

Range

One of the places where Partula snails are found is in the French Polynesia islands. These islands are marked on this map.



Are the French Polynesia islands in the Pacific or the Atlantic ocean?

range

Adaptations

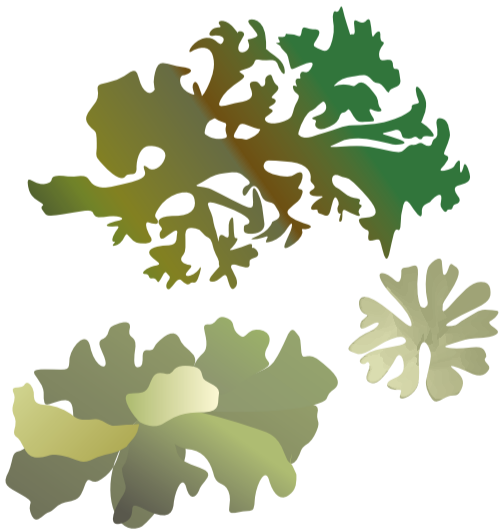
An adaptation is a special ability which helps an animal to survive.



Where are the eyes on a snail?

adaptations

Diet



What is this plant-like fungus called?

diet

Threats

The main threat to the Partula snails is called 'invasive species'.

The picture shows the rosy wolf snail, *Euglandina rosea*.



What do you think the term 'invasive species' means?

threats

Answer card

Adaptations

The eye spots of most snails are at the end of the upper tentacles.

They can be drawn back in or extended out from their bodies.

Snails don't see very well but they can tell the difference between light and shadow.

The snail's lower tentacles are used for smelling and tasting.

Snails do not hear.

Answer card

Range

The French Polynesia islands are in the south Pacific Ocean.

There are 118 islands divided into 5 groups: Society; Tuamotu; Gambier; Marquesas and Austral islands.

Tahiti, one of the Society islands, is the largest of all the French Polynesia islands.

Different species of Partula snails have been found across many islands in the south Pacific.

Answer card

Threats

An invasive species is a species which has been introduced to an area and is not native to that area.

Giant African land snails, *Achatina fulica*, were introduced to the islands as a source of food but they soon became pests, eating and damaging crops.

To try to control the giant African land snails, the carnivorous rosy wolf snail was introduced. It was hoped that this snail would eat all the giant African land snails.

Unfortunately the rosy wolf snail ate the native Partula snails instead. Very soon many species of Partula snails became extinct.

Conservation breeding programmes in a group of zoos including RZSS Edinburgh Zoo has meant that some species of Partula have been re-introduced to the wild.

Answer card

Diet

The plant-like fungus is lichen. Lichen is made up of a fungus and an algae growing together.

Partula snails are known as detritivores because they eat dead and decaying plant material, algae and lichen.

Some snails do eat leaves and some snails are carnivorous - eating other snails, molluscs and earthworms.

carnivore – eats meat
herbivore – eats plants
detritivore – eats dead and decaying plant material

Habitat

Partula snails like to keep moist and live in trees.



Which habitat would be ideal for the Partula snails?

habitat

Species

There have been over 100 species of Partula recorded but unfortunately many of these are now extinct.

Look closely at these shells.

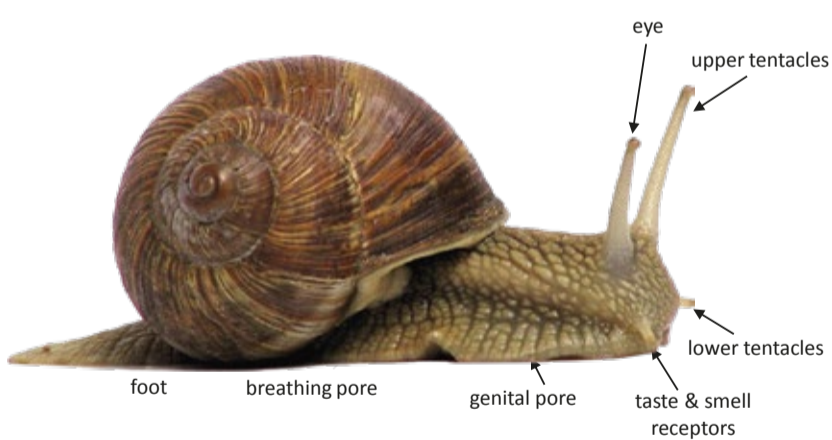


Images © Justin Gerlach

What differences do you notice between these shells?

species

Breeding



Are you able to tell if a snail is a male or a female?

*Image shown is *Helix pomatia* which is **not** a Partula species. It is a common European species of snail and is used as an example to show the body parts of a snail.

breeding

Answer card

Species

Notice the different colour, shape and size of the shells. The species pictured are:



Partula magistri



Partula dentifera



Partula affinis

There can also be subspecies and different varieties.

For example -

varieties of
Partula affinis



RZSS have been involved in the conservation of Partula snails since 1984. Working with many zoos from around the world the programme has saved some Partula species from extinction.

Images © Justin Gerlach

Answer card

Habitat

Tropical rainforests are an ideal habitat for the Partula snails.

Partula snails live in trees. Older snails tend to live higher up in the trees than the younger snails.

Answer card

Breeding

You won't be able to tell if a snail is a male or a female because most snails are both!

Most snails are hermaphrodites. This means they have both male and female sex organs.

After mating, each snail will lay eggs.

Partula snails appear to give birth to baby snails but eggs are produced and kept inside the body. The eggs then hatch and the young are delivered.