

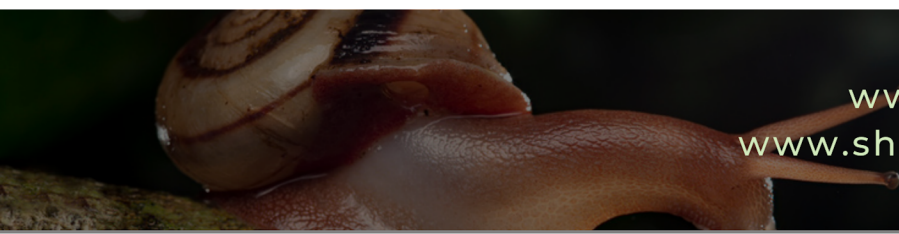


CARE GUIDE



GOLDEN LAND SNAIL

Xanthomelon saginatum



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PROFILE

Golden Land Snails are found in savannah scrubland in tropical north Queensland. They are nocturnal and shelter by day beneath logs and rocks and within the earth where they either utilise existing fissures and holes or are able to 'bulldoze' their way into softer soils.

Like many tropical invertebrates, they are most active throughout the wet season, although they still come to the surface at night in the dry season on moist nights. They feed on vegetation, fungi and a variety of organic debris. They have close relatives that live in similar habitats in southern Australia and also across the Top End.

Like other snails, Golden Land Snails are hermaphrodites. This means that all individuals are both male and female at the same time. Snails still need to find a mate though, and once mating has occurred, both snails will be able to produce eggs.

Snail eggs are a creamy white colour and are laid in clusters in a shallow burrow or under logs where it is moist. Baby snails hatch out looking like miniature adults, but their shells are very fragile. All snails need damp conditions to live in, or their soft bodies can dry out.

FOOD

Freshly cut fruit and vegetables, such as cucumber, carrot, lettuce and sweet potato, and Mollusc Food (available from Minibeast Wildlife Bug Shop). Replace the food every two days or earlier if it is all eaten. The food can be placed in a small, flat dish or directly onto the substrate. These snails will also benefit from feeding on some cuttlebone.

WATER

Mist spray the substrate once a day. This will keep the enclosure damp, and the snails will remain more active. As these snails are from regions that periodically dry out, they can cope with dry conditions for short periods of time provided they are able to burrow under ground to prevent water loss.

ENCLOSURE

The enclosure needs to be about 15 cm H x 20 cm W x 20 cm L. Place the enclosure in a spot exposed to some daylight each day, but be careful it does not over heat or dry out in direct sunlight.

SUBSTRATE

Coco-peat, sphagnum moss or sand, or a combination of these, to a depth of 5-8cm so that the snail are able to burrow. You can find these in the Minibeast Wildlife Bug Shop. This should be kept damp to wet at all times to keep the snails active. Place a small plastic container (such as a halved plant pot) or piece of bark in the enclosure for the snails to shelter under.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Remove any uneaten food after 2 days and replace with fresh food. Remove any waste products, and spot clean the enclosure. The entire substrate should be changed every 6 months, or before if it becomes sodden or smelly.

HANDLING

These snails cannot bite and can be handled safely. They should be picked up gently by the shell, and their bodies should be carefully lifted away from the surface they are climbing on. They will sometimes prefer a wet hand to move on. The snails will leave a bit of a slimy residue on your hand, so make sure you wash your hands afterwards.

COMMON ISSUES

If your snail rarely comes out of its shell, its enclosure it can indicate unsuitable conditions. It may be too hot, too cold or too dry. Make sure the substrate is kept damp to wet at all times. This will encourage your snail to be more active.

TEMPERATURE

This species will do best at 22 – 28 degrees C, but will tolerate 15 – 30 degrees. Cooler temperatures will result in a slower growth rate.



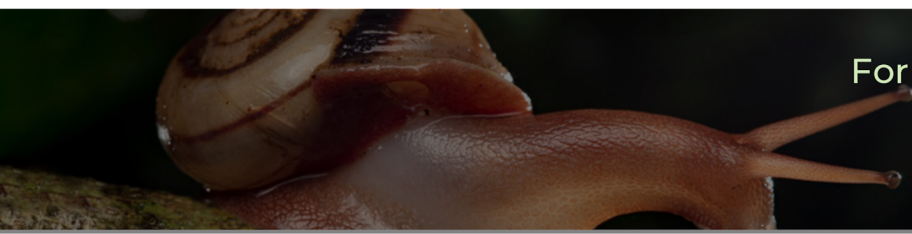
About 5 years life span



These animals are captive bred, and should not be released into the wild



These are tropical snails, so it is important to keep a relatively high humidity of around 60-90% to enable the snails to be active and feed.



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