

## Virtual Scilla Collection project<sup>1</sup>

**One of the questions most frequently asked by visitors to the Sedgwick Museum is what exactly are fossils and how do they form?**

This question also fascinated Agostino Scilla (1629-1700); an artist who lived in the Sicilian town of Messina during the 1600s. Scilla attempted to answer this question in his book *La vana speculazione disingannata dal senso* (Vain Speculation Undeceived by Sense), published in Naples in 1670. Scilla's collection of fossils and the drawings he produced from them are held in the Woodwardian Collection of the Sedgwick Museum.

The Sedgwick Museum has published a free English language eBook of '*La vana speculazione*' as part of its Arts Council England funded 'Virtual Scilla Collection' project.

More information:

<https://camunivmuseums.wordpress.com/2016/07/12/virtual-scilla-collection-project/>



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<sup>1</sup> Published July 2016 © Department of Earth Sciences

Woodwardian Collection drawer E-27 ('Bones, Teeth &c. of Fishes')  
containing many of Scilla's specimens (Image: Eva-Louise Fowler)