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"A Short Glossary of Molluscan Terms."

by

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Introduction.

This glossary has been purposely limited to the technical terms most commonly used in Conchology and is in no way intended as a complete list.

A.

acephalous	headless.
acicular	needle-shaped; approaching subulate, but more slender, with a more delicate point.
aculeate	very sharply pointed as the teeth on the radula of some snails; prickly.
acuminate	long and tapering; sharp pointed.
acute	sharp edged or pointed, ending in a sharp point.
adductor muscle scar	a depression on the interior of a bivalve which marks the area to which the adductor muscles were attached.
adnate	growing together; connected.
aestivation	a period of suspended animation during hot or dry weather.
alate	wing-like projection, as in some species of <u>Unio</u> and <u>Pecten</u> .
albino	an individual lacking normal pigments.
amorphous	without distinctive form.
amphineura	a class of the phylum mollusca; generally possessing a shell composed of eight plates bound together with a leathery border; chitons.
analogous	parallel; similar; related.
annular	made up of rings. Ringlike.
anterior	the front end; in bivalves the umbones usually turn towards the front, and the pallial sinus is at the rear or posterior end.
aperture	the opening in a gastropod shell.
apex	the point at the tip of the spire of a gastropod.
apical	situated at the top or peak.

arcuate.....	bent as in a bow or arched, edge in some bivalves.
arenaceous.....	of sandy consistence.
arenicolous.....	dwelling in sand.
articulate hinge.....	one furnished with a small number of teeth.
asymmetrical.....	not even on both sides of an axis, lacking symmetry.
attenuate.....	long and tapering, drawn out.
auriform.....	having the shape and form of a human ear.
axis.....	also termed pillar; the central structure of a spiral shell around which the volutions revolve.

B.

basal.....	the bottom or lower part.
beak.....	the opposing points or apices of a bivalve.
bivalve.....	two piece shell belonging to the class Pelecypodia.
body-whorl.....	the last whorl of a spiral shell.
boreal.....	of or belonging to the north.
borer.....	a bivalve excavating in rock or wood.
bulbous.....	swollen.
byssus.....	the fibres by which mussels and other bivalves fasten themselves to solid objects.

C.

calcareous.....	composed of carbonate of lime, shelly substance.
callosity.....	a thickened calcareous deposit.
callus.....	a calcareous deposit elevated above the general surface and often covering the umbilicus.
canal.....	a narrow groove or prolongation of the aperture in some gastropods.
canaliculate.....	resembling a canal, as deep sutures in some shells.
cancellated.....	longitudinal ribs crossed by spiral ones of equal development; cross-barred; latticed.
cardiform.....	resembling the shape of a heart.
cardinal teeth.....	interlocking teeth forming the hinge of a bivalve shell, the centralised upright teeth.
carinate.....	angled or keeled; having a longitudinal elevation as the keel of a boat.
cast (Fossil).....	an extraneous substance moulded in the interior of a shell, the shell itself having disappeared.
cephalopod.....	having the feet attached to the head as in a <u>Sepia</u> .
channelled.....	grooved or formed like a channel.
chitinous.....	formed of chitin; as the radula of snails.
cinereous.....	ash-grey; having the colour of wood ashes.
columnella.....	the axial pillar of a spiral shell.
columnellar lip.....	the labrum; the inner side of the aperture in gastropods.
concave.....	excavated; hollowed out; opposite to convex.
concolor.....	of uniform colour.
conchology.....	science embracing the arrangement and description of mollusca based principally on a study of the hard parts.
conchyolin.....	the organic matter which forms the shell.
conic.....	shaped like a cone.

conoid	in the shape of a depressed cone.
constricted	narrowed.
contorted	twisted.
convex	bulged out; opposite of concave.
coralline	composed of coral.
cordate	heart shaped.
corneous	horn-like; as the operculum of some mollusca.
corrugate	roughened by wrinkles.
cortex	the epidermis.
costate	having rib-like ridges.
crenulate	finely notched or delicately corrugated; wrinkled on the edge; indented margin of a shell.
cretaceous	shell having a great proportion of calcareous matter.
cuneate	wedge-shaped.
cunneiform	wedge-shaped.
cuticle	epidermis.

