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# MUD SNAIL

## Potamopyrgus Antipodarum

The New Zealand mud snail is a species of very small freshwater snail with a gill and an operculum (lid), that stops the snail from drying out during low tide and periods of drought. They thrive in disturbed waterways and benefit from high nutrient levels in water that creates more algae to feed from.

### Description

The shell of the Mud Snail is extended with 7 or 8 whorls with deep grooves. Shell colors vary from greys to dark brown and light brown. The average size is only around 5 mm however they can grow up to 12mm.

### Food

Mud snails are nocturnal grazers feeding on plant and animal waste, algae and phytoplankton. Mud snails can survive passage through the guts of fish and birds and may be transported by these animals.

### Breeding

Mud snails can reproduce without fertilisation because females are born with developing embryos in their reproductive system. The snails produces approximately 230 young per year during spring and summer, however they only live for one year.



NZ Mud Snails have become invasive in some countries, where populations as high as 800,000 per m<sup>2</sup> have been found!