

Giant African Snail

July 4, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Giant African Snail Latest News

The invasive giant African snail (*Lissachatina fulica*) is spreading rapidly across Tirunavaya panchayat and has now entered school campuses and is raising health concerns for children in Kerala.

About Giant African Snail

- It is the common name for several **large African land snail species**. The most damaging of these pests is **Lissachatina fulica**.
- It is one of the **world's worst invasive species**.
- It is known to eat more than **500 types of crops and ornamental plants**.
- It is **native to East Africa** but it has been widely introduced to other parts of the world through the pet trade, as a food resource, and by accidental introduction.
- **Habitat:** It **thrives in warm tropical climates** with mild temperatures all year round and high humidity.
- It is found in **agricultural areas**, coastal areas and wetlands, natural and planted forests, riparian zones, scrublands and shrublands, and the urban zones.

- **Food:** Mature, adult snails generally feed on **decaying organic matter**, including garbage, fallen fruit and animal manure.
- **Key Features**
 - It is a **hermaphrodite**.
 - Adult snails are very large with a long, **narrow, cone-shaped shell**.
 - The shell is usually 50 to 100 millimetres long but can reach up to 200 millimetres.
 - The shell is usually light brown with darker brown vertical stripes.
- **Health Impact:** The snails can carry the **rat lungworm parasite** (*Angiostrongylus cantonensis*), which can **cause eosinophilic meningitis** in humans.

Source: TH

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