D.

decollate	cut or broken off; as the apex in some land and fresh-water gastropods.
deflected	bent backwards or to one side.
dentate	with points or nodules resembling teeth as in the aperture of some gastropods.
denuded	without covering of any kind, stripped.
depressed	flattened as spire in some gastropods, like <u>Planorbis</u> .
devoid	without; lacking.
dextral	having the aperture on the right side of the shell, when the apex is upward; right-handed.
diaphanous	transparent; clear; pellucid.
diaphragm	a transverse interior division of a univalve.
diffuse	spreading.
digitated	fingered or clawed.
dimorphism	having two forms.
dorsal	the upper or back area of a shell; umbonal region in bivalve

E.

ecology	the science of the distribution of living organisms; of their environment.
elevated	when the spiral cone advances more in height than in width.
elongate	drawn out, as in the spire of some gastropods.
emarginate	bluntly notched.
epidermis	the outer layer of the skin or the mantle and body generally a word often incorrectly used for the periostracum.
epiphragm	a sheet of dried mucus across the aperture of a land shell to prevent loss of heat and moisture during aestivation or hibernation.
equivalve	when the two valves of a bivalve are of the same shape and of equal size the shell is said to be equivalve.
eroded	worn away, as the periostracum, spire or umbones of some shells, especially fresh-water.

exotic.....foreign to that locality; introduced from abroad.
expanded.....spread out, as the lip of some gastropods.

F.

falcate.....shaped like a scythe or new moon.
ferruginous.....colour of iron oxide; rust.
filiform.....threadshaped; long; slender or cylindrical.
fissure.....a cleft; a little slit.
flagellate.....animals with a flagellum or lash.
flammules.....flecks of colour resembling a small flame.
fluvatile.....living in running streams or rivers.
foliaceous.....leaf-like; similar to a plant.
foot.....the ventral surface of the body on which the mollusc
rests or moves.
fulvous.....orange in colour.
fusiform.....spindle-shaped; thick in the middle and tapering at
each end.

G.

gastropod.....scientific term for univalves (snails &c.); means
'stomach situated in the region of the foot'.
gelatinous.....like jelly, as the eggs of some molluscs.
geniculate.....bent like a knee joint.
genus.....a group of closely related species.
genotype.....the type species of a genus.
gibbous.....oval-rounded, as the whorls in some snails, hump-backed.
girdle.....the leathery tissue which holds the valves of chitons
in place.
glabrous.....smooth surfaced, as if polished.
globose.....rounded.
granulated.....covered with minute grains or bead-like elevations.
gregarious.....living in colonies with others of the same species.
growth-lines.....lines on the surface of a shell indicating rest periods
during growth.

H.

habitat.....locality where a species usually lives.
height.....the greatest length parallel to the axis.
hermaphrodite.....having the sexes united in the same individual.
hibernation.....a state of suspended animation during cold weather.
hinge.....the interlocking toothed devices in bivalves.
hirsute.....covered with hairs.
holotype.....the single specimen on which the description of a species
is based.
homologous.....having the same position or value, corresponding.
hyalins.....glossy; transparent; vitreous.

I.

imbricated.....shingle-like; overlapping, like roof tiles.
immaculate.....without spots or mottling.

imperforate.....	not perforated or umbilicated.
indigenous.....	native to the country.
inequivalve.....	when one valve is larger than the other.
inflated.....	swollen.
inner lip.....	portion of the aperture adjacent to the pillar or axis.
intertidal zone.....	the area bounded by high and low water mark.
invaginate.....	one part bending or travelling into another; as the tentacles of some land snails.
involute.....	rolled inward from each side as in CYPRAEA (Cowries).
iridescent.....	rainbow-coloured; that is colour occasioned by light refraction; prismatic colours reflected.

