

Giant African snail

Lissachatina fulica

Description

Believed to be from East African, originally. Introduced by the importation as pets or for education, accidental importation via cargo

Identification

Very large ? about the size of an average-sized adult fist. Shells can reach 20 cm (8 in) in length and 10 cm (4 in) in diameter. Shell is brownish with dark brown vertical stripes on at least half of the length of the shell. Coloration lightens to almost white at the tip of the shell

Habitat

Believed to be from East African, originally. Thrive in tropical and subtropical areas. While warmer climate areas with abundant agricultural resources are ideal habitats in the United States,



this species can survive cold and snowy conditions similar to those in Michigan.

Reproduction

Hermaphrodite. One snail can produce large eggs that are 4.5 - 5.5 mm in diameter and only hatch at temperatures above 15 degrees Celsius. Snails begin laying eggs at 6 months of age and can lay up to 100 eggs their first year and up to 500 in their second year. Snails may live up to 5 yrs with a total egg clutch of up to 1000.

Impact

Giant African snails pose a serious health risk to humans as this species may be infected with a parasite that causes meningitis. The damage to important food and other agricultural crops and natural resources is another concern. If preferred vegetation is not available, these snails may consume paint and stucco on houses.

Similar

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Physical collection and destruction of snails and their eggs have been effective. Metaldehyde based molluscicides (Blitzem pellets, Deadline pellets, meta-metaldehyde powder, Murphy Slugit liquid).

Credits

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