can live in water rich in nutrients, as they feed on algae, but they are sensitive to some forms of toxic pollution. Some come to the surface to get oxygen, which they can hold within the shell, and some have gills to extract oxygen from the water.

What's interesting about Freshwater Snails?

- Their tongue is like a chainsaw! It is like a belt with layers of teeth along it, with which they rasp away at food.
- They are hermaphrodites with both male and female reproductive organs.

Where they fit in

Phylum Mollusca > **Class** Gastropoda > **Family** (12 families in Australia): Neritidae; Vivparidae; Thiaridae; Hydrobiidae; Pomatiopsidae; Assimineidae; Bithyniidae; Glacidorbidae; Lymnaeidae; Ancyliidae; Planorbidae; Physidae.

