**Pomacea diffusa** Blume, 1957

**Diagnostic features**
Distinguished from *Pomacea canaliculata* by its smaller sized shell (up to 65 mm in height) and shouldered whorls that abut the preceding whorls without forming a channel. Animal with distinctive head-foot; snout uniquely with a pair of distal, long, tentacle-like processes; cephalic tentacles very long. A long 'siphon' is also present.

**Classification**

*Pomacea diffusa* Blume, 1957

*Common name:* Mystery snail

*Class* Gastropoda  
*Infraclass* Caenogastropoda  
*Informal group* Architaenioglossa  
*Order* Ampullarida  
*Superfamily* Ampullarioidea  
*Family* Ampullariidae

*Genus* Pomacea Perry, 1810


*Type locality:* Lagune in St Cruz, Bolivia.

**Biology and ecology**

On sediment, weeds and other available substrate. Lays pink coloured egg masses on plants above the waterline.

This species is not considered to be an agricultural pest as it only feeds on dead plant material and algae.

**Distribution**
Introduced from South America and found in aquarium shops in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. Recently reported from the Ross River in Townsville, and there are other known naturalised populations that have not been previously reported; these are in the Kallangur/Narangba region north of Brisbane, North Lakes, northern Brisbane, two areas SW of Brisbane (Flinders View, south of Ipswich and Springfield Lakes, Coolwynpin Creek, Capalaba E of Brisbane and Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens at Urangan, NE of Maryborough (D. Potter, pers. comm. - material all vouchered in Queensland Museum).

Introduced from the Amazon River system in South America.

**Notes**

This species has until very recently been known as *Pomacea bridgesii* (Reeve, 1856) which has now been shown to be based on a rather rare South American species.

Two similar south Asian ampullariid species have regularly been intercepted by Australian Biosecurity – they are *Pila ampullacea* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *Pila globosa* (Swainson, 1822). *Pila ampullacea* has a more pear-shaped shell compared to *Pomacea diffusa* which is more turbinate in shape. *Pila ampullacea* has rounded whorl shoulders and lacks the distinct flat topped shouldered whorls present in *Pomacea diffusa*. *Pila ampullacea* has a narrow to almost closed umbilicus whereas in *Pomacea diffusa* the umbilicus is wide and deep. *Pomacea diffusa* has a sharp pointed spire whereas in *Pila ampullacea* the spire is more rounded. *Pila ampullacea* is larger in size (up to 100mm high) compared to *Pomacea diffusa* (up to 65mm high).

The shell colour of *Pila ampullacea* varies from bright green to orange-brown with reddish spiral bands. The interior of the shell is yellowish with a suffusion of purple and marked with strong spiral bands. The operculum of *Pila ampullacea* is calcified on the inside whereas in *Pomacea diffusa* the operculum is completely horny. The eggs of *Pila ampullacea* are calcareous and white and are deposited above the water line on banks and mudflats in shallow depressions. *Pila ampullacea* aestivates during the dry season. The snails bury themselves deep into the mud and can be found to depths of one metre. *Pomacea diffusa* generally does not aestivate.

*Pila globosa* has a globose pear shaped shell with an oval aperture and low rounded spire. In contrast with *Pila ampullacea*, *Pila globosa* has a large and deep umbilicus. The colour of *Pila globosa* varies from olive green to grey green with a reddish suffusion. The interior of the shell is dull reddish with very faint spiral bands visible, the columella is white. Like *Pila ampullacea* the operculum is calcified on the inside. The eggs are calcareous and white and are deposited above the water line on banks and mudflats in shallow depressions. Like *Pila ampullacea*, *Pila globosa* aestivates during the dry season.

**Further reading**


