



Identity: *Limicolaria aurora* (Jay, 1839)

Systematics: Achatininae, Achatinidae, Pulmonata,
Gastropoda, Mollusca

Common names: None



USDA photo by David G. Robinson

Description

Dimensions

Up to 6.5 cm (2.4 inches) in height.

Shell description

“Shell oblong-ovate, narrowly umbilicate, the edge of the umbilicu subangulate, rather thin, white or flesh coloured under a thin, pale yellow cuticle. Surface not glossy when unworn, slightly wrinkled with growth striae, rather indistinctly decussate with spiral impressed lines; crenate below the suture. Spire a little attenuate above, the apex obtuse. Whorls 9 to 9½ moderately convex. Aperture slightly oblique, white inside; outer lip simple, columella vertical, straight, cylindric, the edge well reflexed.” (Crowley & Pain, 1970, after Pilsbry, 1904).

Pest Significance

First detected in the Saint Esprit area at the beginning of 1989. By August 1989, considerable numbers of this snail were reported attacking yam, bean, pepper, Jerusalem artichoke, cucumber, okra and sweet potato (Mead & Palcy, 1992). It should be noted, however, that “*Limicolaria aurora* [as compared with the Banana Rasp Snail] may prove eventually to be the worse pest” (Mead & Palcy, 1992). It is reportedly replacing the established population of *Lissachatina fulica* in Martinique.

Geographic Distribution

Original distribution: Native to West Africa, Guinea to Nigeria, Cameroon and Gabon.

Introduced to: West Indies: Saint Esprit area, in southern Martinique.

Life History

Very little is known.

Movement and Dispersal

Natural spread: Natural spread is extremely slow.

Human-assisted spread: Transportation on local produce and spread by international travelers for food. It is occasionally intercepted by Agricultural Inspectors in baggage of international travelers at US airports, such as Houston, Atlanta and Washington DC, from Nigeria and Cameroon.

Parasitology and Public Health Significance

This snail is potentially an intermediate vector of the Rat lungworm (*Angiostrongylus cantonensis*), a parasitic nematode worm causing eosinophilic meningoencephalitis/cerebral angiostrongyliasis in humans and similar conditions in livestock including household pets. The disease can be contracted from the consumption of undercooked snail meat and from the residual slime left on uncooked fruits and vegetables. This disease causes a wide variety of neurological disorders, permanent brain damage, blindness and even death.

Selected References

Bequaert, J. C., 1950, Studies in the Achatininae, a Group of African land Snails. *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy at Harvard College*, 105(1): 1-216, 81 pl.

Mead, A. R., 1979, Pulmonates. Volume 2B. *Economic Malacology, with particular reference to Achatina fulica*. Academic Press, London, 150 pp.

Mead, A. R. & L. Palcy, 1992, Two giant African land snail species spread to Martinique, French West Indies. *The Veliger*, **35**(1): 74-77.

Palcy, L. & A. R. Mead, 1993, Les deux redoutables escargots géants a la Martinique. *Phytoma*, (449): 48-50.