



Aquatic Invasive Species Quick Guide

Faucet Snail (*Bithynia tentaculata* L.)

Description: A member of the Bithyniidae family, faucet snails grow up to 12-15mm tall (about 1/2"), and have a light brown to black shell with 5-6 whorls. The shell opening (aperture) is on the right side, and is less than half the height of the shell. A tough plate called an operculum tightly covers the aperture. It is teardrop-shaped, and displays several concentric rings on adults. Faucet snails can filter-feed on suspended algae, or graze algae off of rocks and other surfaces, whichever is more favorable at the time.

North American Distribution: Great Lakes region from New York and Quebec east to Minnesota. Also known from Montana and Chesapeake Bay.



Faucet snails have light brown to black shells, with the opening on the right side.



Faucet snail shells have 5-6 whorls, and a teardrop-shaped opening.

Dispersal Vectors: Faucet snails are native to Europe, and arrived in the Great Lakes through ballast water transport in the 1870s. They can be transported locally by boats, trailers, anchors, duck decoys, and other equipment that is moved between water bodies. Faucet snails can live for up to a month in dry mud, so proper cleaning of equipment is essential before moving to a new water body. Eggs are deposited on firm substrates in masses of up to 77.

Ecological Impacts: Faucet snails are intermediate hosts for three trematode parasites that can kill waterfowl. Several massive waterfowl die-offs have occurred in the Upper Midwestern U.S., and have been attributed to the birds' consumption of faucet snails. These parasites do not pose a risk to humans consuming cooked fish or waterfowl. Faucet snails also compete with native snails for food and other resources, and can clog water intake screens and pipes in municipal water systems.

Control Options: The best control measure for faucet snails is preventing their spread to new water bodies. Boats, trailers, decoys, and other recreational equipment should always be thoroughly checked before leaving a water body, to prevent faucet snails and other aquatic invasive species from being transported.

No effective chemical or biological control measures are known for faucet snails.



The adult faucet snail's operculum has many concentric rings.

Additional Information:

Brendelberger, H. and Jürgens, S. 1994. Suspension feeding in *Bithynia tentaculata* (Prosobranchia, Bithyniidae), as affected by body size, food, and temperature. *Oecologia*. 94:1 36-42.

Kipp, R.M., A.J. Benson, J. Larson, and A. Fusaro. 2013. *Bithynia tentaculata*. USGS Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Database, Gainesville, FL. <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?speciesID=987> Revision Date: 6/4/2012

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