K.

keel.....	a longitudinal ridge; a carina.
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L.

labiate.....	pertaining to the lips; thickened inside or out.
labrum.....	exterior of aperture in gastropods.
lamella.....	a thin plate or plates; foliation.
lamellibranchia.....	alternative name for bivalves.
lamelliform.....	having the form of scales.
laminae.....	thin plate or plates built up in layers.
lanceolate.....	shaped like a lance; gradually tapering to a point.
lateral.....	pertaining to the side.
lateral teeth.....	interlocking teeth of a bivalve, the sloping teeth situated usually either side of the cardinal teeth.
lectotype.....	type selected by a subsequent reviewer when the original author has failed to designate one.
left valve.....	determined by pointing the beaks of a bivalve away from you.
lenticular.....	having the shape of a double convex lens.
ligament.....	the elastic material which hinges the valve of bivalves and functions in opening them.
lined.....	marked with lines.
lips.....	the outer edge of the aperture in gastropods.
littoral.....	of the tidal zone.
lunate.....	shaped like a half-moon, as the aperture in some shells.
lunule.....	the heart-shaped depression in front of the beaks in some bivalves; impressed area.
lurid.....	a dull yellowish colour.

M.

maculate.....	splashed; spotted; blotched.
malacology.....	the science of molluscs.
malleated.....	appearing as though hammered.
mamillated.....	bluntly rounded.
mantle.....	a fleshy or membranous outgrowth of the outer body whorl; the mantle secretes the matter of which the shell is formed.
moniliform.....	beaded like a necklace.

monoecius.....having sexes united in the same individual.
monomyarian.....having one adductor muscle.
mucronate.....ending in a sharp point.
multivalve.....composed of a number of valves; a part of the class
 Amphineura.
muricate.....formed of sharp elevated points.
muscle scar.....a spot or depression on the inside of a bivalve to which
 the adductor or other muscle is attached.

N.

nacreous.....pearly or irridescent.
nautiloid.....having the shape or form of a nautilus.
navicular.....boat-shaped.
nepionic.....the second stage of the embryonic shell.
nodule.....knob-like projection.
nucleus.....that portion of the shell already formed when the egg is
 hatched.

O.

obese.....distended; enlarged.
oblique.....slanting, as the aperture of some shells.
obsolete.....indistinct; inconspicuous, for example when the suture
 is not obvious.
obtuse.....dull or blunt.
operculum.....a horny or shelly plate which seems to close the aperture
 of the shell when the animal is retracted.
outer lip.....the outer edge of the aperture, away from the columella.
ovate.....egg-shaped.
oviparous.....egg laying.
ovoid.....tending to be egg-shaped.
ovoviviparous.....the young are formed in an egg, but are hatched internally.

P.

pallial line.....the impression or mark made by the mantle on the inner
 surface of a bivalve shell.
pallial sinus.....a notch or recess of the pallial line; the scar of the
 siphon.
palmate.....hand-shaped.
palpum.....a feeler.
papyraceous.....thin; paper-like.
parasitical.....living upon or in another animal, and drawing nutriment
 from it.
paratype.....a specimen other than the holotype upon which the original
 description was based.
parietal callus.....enamel on inside wall of aperture.
patelliform.....limpet-shaped; a flattened out cone.
pelagic.....inhabiting the open sea, far from shore.
pelecypod.....a bivalve.
pellucid.....transparent or clear.
penultimate whorl.....the whorl before the last, or body, whorl.
perforate.....having an umbilicus
periostracum.....the external, outer fibrous covering of some shells.

periphery.....	that part of the whorl most distant from the axial centre.
peristome.....	edge of the aperture.
pilous.....	covered with hairs.
planorbid.....	flat and orb-like.
posterior.....	the rear end of bivalves, the end where the siphons are located.
postnuclear.....	after the nucleus.
protoconch.....	embryonic shell.
pulmonate.....	air breather.
punctate.....	thimble-like sculpture.
pupaeform.....	like a pupa, one of the stages in the development of an insect.
pustulate.....	covered with pustules or little pimples.
pyramidal.....	having the form of a pyramid.
pyriform.....	pear-shaped.

