

MANAGEMENT & CONTROL

The most important measures to adopt at present are to;

- Manual collection and destruction
- Use of baits (metaldehyde or iron phosphate)
- Bounty programme

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Direct damage to a crop can result in loss of earnings to the farmer.
- Cost of management of the pest, e.g., purchase of baits, can also reduce the profitability of the crop.
- Control measures such as a baiting or a bounty programme at the national level can incur significant costs to a country.
- The pest is also of concern to public health as it can carry the rat lungworm, *Angistrongylus cantonensis*, which can cause a type of meningitis in humans, dogs and horses. Empty snail shells can hold rainwater and serve as breeding sites for mosquitoes that transmit dengue and Chikungunya fevers. Large populations of this snail may also foul ponds and catchments that supply water for humans and livestock.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Do NOT bring the giant African snail into your country
- If you see this pest, immediately inform the Ministry responsible for Agriculture in your country and follow their recommendations
- Keep your surroundings clean
- Crush empty snail shells



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PRIORITY PEST THREATS TO THE REGION GIANT AFRICAN SNAIL



Lissachatina fulica

The Giant African Snail (GAS), sometimes referred to as the giant African land snail (GALS), is one of a group of large terrestrial snails native to Africa. It can grow to 8 inches in length and is regarded as one of the most destructive snails in the world as it will feed on over 500 plants and can survive in many different environments. The snails are very prolific, capable of laying over 500 eggs in one clutch and producing subsequent clutches without needing to mate again.

PROTECT

Safeguard our agriculture & environment do NOT bring in African snails as a food delicacy or pet.

DETECT

Monitor for Signs & Symptoms of GAS.

REACT

Report any sightings of this pest to your Ministry or Department of Agriculture and follow ALL recommendations for Control or Eradication

GIANT AFRICAN SNAIL

Lissachatina fulica



Newly hatched snails are small and easily overlooked, having a shell only about 5.5 mm long. The shell of an adult can be nearly 200 mm long and is brown with paler vertical stripes. The body of the snail is dark brown, though in some populations a white body may be seen. These snails have both male and female reproductive organs and can mate and produce young in less than 6 months. They are very prolific, capable of laying over 500 eggs in one clutch and producing subsequent clutches without needing to mate again.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Extensive rasping (scraping) or defoliation of plants may indicate its presence, as may slime trails and large ribbon-like faeces. The giant African snail is nocturnal, feeding mainly at night but can be active during daylight hours on rainy days. Large adults are easily visible at these times. Look in protected humid areas, e.g., in leaf litter, grassy patches, under rocks or farm debris for juvenile and newly hatched snails.



Giant African snails and slugs feeding

HOST PLANTS

The giant African snail is an opportunistic pest and will feed on a large variety of agricultural and horticultural crops as well as wild plant species. It is reported to consume at least 500 species of plants. In the Caribbean crops attacked include cucumber, sweet potato, yam, cabbages, papaya and cocoa. They particularly seem to like young vegetable seedlings.

DISTRIBUTION

GAS is native to East Africa but is now established in several countries around the world. It is present in areas of Africa, Asia, India and South America, on islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans in the Caribbean. Isolated populations also exist on mainland North America.

SPREAD AND POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

The spread of this pest is largely through human activities, e.g. trade, movement of humans. Live snails are excellent hitchhikers and may be inadvertently introduced into a region attached to shipping pallets and/or containers, machinery or on vehicles. Live specimens may be deliberately introduced as food or as pets. Eggs may also be accidentally introduced concealed in cargo. Within a country, the snail may be spread by movement of vehicles, soil or plant material. Natural dispersal on land is slow, but rivers may carry eggs downstream where they may hatch and establish a new population.