

FEEDING IN *Pila*

The digestive system of *Pila* comprises

1. A tubular alimentary canal
2. A pair of salivary glands
3. A large digestive gland

(i) Alimentary Canal:

The alimentary canal is distinguished into three regions, viz:

1. The foregut or stomodaeum including the buccal mass and oesophagus,
2. The midgut or mesenteron consisting of stomach and intestine, and
3. The hindgut or proctodaeum comprising the rectum. The midgut alone is lined by endoderm, while the other two are lined by ectoderm.

1. Foregut:

The foregut includes the mouth, buccal mass and oesophagus.

(i) Mouth:

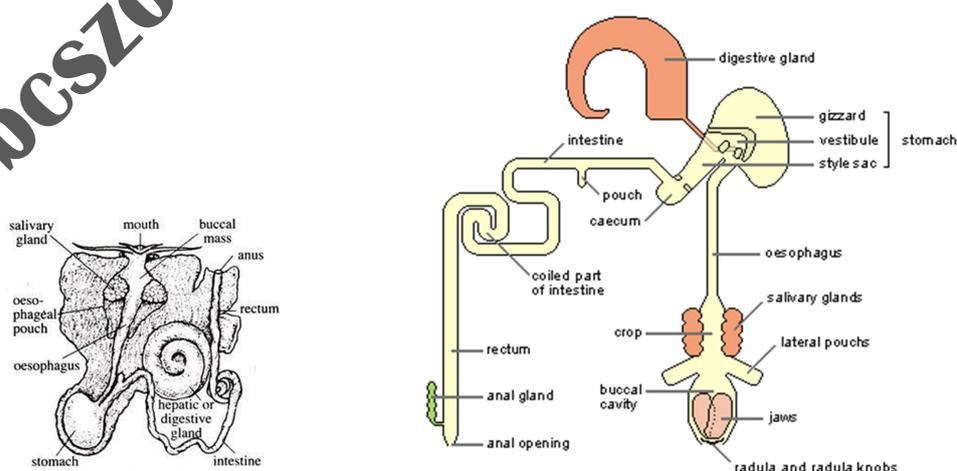
The mouth is a narrow vertical slit situated at the end of snout. There are no true lips but the plicate edges alone serve as secondary lips.

(ii) Buccal Mass:

The mouth leads into a large cavity of buccal mass or pharynx having thick walls with several sets of muscles. The anterior part of the cavity of buccal mass is vestibule. Behind the vestibule are two jaws hanging from the roof of the buccal mass. The jaws bear muscles and their anterior edges have teeth-like projections for cutting up vegetable food.

Buccal Cavity:

Behind the jaws is a large buccal cavity. On the floor of the buccal cavity is a large elevation called odontophore. The front part of odontophore has a furrowed subradular organ which helps in cutting food. The odontophore has protractor and retractor muscles and two pairs of cartilages, a pair of triangular superior cartilages which project into the buccal cavity, and a pair of large S-shaped lateral cartilages.



Radula:

Above and behind the odontophore is a bag-like radular sac which is a diverticulum of the buccal cavity. The radular sac has transverse rows of cells called odontoblasts. Inside the radular sac is a radula which is characteristic of Mollusca. The radula is made of many transverse rows of horny teeth.