



Land Snails of Leicestershire and Rutland

Introduction

There are 50 known species of land snail found in Leicestershire and Rutland (VC55) which represents about half of the 100 UK species. However molluscs are an under-recorded taxon group so it is possible that more species could be found and equally possible that a few may now be extinct in our two counties. There was a 20 year period of enthusiastic mollusc recording between 1967 and 1986, principally by museum staff, which account for the majority of species. Whilst records have increased again in the last three years thanks to NatureSpot, some species have not been recorded for over 30 years.

All our land snails are in the class Gastropoda and the order Pulmonata. Whilst some of these species require damp habitats and are generally found near to aquatic habitats, they are all able to survive out of water. A number of species are largely restricted to calcareous habitats so are only found at a few sites.

The sizes stated refer to the largest dimension of the shell typically found in adult specimens. There is much variation in many species and juveniles will of course be smaller. Note that the images are all greater than life size and not all the to the same scale. I have tried to display them at a sufficiently large scale so that the key features are visible. Always refer to the sizes given in the text.

Status refers to abundance in Leicestershire and Rutland (VC55). However molluscs are generally under-recorded so our understanding of their distribution could easily change.

Identification

Nearly all species can be identified from their shell so collecting empty shells is a good way to add new records. This guide provides information and images that should make it possible to identify most species, though some are very small and need a hand lens or microscope to view them in sufficient detail. I am always happy to receive specimens, alive or shell only, if identification help is needed.

A key to the land snails of Leicestershire and Rutland can be downloaded from the NatureSpot website.

Further Information

[NatureSpot – Slugs and Snails](#)

[Mollusc Ireland](#)

[Land Snails in the British Isles](#) (Aidgap key)

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Helicidae

This family contains our largest and most familiar snail species.

Cornu aspersum – Common Garden Snail

Description: 30mm. Shell blotched and striped or speckled dark brown.

Habitat: gardens, allotments

Status: very common



Cepaea nemoralis – Brown-lipped Snail

Description: 20mm. Shell with brown lip. Variable colour and stripes (yellow, brown, pink)

Habitat: varied

Status: very common



Cepaea hortensis – White-lipped Snail

Description: 17mm. Shell with white lip. Variable colour and stripes (yellow, brown, pink)

Habitat: varied

Status: common



Arianta arbustorum – Copse Snail

Description: 15-18mm. Globular, brown shell with round mouth. Central stripe or blotched.

Habitat: moist areas

Status: fairly common



Helicigona lapicida - Lapidary Snail

Description: 16mm. Flattened with prominent ridge. Large umbilicus. Dark brown body.

Habitat: calcareous. Rocky ground & stone walls.

Status: uncommon



Hygromiidae

Ashfordia granulata - Silky Snail

Description: 8mm. Hairy. Glossy, whitish to pale brown shell. Globular with short spire, small umbilicus and pale hairs.

Habitat: damp, shady places.

Status: uncommon



Candidula gigaxii - Eccentric Snail

Description: 10mm. Variable bands. Height <math><3/4</math> width. Flattened spire. Eccentric (not rounded) umbilicus.

Habitat: calcareous.

Status: rare



Candidula intersecta – Wrinkled Snail

Description: 10mm. Variable bands. Height <math><3/4</math> width. Pointed spire.

Habitat: calcareous.

Status: uncommon



Ceruella virgata - Banded Snail

Description: 13mm. Shell globular and pale. Spiral band but variable.

Habitat: calcareous, dry, exposed areas.

Status: rare



Helicella itala - Heath Snail

Description: 16mm. Flattened.

Spiral band but variable.

Large umbilicus.

Habitat: calcareous, dry, exposed areas.

Status: uncommon



Hygromia cinctella - Girdled Snail

Description: 11mm. Pale ridge. Small umbilicus.

Habitat: woods, hedgerows, gardens, allotments.

Status: uncommon but expanding



Monacha cantiana - Kentish Snail

Description: 20mm. Pale and mottled. Often with pale keel stripe. Pinkish near mouth.

