

KNOW YOUR PLANT ENEMIES IN THE CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

1. c. THE GOLDEN APPLE SNAIL

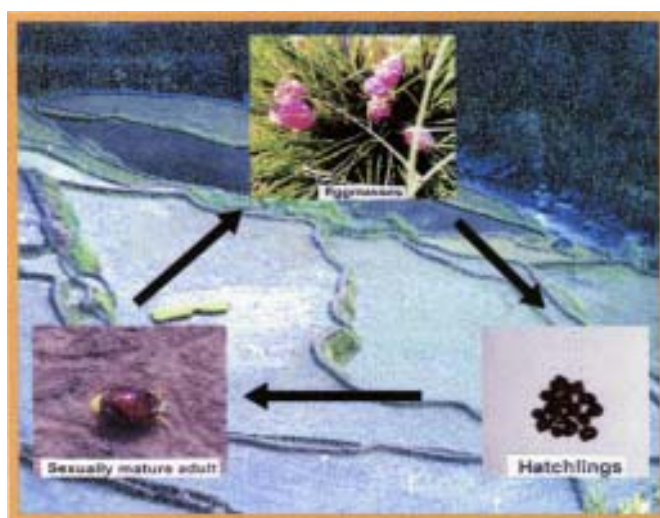
What is the Golden Apple Snail?

It is an alien species of freshwater molluscs. This is the only species of snail so far known that is destructive to rice seedlings and young rice plants. It is also known as golden “kuhol”, golden nuisance snail, miracle snail, or Miami golden snail. In the Ifugao Rice Terraces (IRT), its introduction is recent and is locally referred to as “Batikor”. It was then introduced as a cheap protein food source for humans.



What are the characteristics of the Golden Apple Snail?

The Golden Apple Snail begins its life as **strawberry colored eggs** that are laid on the substrates above the water surface. A pregnant snail can lay from 50-500 eggs with 80% hatching rates. **Egg masses turn white when they are about to hatch**. The young snails (hatchlings) are not capable to feed on rice seedlings. Once young snails attain a size of corn seed they feed voraciously on the rice plants. Sexually **mature** in 2-3 months. The life span of Golden Apple Snail ranges from 2-6 years. They grow to a substantial size-as large as a ping-pong ball or even a tennis ball in some cases.



Are all Snail species destructive to rice plants?

No. In IRT fields, along with the Golden Apple Snail many other non-destructive snails (Pilipit, Birabid, etc.) are present, but it is only the Golden Apple Snail that damage rice plants (causes uneven crop maturity, additional labor for replanting), Azolla, succulent leafy plant and vegetables.



How to detect the presence of Golden Apple Snail?

- Golden Apple Snails congregate in waterlogged areas and irrigated fields, but they bury themselves in soil during the dry seasons.
- Water entry/rains triggers the Golden Apple Snail to lay eggs. Egg masses are always found sticking above water surfaces.



How can you manage Golden Apple Snail destruction?

Combination of the following practices will lessen the continuous proliferation of the the Golden Apple Snail.

1. **Prior to rice seedbed preparation.** Clear rice stubbles, and grasses in the designated seedbed area. Put in divisional embankment along the perimeter of seedbed area. Install screen on water inlets of the seedbed area. Crush or drop eggmasses underwater by hand or foot.
2. **Prior to rice transplanting.** Level the field uniformly. Spread attractants such as trumpet flower leaves/ gabi leaves and stems/ banana leaves/old newspapers, near paddy embankments to hasten the collection of Golden Apple Snails. Utilize such Golden Apple Snails as food, for pigs, ducks, chickens, and human beings (Chicharon Kuhol). Either destroy/collect eggmasses before they change from strawberry color to white.
3. **After rice transplanting.** Maintain water depth on rice paddy of 1 cm. To Limit the movement of Golden Apple Snails. Sustain the destruction of eggmasses and use of attractants to limit continuous reproduction.
4. **After rice harvesting.** Use attractants to collect Golden Apple Snails to prepare Chicharon Kuhol.

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