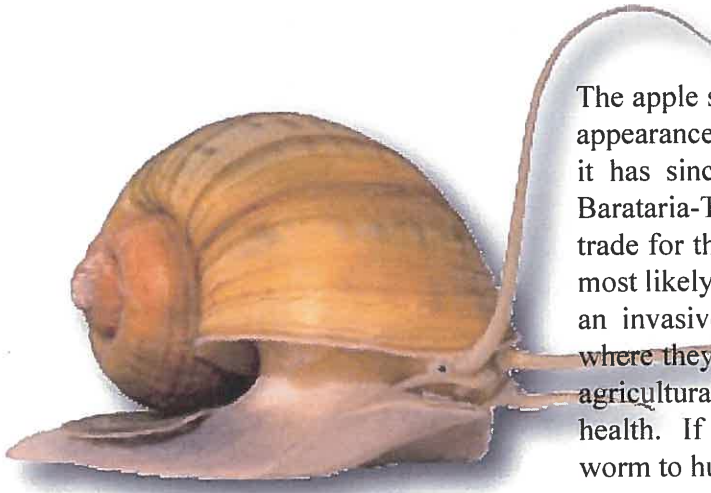


Apple Snails

(*Pomacea maculata*)



The apple snail is an invasive aquatic snail from South America. Its first appearance in Louisiana was in a drainage basin near Gretna in 2006, and it has since been found in several different water bodies within the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary. Apple snails are popular in the aquarium trade for their large size and handsome shells, and their presence here is most likely due to irresponsible aquarium releases. The apple snail is also an invasive species in Florida, Texas, and throughout Southeast Asia where they have become a serious rice crop pest. In addition to causing agricultural and ecological damage, these snails also threaten human health. If eaten raw, they can transmit a deadly parasite called rat lung worm to humans and other mammals.

www.applesnail.net

The Problem

As with any invasive species, apple snails will overpopulate and steal resources away from native species, disrupting natural ecological processes. They consume large quantities of plant material, damaging important habitat for native fish and wildlife. These snails, as with any exotic plants or animals, should never be released into natural areas.

What they look like

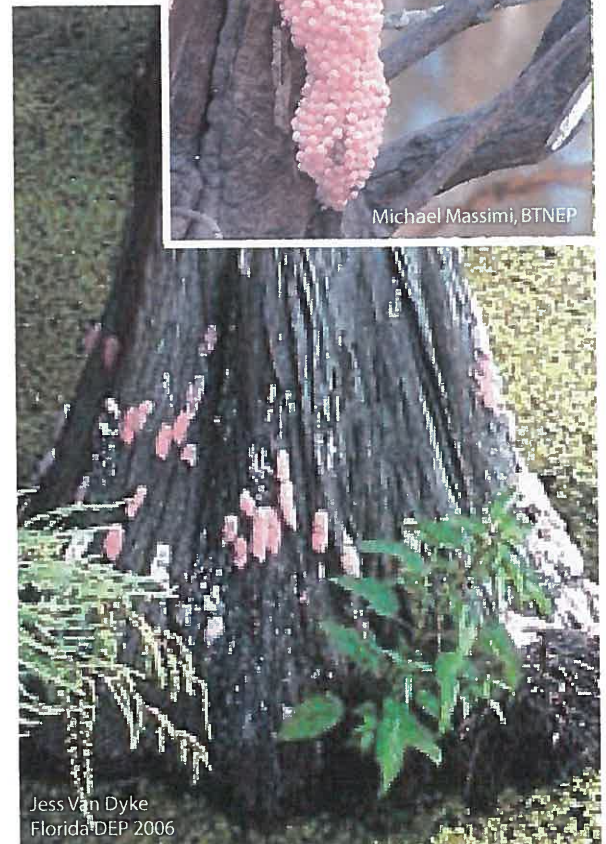
Apple snails are among the largest freshwater snails. Their heavy golden-yellow to dark brown shells can grow up to 6 inches across, but are more often in the range of 2 to 4 inches. The first visible sign of these snails is usually the egg clusters. These are bright pink clumps of 200-600 tiny eggs attached to a tree stump, piling, or other object just above the waterline.



www.iswgfla.org



Michael Massimi, BTNEP



Jess Van Dyke
Florida DEP 2006

What to do

Unfortunately, no pesticide will selectively eliminate the snails. Hand removal of the bright pink egg masses can effectively reduce their numbers. Egg masses should be scraped off and crushed or otherwise destroyed. Hand picking adult snails is effective when possible, although they are usually submerged.

Report

If you see apple snails or their eggs, note the location and report to:

Bobby Reed

Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator

225-765-3977- or

breed@wlf.la.gov

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries