



# New Zealand mudsnail

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<b>Common Name</b>	New Zealand mudsnail
<b>Genus &amp; Species</b>	<i>Potamopyrgus antipodarum</i>
<b>Family</b>	Hydrobiidae
<b>Order</b>	Mesogastropoda
<b>Class</b>	Gastropoda

**Diagnosis:** A small, aquatic snail with a light to dark brown shell. Compared to native U.S. species, the shell of the New Zealand mudsnail is rather elongate with 5 to 6 whorls. In some populations, a weak keel may be present about mid-whorl. The shell aperture is dextral, meaning the opening is to the animal's right.



**Ecology:** This species is considered a scraper/grazer, with diatoms, detritus, and periphyton comprising the majority of their diet. Females are capable of producing 20 to 120 live young per year. Reproduction usually occurs from summer to early fall, with some populations reproducing as early as the spring. Most populations in the U.S. are all female and reproduce via parthenogenesis.

**Habitat & Distribution:** The New Zealand mudsnail is able to occupy a wide range of habitats including rivers, reservoirs, lakes, and estuaries. This species is native to New Zealand, but has been introduced to Australia, Europe, and North America. This species is extremely tolerant of various salinities, temperatures, and is capable of withstanding desiccation. In the U.S., densities of over one-half million/m<sup>2</sup> have been observed in western streams. This species can comprise 95% of the invertebrate biomass within a stream. Studies have shown that this species can cause native invertebrate populations to decrease as well as alter primary production.

**Status:** In Illinois, established populations of this species have only been recorded from Lake Michigan, near Waukegan. Introduction of the species was most likely via drinking water barrels in ships from Australia. Dispersal within the U.S. has been aided by accidental human transport (e.g. recreational water users).

**USGS Fact Sheet:** <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=1008>