

Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

LAND SNAIL

Pilomena aemula

Conservation status

Australia: Not listed

Northern Territory: Vulnerable

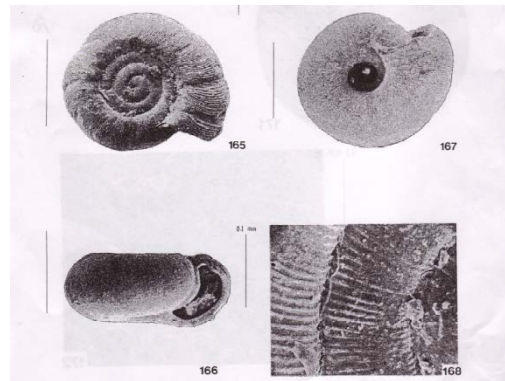


Illustration from Solem 1988

Description

Pilomena aemula is a very small (shell diameter 1.9 – 2.25 mm) non-camaenid landsnail, with a depressed spire, crowded radial sculpture and a thick parietal callus (Solem 1988).

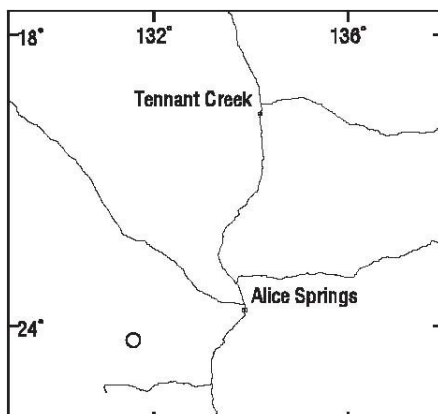
Distribution

All records of this species are from a total range of less than 1 km² around Penny Springs in the George Gill Ranges southwest of Alice Springs.

Conservation reserves where reported:
Watarrka National Park.

Ecology

It is found in leaf litter in relatively moist areas, under patches of fig trees, cycads and scrub.



Known locations of *Pilomena aemula*

o = pre 1970.

Conservation assessment

This species was recorded from the Horn Expedition to central Australia in 1894; but there were few or no other records until 1987, when Vince Kessner collected a few dead specimens around the type locality (Solem 1988).

Its known range is highly restricted; it is possible that further survey effort will extend this range. It fits the criteria for **Vulnerable** (under criterion D2) based on:

- area of occupancy < 20 km²; and
- known to exist at <5 locations.

Threatening processes

It is possible that this land snail has always been extremely restricted in range as there is no direct evidence that any external factors have yet caused a decline in their numbers or distribution.

However, in general, land snails are susceptible to the impacts of an increased frequency and intensity of fire. Invasive exotic pastures, such as buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) create far more fuel than do the native grasses and hence frequently carry destructive fires.

Rare extreme events such as major floods or droughts may severely affect populations made vulnerable by the above processes.

Conservation objectives and management

There is no existing management program for land snail species in the Northern Territory.

Research priorities are:

- i. to conduct further surveys to determine whether populations occur elsewhere; and
- ii. to identify specific threats to the known population.

Management priorities are:

- i. to better safeguard the known populations through containing the spread of exotic grasses; and
- ii. to establish a monitoring program for the species.

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References

Solem, A. (1988). Non-Camaenid land snails of the Kimberley and Northern Territory, Australia. I. Systematics, affinities and ranges. *Invertebrate Taxonomy* 4, 455-605.