

NOBLE PEN SHELL



Noble pen shell

Photo by Meet the Sea

Behavior

This shell may not walk or swim, but it plays an important role in the underwater world! The Noble Pen Shell sits partly buried in the sand, gently filtering the water. It's a quiet but very helpful ocean neighbor, keeping the sea clean. Fish, crabs, and even small shrimp often hide around or inside its shell for protection – it's like a tiny underwater apartment!

Curoisities

In the past, people used the silky byssus threads from Noble Pen Shells to make a rare and golden fabric called sea silk. It was so fine and delicate that it was only worn by royalty! Today, this ancient tradition has almost disappeared – and the shells are now protected by law, so they can't be collected.

Scientific Name:

Pinna nobilis

Key Information

The Noble Pen Shell is one of the largest seashells in the Mediterranean Sea! It can grow up to 1 meter long, shaped like a giant fan or a closed book standing upright in the sand. Its two brownish shell halves are thin but sharp, and it's anchored into the sea floor with silky threads called byssus, a bit like roots holding a plant in place.

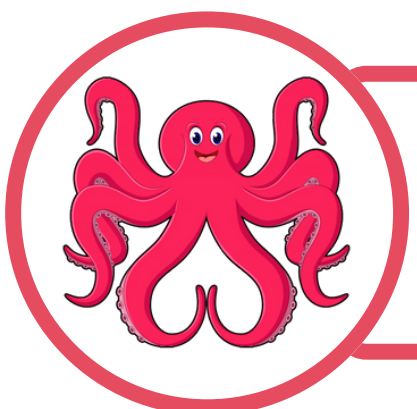
Sadly, the Noble Pen Shell is critically endangered, mostly because of pollution, climate change, and a deadly parasite affecting many populations.

Food

The Noble Pen Shell is a filter feeder. That means it doesn't chase or grab food – instead, it opens its shell slightly and lets water flow through. Tiny bits of plankton, algae, and organic particles are trapped and eaten. This process helps keep the water clean and balanced, like a natural filter system.

Habitat

Noble Pen Shells live in sandy and muddy sea floors, especially among seagrass meadows like *Posidonia oceanica*. These meadows are like underwater forests and are very important for marine life. The Pen Shell prefers shallow waters, up to about 60 meters deep, where sunlight can still reach. They are found only in the Mediterranean Sea.



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