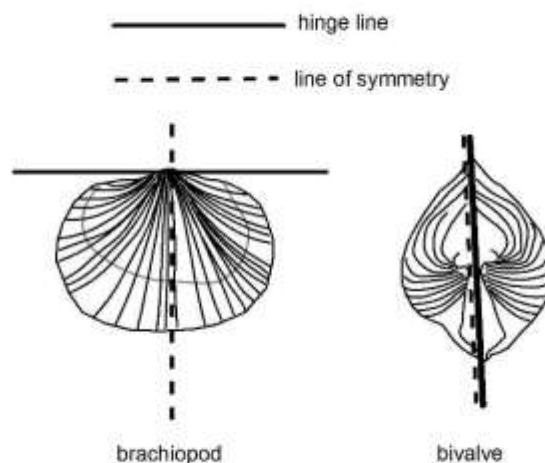


Phylum Mollusca Class Bivalvia or Pelecypoda Cambrian - Recent

The phylum Mollusca includes the familiar classes Gastropoda (snails), Pelecypoda (also called Bivalvia) (clams, oysters and scallops), and Cephalopoda (squids, octopuses, and the chambered Nautilus).

All bivalves have two valves, but they can be categorized on the basis of shell shapes into clams, oysters, and scallops. Clams have two matched valves, each of which is a mirror image of the other. In oysters, the left valve which is attached to the sea floor, is usually considerably larger than the right. Scallops usually have a slightly larger left valve and crudely resemble brachiopods, but on close inspection individual valves are found to lack the “equal-half” type of symmetry of brachiopod valves. Keep in mind that a brachiopod is *not* a mollusk.



Bivalve mollusks are abundant in Mississippian and Cretaceous age rocks in Arkansas.



Bivalves (*Nuculana*) from the Mississippian Imo interval in north-central Arkansas.



Bivalves (*Ostrea franklini*) from the Cretaceous Dierks Limestone in south-western Arkansas.



Bivalve (*Ostrea fulcata*) from the Cretaceous Marlbrook Marl.



Bivalve oysters (*Gryphaea* (left) and *Exogyra* (right)) from the Cretaceous Marlbrook Marl in southwestern, Arkansas.