

# Aquatic Snails

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

### Immediate Care and Handling

As soon as your shipment arrives, open the container of snails. Allow at least 30 minutes for them to reach room temperature. Prepare a holding pail or habitat with room-temperature conditioned tap water. (See General Guidelines for information on conditioning tap water.) Rinse water plants and add to the holding pail.

Newly arrived snails often do not move for the first 2 or 3 days. If you think a snail is dead, use a pencil to gently pry against the hard flap at the shell opening. If it resists probing or is tightly closed, the animal is alive. Avoid overcrowding the habitat; do not hold more than 15 to 20 snails per 1 to 2 gallons of water.

Immediately change the water if it becomes cloudy or foul smelling, then check for and discard any dead snails. A dead snail will have a foul odor and usually hang out of its shell when picked up.

### Habitat Setup and Maintenance

All water used in the habitat must be conditioned and dechlorinated. Place the aquarium in an area where the temperature is fairly constant, between 18 to 25° C (64 to 77° F). An aquarium needs diffuse light; do not place in direct sunlight or unusually bright artificial light. Remember that snails are cold-blooded. An aquarium in direct sunlight may have a temperature as much as 5° C above the temperature of the room. At night such an aquarium cools rapidly, stressing the snails and leaving them vulnerable to disease.

### FAQ's

*I have a snail that is floating. Does that mean it's dead?*

Probably not. The snail has collected a gas bubble under its shell. In time it will sink.

*What should I feed my snails?*

Snails do not need extra food if they live in an aquarium with fish and plants.

*Snails are crawling on the water plants. Are they eating them?*

Perhaps. They are probably eating algae growing on the plants. However, if there is not enough other food for the snails, they may eat the plants. Also, if the plants are weakened and beginning to die, the snails may eat them.

*A snail has retracted into its shell and hasn't moved. Is it dead?*

Probably not. Snails often do this for a few hours or even for days. As long as the shell is tightly closed, it is alive. A snail that hangs limply out of its shell is dead and you should discard it.

*All the snails died soon after we put them in the aquaria. What went wrong?*

If you properly acclimated the snails, it could be the water. Some city water systems now use chlorinators that are not removed by aging the tap water. In those cities, use a chemical water conditioner that removes chloramines. Still, your tap water may contain metal ions that are toxic to snails. This is especially likely if the water pipes at your school are less than 3 years old or if there have been recent major repairs to the plumbing. Snails are more sensitive to metal ions than are most other aquarium animals, including fish. You may have to use water from another source, such as bottled water.

**Problems?** We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

**Orders and replacements:** 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

**Technical Support and Questions:** [caresheets@carolina.com](mailto:caresheets@carolina.com)



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