

FLORIDA TREESNAIL

Liguus fasciatus

Order: Stylommatophora

Family: Orthalicidae

FNAI Ranks: G3/SNR

U.S. Status: none

FL Status: none



Description: A large snail (adults 1.6 - 2.7 in. = 40 - 70 mm) with a high conical shell of variable thickness and texture. Background color is white or cream. Although sometimes solid white, the shell is more often marked with streaks or bands of variable color (yellow, brown, pink, green) and width. Apical whorl (shell tip) and columella (inner shell spiral) are white or pink. Snail body is grayish tan without markings.

Similar Species: The two species of *Orthalicus* living in Florida are superficially similar to *Liguus fasciatus*, but have thinner, more capacious shells. Florida Keys tree snail (*Orthalicus reses*) has axially (vertically) oriented brown streaks. The banded tree snail (*Orthalicus floridensis*) has three spiral chestnut bands that can resemble *Liguus fasciatus*, but has a chestnut-colored apex and columella.

Habitat: Tropical hardwood hammock (rockland hammock). This species prefers smooth-barked trees. On the mainland it utilizes wild tamarind (*Lysiloma latisiliquum*), poisonwood (*Metopium toxiferum*), gumbo limbo (*Bursera simarouba*), and mastic (*Mastichodendron foetidissimum*). Additional host trees in the Keys are Jamaican dogwood (*Piscidia piscipula*), pigeon plum (*Coccoloba diversifolia*), ironwood (*Krugiodendron ferreum*), and other hardwoods native to the Florida Keys hammocks.

Seasonal Occurrence: Dormant December - April or May (depending on length of dry season and local conditions).

Florida Distribution: Occurs from Broward and Collier counties south through the Keys. *L. f. matecumbensis* is restricted to Matecumbe Key; *L. f. septentrionalis* was eliminated from its natural range in Broward and Palm Beach counties, but has been introduced into Everglades National Park.

Range-wide Distribution: Southern Florida, Cuba, and Isle of Pines.

Conservation Status: Protected within ENP and several local, state, and federal conservation areas throughout the Keys. Of the eight described subspecies, *L. f. matecumbensis* is least secure; many of the color varieties of the species have been exterminated.

Protection and Management: Prevent disturbance in hammocks, as this can alter the microclimate, resulting in unsuitable conditions for tree snails. Maintain leaf litter accumulations at the bases of trees for egg deposition. Translocation recommended only after careful consideration of consequences.

References: Deyrup and Franz (eds.) 1994, Pilsbry 1946.



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