Habitat: grassland (not woodland)

Status: common



Trochulus hispidus - Hairy Snail

Description: 7-8mm. Large umbilicus. Hairs wear off with age.

Habitat: variety

Status: common



Trochulus striolatus - Strawberry Snail

Description: 12mm. Rough growth lines. Dull keel. Pale band inside lip. Hairy when young.

Habitat: gardens, hedges, woodlands

Status: common



Oxychilidae

This family includes several very common species but they are generally similar and can be hard to distinguish.

Aegopinella nitidula - Smooth Glass Snail

Description: 8-10mm. 4-5 whorls. Slightly raised spire. Yellow-brown & waxy.
Rapidly expanding body whorl – gives flared mouth.

Habitat: varied

Status: common



Aegopinella pura - Clear Glass Snail

Description: 5-6mm. 4-5 whorls. Pale brown, translucent shell.
Similar to *A. nitidula* – but smaller.

Habitat: varied

Status: frequent



Nesovitrea hammonis - Rayed Glass Snail

Description: 3-4mm. 3.5 whorls. Slightly raised spire.
Pale, translucent. Distinct striations.

Habitat:

Status: common



Oxychilus alliarius - Garlic Snail

Description: 6-8mm. 4-5 whorls. Slightly raised spire.
Yellow-brown to greenish.
Translucent & glossy. Garlic smell.

Habitat: gardens, woodland

Status: very common



Oxychilus cellarius - Cellar Snail

Description: 9-12mm. 5-6 whorls. Flattened spire.
Pale, transparent & glossy.

Habitat: varied

Status: very common



Oxychilus draparnaudi - Draparnaud's Snail

Description: 11-16mm. 5-6 whorls. Flattened spire.
Yellow-brown. Waxy.

Habitat: gardens, varied

Status: common



Oxychilus navarricus - Glossy Glass Snail

Description: 8-10mm. 8-10 whorls. Light brown & glossy.
Dark mantle shows as black band behind mouth.

Habitat:

Status: common



Lauriidae

We have just one species in this family – one of our commonest.

Lauria cylindracea - Chrysalis Snail

Description: 3-4mm. Single tooth contiguous with lip.

White lip when fresh.

Habitat: stone walls

Status: very common



Carychiidae

Carychium tridentatum - Herald Snail

Description: 2mm. ID needs examination of internal shell.

Habitat: varied

Status: frequent



Clausiliidae

Balea perversa - Tree Snail

Description: 8mm. Sinistral. Mouth square

Habitat: rocky outcrops & stone walls

Status: rare (South of England species)



Clausilia bidentata - Two-toothed Door Snail

Description: 8mm. Distinct growth lines, 3mm max width.

Habitat: leaf litter in woodlands & hedges. Climbs walls and vegetation.

Status: common



Cochlodina laminata - Plaited Door Snail

Description: 14mm. Shell smooth, glossy & translucent. Faint growth lines.

Habitat: climbs trees & walls when wet

Status: common



Cochlicopidae

Azeca goodalli - Three-toothed Snail

Description: 6mm. Shell thin & glossy, brown or white.
Variable pattern.

Habitat: leaf litter in woodlands

Status: rare / under-recorded



Cochlicopa lubrica - Slippery Snail

Description: 5mm. Shell smooth & very glossy.
Dissection needed to distinguish from *C. lubricella*.

Habitat: varied

Status: common



Cochlicopa lubricella - Least Slippery Snail

Description: 5mm. Shell smooth & very glossy.
Dissection needed to distinguish from *C. lubrica*.

Habitat: varied

Status: common

Discidae

We have just the one species in this family – the familiar Round or Discus Snail.

Discus rotundatus - Round Snail

Description: 5mm. Shell flattened & barred. Large umbilicus.

Habitat: moist areas

Status: very common



Enidae

Ena montana - Mountain Bulin

Description: 15mm. Brown and not very shiny.

Habitat: ancient woodland & hedgerows of uplands, usually calcareous.

Status: rare (single record, very doubtful as it is by far the most northerly UK record for this species)

Merdigera obscura - Lesser Bulin

Description: 8mm. Shell dull with fine growth lines, white lip.

