

Experimental shell degradation of nine common Central European pulmonate snail species in forest ecosystems in the Czech Republic was investigated. Model shells were deposited for 6, 12, 24 and 36 months in leaf litter of six different places; than removed, dried and photographed. Set of alternations was analysed by CANOCO 4.5 statistical system. Small species degrade different from large ones. Large species corrode outwards, after periostracum disruption the ostracum dissolves and holes appear. Small species corrode out from within, calcium carbonate dissolves and small windows arise. The shell degradation proceeds with different rate on various localities. Some localities have characteristic types of alteration, e.g. peat bog pine forest exhibits ostracum dissolution and periostracum deformation. The ultimate influence of the degradation is caused by pH value and humidity. Shell shape and size have effect on its degradation. Moreover, other important decomposition agents are living animals.