

Destroy African Snails but save the rare Barbados Giant Land Snail!

Date sent to local media: Sunday, August 3, 2008, 8:00 PM

Dear Editor,

I am requesting permission to transmit this environmentally important information to the general public of Barbados via your respected publication.

I have read - and support - the call that is going out to Barbadians to destroy on site the African Giant Land Snail (*Achatina fullica*), but I want my fellow Barbadians to be able to differentiate between the aforementioned Agricultural pest invasive species and our local Giant Land Snail (*Bulimulus oblongus*) - which is quite rare in comparison; and the photos I have supplied will help to make the distinctions between the two clearer. The African Giant Land Snail has a predominantly brown striped shell - whilst our local Giant Land Snail has a solid cream/beige shell with a pink 'lip' around the shell entrance.



Barbados Giant Land Snail (Bulimulus oblongus)



African Giant Land Snail (Achatina fullica)

I have been monitoring the population of our local Giant Land Snail for just over 20 years and there has been a steady decline in all the gullies I frequent and I have not yet been able to determine the exact reasons why.

To most people our 'microcosmos' of invertebrate fauna is not considered important, but if you took the time to notice - you would soon realize that our little rock has quite a tremendous and fascinating diversity of life forms that ALL deserve their right to exist to be recognized and accepted by all Barbadians.

I would not like us - in our haste to reduce the African Giant Land Snail population - to end up causing the extinction of our own Barbadian Giant Land Snail, the tragedy that befell *Liophis perfuscus*, the Barbados Pelican (and the entire Pelican Islands sea bird colony) and the Barbados Raccoon - should NOT be repeated in my lifetime or that of generations yet unborn; surely we are more educated and environmentally conscious today than our forefathers ever were.

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