Climbs trees and often found mud-covered. Juveniles more cone-shaped.

Habitat: woodland & scrub.

Status: uncommon



Euconulidae

Euconulus alderi -

Description: 2-3mm. 5 whorls, flattened top-shaped.

Smaller, darker and glossier than *E. fulvus*.

Habitat: wet, open habitats.

Status: rare



Euconulus fulvus - Tawny Glass Snail

Description: 3-4mm. Shell top-shaped. Pale yellow-brown.

Habitat: various moist areas

Status: rare (2 records, both doubtful)



Ferussaciidae

Ceciliodes acicula - Blind Snail

Description: 4mm. Narrow shell <1mm. Large mouth.

Habitat: calcareous. Lives underground (search mole hills!)

Status: uncommon / rare



Gastrodontidae

Zonitoides nitidus - Shiny Glass Snail

Description: 5-6mm. 4.5 whorls. Yellow-brown shell but live animal is black so appears dark. Large umbilicus. Slightly raised spire. Triangular cross-section. Dull orange spot often visible through shell behind mouth in live animals.

Habitat: wet meadows. Near water bodies.

Status: uncommon



Pristilomatidae

Vitrea contracta - Milky Crystal Snail

Description: 1mm. White shell. Small umbilicus.

Habitat: Dry areas. Calcareous but not exclusively.

Status: frequent



Punctidae

Punctum pygmaeum - Dwarf Snail

Description: <1mm. Shell brown & minute.

Habitat: moist habitats. Woodland leaf litter. Marshes.

Status: uncommon/under-recorded



Pupillidae

Pupilla muscorum - Moss Snail

Description: 2-3mm. Single or no tooth. Pale tooth inside mouth.

Habitat: Open grassland, rocky outcrops, walls.

Status: uncommon



Pyramidulidae

Pyramidula pusilla - Rock Snail

Description: 2-3mm. Roundish. Deep and wide umbilicus. Heavily striated.

Habitat: exposed rocky outcrops & walls.

Status: uncommon



Succineidae

Oxyloma elegans - Pfeiffer's Snail

Description: 6mm. Shell translucent. Dark body colour.

Habitat: wetland, marginal vegetation.

Status: frequent



Succinea putris - Amber Snail

Description: 14mm. Shell translucent.

Pale mottled body colour shows through.

Habitat: wetland, marginal vegetation.

Status: common



Valloniidae

Acanthinula aculeata - Prickly Snail

Description: 2mm. Globular. Spines on ridges.

Habitat: sheltered habitats.

Status: uncommon



Vallonia costata - Ribbed Grass Snail

Description: <3mm. Flattened with prominent ribs. Large umbilicus.

Habitat: calcareous. Exposed areas.

Status: frequent



Vallonia excentrica - Eccentric Grass Snail

Description: 2mm. Ribbed. Eccentric umbilicus.

Trumpet mouth without protruding lip.

Habitat: calcareous, open grassland.

Status: frequent



Vallonia pulchella agg. - Smooth Grass Snail

Description: 2mm. Not ribbed.

Trumpet mouth with protruding lip.

Habitat: calcareous, dry grassland.

Status: uncommon



Vertiginidae

Columella edentula - Chrysalis Snail

Description: 2mm. Faint striations.

No teeth inside mouth.

Habitat: damp areas, often calcareous.

Status: rare



Vertigo antivertigo - Marsh Whorl Snail

Description: 2mm. Oval, smooth & glossy. Dark brown.

Two teeth on the upper mouth aperture.

Habitat: wetland areas.

Status: rare (1 record)



Vertigo pygmaea - Common Whorl Snail

Description: 1-2mm.

One tooth on the upper mouth aperture.

Habitat: calcareous grassland and wetlands

Status: uncommon (the commonest of 11 UK Vertigo species)



Vitrinidae

Vitrina pellucida - Pellucid Glass Snail

Description: 5-6mm. Transparent shell with rapidly expanding body whorl.

Live animal mainly found in winter.

Habitat: variety of moist habitats.

Status: common

