

JR FACT FILE



OTWAY BLACK SNAIL

Victhaphantia compacta



AT A GLANCE

Size:

The shell of the snail has a maximum diameter of 2.8 cm

Diet:

Other snails, slugs, earthworms and soft bellied insect larvae

Life Span:

2-8 years

Habitat:

Wet forests and cool temperate rainforests in the Otway Ranges in Victoria.

Threats:

Loss of habitat through land clearing and other human disturbances, fire, the restricted range of the snails, drought and climate change.

Natural Predators:

Bush rats, birds

What Is an Otway Black Snail?

The Otway Black Snail is a rare snail found only in the Otway Ranges in southern Victoria. Due to its very limited distribution, the snail is classified as endangered. The Otway

Black Snail is a carnivorous snail that eats other snails, worms and insect larvae. To eat its prey the snail uses it's long, sharp, backward pointing teeth arranged in v-shaped rows on the radula (underside of the foot of the snail) which holds the prey while being eaten. The Otway Black Snail is partially nocturnal but can be seen on walking tracks in the Otways on cool moist days.

The body of the snail is dark blue/ grey to black. The thin shell, positioned to the rear of the snail's body is round with four whorls (spirals). The shell colour varies from a glossy dark brown to black sometime with tinges of yellow-brown on the inner whorl.

Where Do the Otway Black Snails Live?

The snails live in the wet forests and cool temperate rainforests in the Great Otway National Park and Otway Forest Park. The black snails preferred habitat is in the deep leaf litter close to ground level at the base of trees and tree-ferns. Within it's preferred forest types, the Otway Black Snail can be found on wet forest ridgelines, gullies and slopes.

Where to spot an Otway Black Snail in Victoria's parks?

Walking tracks in wet forests in the Great Otway National Park and Otway Forest Park on moist days. Great locations include Triplet Falls, Little Aire Falls, Melba Gully, Maits Rest, Hopetoun Falls and Erskine Falls. Remember to keep to the walking track.