

# Invasive Species Alert

## Giant African Snail

(*Lissachatina fulica*)

\*Not detected in Michigan\*

### 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



Roberta Zimmerman, USDA APHIS, Bugwood.org

**Diet:** Giant African snails have a large appetite and consume at least 500 different types of plants. They will eat fruits, vegetables, or even bark.



Yuri Yashinachatina, RU, Bugwood.org

**Habitat:** These terrestrial snails 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.

**Native Range:** Believed to be from East Africa, originally.

**Local Concern:** 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.

**Potential Means of Introduction:** Importation as pets or for education, accidental importation via cargo

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