

Chinese Mysterysnail (Cipangopaludina chinensis)

Identification:

This aquatic invasive species has a smooth, strong, uniform green colored shell. The green color can range from light to dark olive green. Shells can have 6 to 7 whorls. The whorls are very convex and indented. With the ability to close up the opening of their shell when water conditions are unfavorable, their “trap door”, they are able to tolerate a wide range of conditions. The outer lip of their shell, around the trap door, can be round or oval and is black in color. Their shells can grow to be a couple inches in length.



Habitat and Spread:

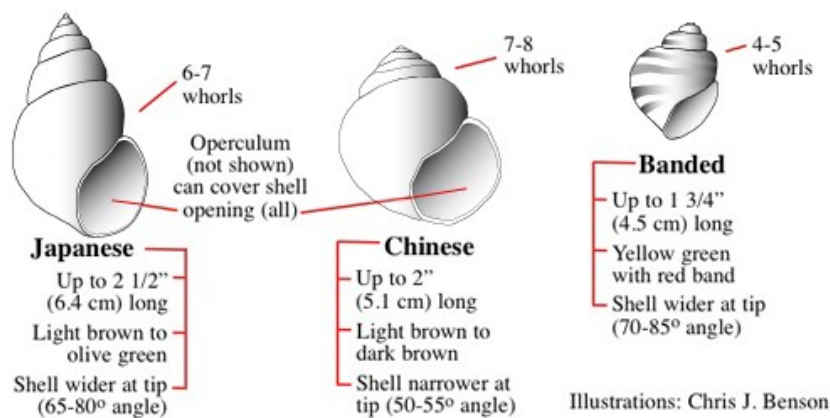
Home to lakes, ponds, rice paddies, irrigation ditches, roadside ditches, and slow moving water portions of streams where there is muddy substrates, the snails will stay partially buried in the mud where the water is calm. Females lay live young that feed on zooplankton and phytoplankton. Impacts Chinese mystery snails can have is outcompeting native snail species for resources such as food and space, clogging pipes, and transmitting parasites and diseases to humans.

Management Techniques:

Chemical methods of management are not feasible because when water conditions become unfavorable, like introduced chemicals, snails can close their trap doors and wait until the chemical has moved downstream or has diluted. There are copper compound treatments but they are not selective and may kill more native species than target species if released in an open area. The best way to prevent the spread of the species is to sell aquarium organisms back to a store rather than releasing them. You can also prevent new introductions by cleaning and drying out aquatic equipment before using it again. Reporting possible sighting of the species is also a crucial step in management.

Native Range and Original Introduction:

Native to Burma, Thailand, South Vietnam, China, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Java they have now been introduced into 27 states in the US where they have become invasive. Their populations have crept into Lake Michigan and Lake Erie of the Great Lakes. Chinese mystery snails were first imported to live markets in San Francisco in 1892. They eventually became discovered in Boston, Gulf of Mexico, and Florida as well. Mystery snails were most likely imported to the United States for aquarium trade and a food source for Asian food markets.



“Trap door” operculum