

snails (and vermetidae) in Bermuda

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Land snails

- Amber snails - only found in the form of fossil (5%)
- Bermuda land snail - rest of 95% Bermuda's terrestrial fossils
Alive?

Bermuda land snail



- *Scientific name: Poecilozonites*
endemic genus of pulmonate land snails in Gastrodontidae family
about 10 mm in size
- They settled in Bermuda at least 300,000 yrs BP
Scientists believe their origin is in North America, where they traveled across
Mid-Atlantic using flotsam.
- Population has fallen to critically low levels in the wild
Only a single small colony surviving



Bermuda land snail



- Family consists of four sub-branch species:
 - Poecilozonites bermudensis †
 - Poecilozonites nelsoni †
 - Poecilozonites reinianus †
 - Poecilozonites circumfirmatus ← only species that *may* still be alive
- The “sole survivor of a once diverse range of endemic Bermudian snail species, are being driven to extinction by the introduced predatory snail, *Euglandina rosea* (rosy wolfsnail), and Argentine ants.” - *Zoological Society of London, March 4, 2004*



snail-eat-snail

- 1958: Wolfsnail was brought to Bermuda meant to control the pesky garden snails that was introduced 30 yrs ago
- Wolfsnail does not distinguish between endemic and alien snails





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Mission to save endangered snails

A colony of rare snails is settling into its new home at London Zoo as part of a mission to save the species from extinction.



Experts will study the snails' breeding and feeding habits

The 56 Bermudan land snails were flown in after the native population fell to critically low levels.

The species, of which only 100 remain, is being driven to extinction by predatory snails and Argentine ants.

Experts at the Zoo in Regents Park will study the snails' breeding and feeding habits to develop a conservation plan.

The Bermuda Natural History Museum, which had been monitoring the snails, asked the zoo for help after numbers among the single surviving colony fell dramatically.

Island habitat

It is hoped they can establish a 'safety net' population which could be bred and later reintroduced into their island habitat.

To do this experts will study the snails to produce detailed information on their life history, breeding and feeding habits.

Paul Pearce-Kelly, Curator of Invertebrates at London Zoo, said "We were more than happy to get involved in such a critical project.

"We've had a lot of success and experience breeding a Polynesian snail called Partula and so we can use that knowledge to help the Bermudan species and hopefully help re-establish them in the wild."

snails that live in ocean

- *scientific name: Janthina janthina*
a.k.a. purple ocean snail or purple sea snail
grows up to about 3.5 cm
- found worldwide in the warm waters of tropical and temperate seas, floating at the surface
- In bermuda, you can find often after storms or when the wind consistently blows for a few days
- Similar species: *Janthina pallida* also found in Bermuda
Smaller, shell is more highly domed, lavender color.



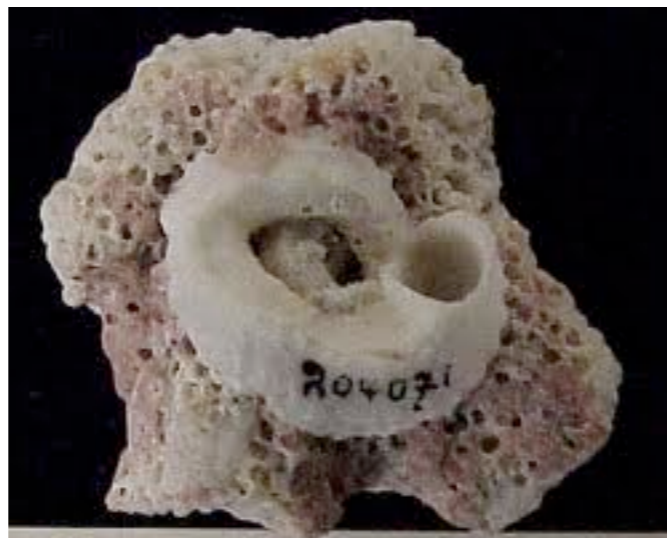
“little snails”

- Lettered Horn Shell
- False Cerith
- Zigzag Periwinkle
- Angulate Periwinkle
- Beaded Periwinkle
- Prickly Winkle



more marine snails

- Worm Snail - *Dendropoma corredens*
starts out as a drifting larva, then settles down to make a regular spiral shell
- then it glues its shell to the substratum, begins to grow irregularly, joining forces with its brethren to form tangled, intertwined masses grounded for life - no movibility
- can be hard as granite



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