# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION & AIM OF THE WORK

## 1-1- Introduction

Mollusca represents one of the most diverse invertebrate animals in form and habitats among all phyla. This makes them an interesting subject for comparative morphological and physiological studies quite apart of their interest as a classic illustration. Despite this fact, our information about molluscan haematology and excretion still suffers from a lack of morphological and histological data. In addition, there is no detailed information about many molluscan species particularly, those inhabiting Egyptian waters and even comparative studies are completely neglected by investigators dealing with such kinds of researches.

In recent years, much attentions have been paid for marine edible molluscs which invade the markets of the world because of their high nutritive and commercial value. In Egypt, hundreds of tons of edible molluscs are harvested, markted annually and consumed mainly by inhabitants of cities located on coasts **(El-Gamal, 1988)**. However, in Egypt very few data are available about the nutritional value of this important food item.

On the other hand, not least the environmental problem is water pollution. The seas which offer one of man's great hope for future food supplies are not except from the menace of pollution. The understanding of the interaction between pollutants and components of the environment is considered as prerequisite for pollution control programming for

establishing environmental quality criteria. The detrimental compounds introduced into the sea include heavy metals which are relatively toxic and ready concentrated by marine organisms especially molluscs. Thus, they affect the quality of marine products and possibly thereby human health.