

Golden apple snail

What is it?

The Golden Apple Snail is one of the most feared pests of rice, and is currently not found in Australia. It can devastate rice crops and natural waterways and is difficult to control. One single large snail can eat 7-24 rice seedlings per day, so an infestation could potentially wipe out an entire rice crop.

One way that the Golden Apple Snail could get into the Australian rice growing area is through sale of snails in the aquarium trade. This snail and its relatives are illegal imports into the NSW rice quarantine area, so if you find it you should report it.



What do I look for?

The Golden Apple Snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*) is a large snail of about 3 to 8 cm in diameter, and has variable colour (often, but not always, golden, yellow or brown). The snail lays distinct masses of bright or cream pink coloured eggs above the water line (often hanging from plant stems; see image to the left).



How does it spread?

This snail can spread rapidly, especially in running water such as irrigation and drainage channels. Also, the snails can survive for considerable periods out of water and move significant distances over land.

Where is it found?

The Golden Apple Snail is not present in Australia. It is currently present in China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, USA, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Surinam, Uruguay and Papua New Guinea.

Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Industry Biosecurity Plan, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6260 4322.

Control options?

Ultimately, the best method for control is to prevent the snail from ever getting into Australia and the rice growing area.

If this snail did get into the Australian rice growing area and natural waterways it would be very difficult to control.

The best way to prevent the devastating impact this snail could have on the rice industry and the environment is to report any suspicious looking large snails immediately. Early detection will improve the chances of eradication.



Reporting

Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state/territory agriculture agency through the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881). To minimise the risk of disease spread, samples should not be moved until they have been checked by an expert.



This fact sheet was produced as part of the Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Rice Industry.

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