

# Basic Detail Report

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## Melon Vine with Squirrels

### Date

18th century

### Medium

nephrite

### Description

This composition would probably have been made for the curio cabinet of a wealthy scholar-official. The Chinese

delighted in placing objects of this type in their studios to provide a distraction to the eye while engaged in more official pursuits. The symbolism of the melon, with its many seeds, is clearly a reference to fertility. The vine and stems (wan dai) are a homophone for the phrase wan dai, or ten thousand generations. It is unclear if there is a secondary meaning for squirrel or songshu (literally pine tree rat), and it is probable they were incorporated into the composition simply for enjoyment.

### Dimensions

Overall: 4 x 6 x 2 1/4 in. (10.2 x 15.2 x 5.7 cm)