Q.

quadrate.....	of rectangular shape; somewhat square.
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R.

radula.....	dental apparatus of molluscs; a ribbon-shaped structure bearing teeth and used to rasp off small particles of organic matter for food.
retractile.....	capable of being drawn in.
recurved.....	bent downward.
reflexed.....	bent backward.
reniform.....	kidney-shaped.
reticulated.....	cross-ridged, forming a network.
riblets.....	small ribs or lines.
right valve.....	(see left valve.)
rimate.....	having a very small hole or crack; as in some snails in which the umbilicus is very narrowly open.
rostrate.....	beak shaped at end, as in describing the anterior end of bivalves.
rufous.....	red or pale red in colour.
rugose.....	rough or wrinkled.

S.

saccate.....	gibbous or inflated towards one end.
scalariform.....	ladder-like; whorls separated from one another.
scalloped.....	indented on edge.
septum.....	diaphragm; as in <u>Crepidula</u> .
serrate.....	having notches or projections suggesting the teeth of a saw.
sessile.....	attached with a stem.
shouldered.....	ridged; as the whorls of some gastropods.
sigmoid.....	shaped like a letter "S".
sinistral.....	coiled in a left-hand spiral; having the aperture on the left side when the apex is held upward.
sinuate.....	curved in and out; wavy.

sinus	excavation; indentation; a groove or cavity.
siphon	a tubular fold or prolongation of the mantle forming a tube, by means of which water is conveyed to and from the gills.
spatulate	in the form of a spatula as <u>Lima</u> .
species	groups of actually (or potentially) interbreeding natural populations which are reproductively isolated from other such groups.
apicules	small slender needle-like structures.
spinose	armed with sharp spines.
spire	all the coils of a gastropod shell above the body whorl.
sp.nov.	new species (abbreviation of Latin).
s.s.	abbreviation for sensu stricto (strict sense.)
striae	sculptured lines or elevations on the surface of a shell.
sulcate	grooved; fluted or furrowed.
summit	the apex; the top.
suture	junction between the whorls of a gastropod.
symmetrical	squal sided.

T.

taxonomy	the study of the laws of classification.
tenuous	thin.
terrestrial	living on land.
testaceous	having a hard shell.
topotype	a specimen not of the original type series but collected at the type locality.
translucent	not quite transparent, transmitting some light.
transverse ribs	ribs or sculpture running at right angles to the axis.
trochiform	of conical shape but flattened.
truncate	having the end cut off squarely in gastropods: in a bivalve where the end is blunt.
tubercle	a knob.
tumid	swollen.
turreted	spiral whorls regularly stepped in outline; having the form of a tower; elongate with the upper whorls shouldered.
type	any specimen or specimens upon which the description of a species is based.
type locality	the locality at which a holotype or lectotype was collected. (c.f. topotype).

U.

umbilicated	having an umbilicus.
umbilicus	a central, naval like depression in the body whorl; a circular more or less central pit or hollow.
umbo	the protuberance on each valve above the hinge, the beaks.
undulate	having undulations or waves.
unicolor	one colour.
univalve	shells in one piece; gastropods.

V.

varices.....	prominent raised ribs on surface of gastropods, corresponding to rest periods or periodic thickenings of the lip.
varicose.....	having prominent or tortuous formations on the shell.
varix.....	a ridge formed at the outlip in certain gastropods.
ventral.....	underside; edge remote from hinge.
ventricose.....	swollen or inflated; having the whorls of the shell swollen or strongly convex.
veriform.....	formed like a worm.
verrucose.....	having small lumps on the surface; warty.
viscera.....	the internal organs.
vitreous.....	resembling glass.
viviparous.....	producing young alive.
volutions.....	whorls.

W.

whorl.....	one complete spiral turn of a gastropod.
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