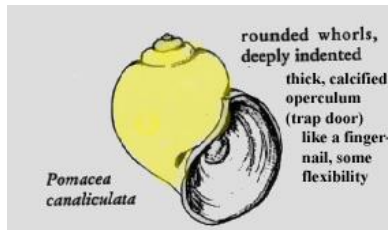


# Apple Snail Facts

April 2014

Since 1983, this highly invasive snail has been a major pest in ponds, springs, ditches, estuaries (ie., muliwai), especially wetlands and taro growing areas (lo'i kalo) on all islands except Kaho'olawe and Moloka'i.



Apple snails lay egg clusters averaging 200 to 800 eggs each and 4,000 to 8,000 eggs per year. Egg clusters are bright pink with a 'wet' look when first laid, becoming pale pink as the shells harden and then white at hatching.



Kalo being consumed by apple snail.

To learn more:

<http://www.hear.org/articles/pdfs/applesnailcontrolplanlevin2006.pdf>

To report new pests on your island, call (808) 643-PEST or [www.643pest.org](http://www.643pest.org)

Apple snails, *Pomacea canaliculata*, can be dark or muddy brown to "golden" yellow and average 50mm in diameter (ie. the size of a lime) but can reach the size of a baseball. Bright pink egg clusters hatch within 3 weeks. Young snails are tiny (ie. the head of a pin) and hard to see. They mature at 2 to 3 months.

The apple snail feeds and breeds underwater and lays eggs above the waterline, often at night. It thrives in slow water, wet or mucky areas and can hibernate below ground for many months, particularly in areas that don't ever dry out, and returns to the surface when taro patches are reflooded.

## Risks

**Economic:** Apple snails consume 18 to 25% of Hawai'i's wetland kalo crop annually and more than 50% of young huli where snail populations are left unchecked.

**Health:** The shells of apple snails are sharp when broken and can cut feet or hands. This is a risk for wetland kalo farmers who become exposed to *leptospirosis* through cuts. Apple snail is also a known carrier of *rat-lungworm*. Both diseases can result in meningitis, liver damage, renal failure and death if left untreated.

## How does it spread?

**Human transport is the number one way apple snails move around in Hawai'i**, from island to island and district to district, either introduced deliberately as live snails for food or by mistake on plants such as taro huli. Mauka to makai, snails can travel on their own through water.

## How to prevent introduction

**It is illegal to transport live apple snails between the islands or introduce them into a body of water in Hawai'i.**

- 1. IF YOU HAVE APPLE SNAILS DON'T SHARE HULI WITH FARMERS THAT DON'T HAVE SNAILS. ASK WHERE THE HULI WILL BE PLANTED.**
- 2. ALWAYS ASK! DON'T ACCEPT TARO HULI FROM ANY TARO FARM ALREADY INFESTED WITH APPLE SNAIL.**
3. Not sure of your huli source? Remove all open stem blades on each huli, remove dirt and pests, dry at least one day. Plant kalo dryland and well away from wet areas the first year, then, rotate to lo'i in the second year. *Apple snails can not survive in dryland plantings.*

**Prevention is the best protection**

4/18/2023