## Word Find: Snails and Mimicry

Solutions will be posted at https://www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca/the\_tattler.

Find the words in the word list using the article below. Brackets indicate the amount of times the word appears—make sure to find them all!

## The Weird and Wonderful with a Biologist: Aggressive Mimicry

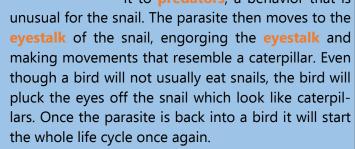
Many organisms have evolved to used mimicry as a defense from predators. The two types most often taught in school are Batesian and Müllerian mimicry. Batesian refers to an edible organism that evolves to look like an unpalatable organism to try

to avoid being eaten, such as a harmless fly looking like a **stinging** bee. Müllerian **mimicry** refers to an unpalatable **organism** looking like other unpalatable organisms, such as a **stinging** bee having similar colours to a **stinging** wasp. Many bees and wasps use the same yellow and black patterning so **predators** know to avoid these colours in general. There is

another type of **mimicry** which is less common: aggressive **mimicry**. Aggressive **mimicry** refers to an **organism** looking like another **organism** in order to obtain a food source or be eaten itself. This is most often done as a dupe by an animal looking like prey to draw in a small predator which is then eaten by the mimic. For example, a **Bolus** spider will emit a chemical similar to the sex pheromones emitted by a

species of moth. This entices a real moth to come and mate. When the moth arrives, it will be eaten by the spider. Another example is the **parasitic** worm *Leucochloridium*. This parasite lives inside of birds, but needs to travel between birds to find mates so

that, when one bird host dies, it will continue to live in other birds. In order to do this the parasite lays its eggs inside the bird's **digestive** system, which will then be pooped out. The poop is then eaten by snails that will accidently eat the parasite. The parasite will take over the mind of the snail so that it moves out into the open exposing it to **predators**, a behavior that is



- Colin Johnson



Succinea putris snail with a parasitic Leucochloridium worm in its eyestalk (cropped photo) by Thomas Hahmann, CC BY-SA 3.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/bysa/3.0/)

## **Word List**

Batesian (x2) Eyestalk (x2) Predators (x3)

Bolus Müllerian (x2) \*Parasitic (x6)

Defense \*Mimicry (x4) Stinging (x3)

Digestive Organism (x5) Unpalatable (x3)



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519.858.3442