

The museum of  
“Stichting Schepsel Schelp”  
has several exhibitions:

- ❖ fossil shells
  - ❖ recent shells
  - ❖ fossil corals
  - ❖ fossil sea-urchins
  - ❖ fossil shark teeth
  - ❖ fossil mammal bones
- and a lot of other things

You can see how fossils are cleaned and preserved.

When you want to do it yourself, you can have a try. Bring your own shells and fossils for identification.

## Shells

Who did not bow down sometimes to pick them up? Not only children are delighted about their beauty. Throughout the centuries scientist and artists were fascinated by these chalky homes of the molluscs. You can find them everywhere: on the beach, in the sea but also in fresh water, under shrubs in the garden, but on high cliffs in the mountains as well. Some snails with very nice houses live in trees in tropical areas. Colour and shape of shells are often breathtaking and they give us much joy over the loveliness of creation.



In our days there are five groups of shell bearing molluscs:

- chitons
- bivalves           for example the oyster
- tusk shells       for example the elephant's tusk
- snails             for example cone shells
- cephalopods     for example the nautilus

When you can't find them all in our showcases, just ask and we will show them.

## Fossil Shells

Molluscs are very old indeed. They already existed in the Cambrian period. According to geologists these shells are now about 570 million years old. In our museum the oldest are Jurassic (ca. 180 million years old). These are mostly not very nice to look at. For real nice fossil shells you have to look at younger periods like the Cretaceous and the Tertiary. These shells are often very well preserved. Layers with fossil shells can be found at many places in the world. In Belgium and Italy there is magnificent Pliocene, in Florida these layers are very nice and with lots of big species.



France is absolutely on top with shells of Jurassic, Cretaceous, Eocene, Oligocene and Miocene layers. All together thousands of species.

There are fossil shells in the Netherlands too, for example on the beaches of Zeeland. Near Winterswijk there are very rich Miocene deposits, with about 500 different species. Most of them however are very small.

Our museum also exhibits shells of groups that are now totally extinct like the Ammonites and the Hippuridae.