Pyrgophorus platyrachis Thompson


Diagnostic features
Shell elongate-conical with 5-6 whorls usually with raised spiral threads around periphery, frequently the uppermost thread has conical or triangular spines. Spire straight-sided. Suture deeply impressed. Color brown or olive. Peristome complete around aperture. Sexually dimorphic in size; length of female shell 3-5 mm. males about half as large as females. Male Pyrgophorus have a distinctive penis fringed with numerous papillae: 3-7 papillae along right margin and a projection with 1-4 papillae near end on left side (Hershler & Thompson 1992).

Classification

Common name: Serrate Crownsnail

Class Gastropoda
Subclass Caenogastropoda
Order Littorinimorpha
Superfamily Truncatelloidea
Family Cochliopidae

Genus Pyrgophorus Ancey, 1888 (Type species: Paludina parvula Guilding, 1828; St Vincent, Lesser
Antilles, Caribbean)


**Type locality:** Florida, USA.

**Biology and ecology**

*Pyrgophorus platyrachis* is most commonly found in fresh water, including man-made structures such as canals, also lakes, streams, rivers, swamps etc. and has been collected in brackish marshes. It most commonly occurs in streams and canals with a slight current and a soft, silty bottom but some populations may be found in mangrove swamps. Individuals are generally found on plants but may also be found on any submerged object on the bottom (Thompson, 1968).

*Pyrgophorus* feeds on algae and biofilm. *Pyrgophorus* species are ovoviviparous brooders, females holding eggs until hatching in a brood pouch in the pallial oviduct. The embryos are clearly visible through clean shells.

**Distribution**

Native to Florida, USA; recently introduced to Singapore.

**Further reading**


**Notes**
This species resembles *Potamopyrgus antipodarum* but differs in that the spines and sculptural ornamentation of the shell is composed of calcium carbonate (shell) and not proteinaceous material (periostracum) as in *Potamopyrgus*. Also *Pyrgophorus* has low (often indistinct) multiple spiral cords around the shell. *Potamopyrgus* only develops a single spiral thread or row of spines on the whorl shoulder of some individuals under certain environmental conditions. Anatomically *Pyrgophorus* differs in having a number of short finger-like glandular papillae on the penis of males; *Potamopyrgus* has a simple penis.

Although *Pyrgophorus* is not yet recorded from Australia, given that it is established in freshwater in Singapore, and because of its close resemblance to *Potamopyrgus*, we include it here as a species to watch.


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