

# *Potamopyrgus acus* (Haase, 2008)

## A freshwater snail in the leaf litter



Shell: Te Papa (CC BY-NC-ND)

### Quickfacts

A freshwater snail, only known from one location in the Waikato

First discovered in 1981

Not found in recent searches

## Known from only one gully

The 'freshwater' snail *Potamopyrgus acus* is only known from one location of less than one hectare where it was initially found and collected in 1981 by Frank Climo and David Roscoe. They found it inhabiting litter, covering rocks in a gully in a steep small limestone bank at Limestone Downs Station in the Waikato - an unusual terrestrial habitat for a genus of snails who usually inhabit freshwater streams and ponds. Subsequent surveys in 2002 & 2003 failed to find any snails, but there is doubt as to whether they searched the same area that *Potamopyrgus acus* was originally collected. If it was the same site, it is possible that *Potmaopyrgus acus* is no longer there, as the area is now partially accessible to cattle. Threats to the survival of this poorly known snail likely include changes in its habitat because of agricultural activities and trampling by cattle.

*Potamopyrgus acus* is in the Family Tateidae and snails in the genus *Potamopyrgus* are endemic to New Zealand (though New Zealand's common water snail *Potamopyrgus antipodarum* has been introduced to Australia, Europe, Japan, U.S.A, and lately Chile).





## What next?

Locating this species is the first task. Searches should focus on leaf litter in rocky gullies in limestone in the Port Waikato area. There are likely to be several other small snail species in this habitat, but *Potamopyrgus acus* is light brown, about 5 mm long, and will be the only snail that has a lid with which it can close-off the shell entrance and have more than 7 twists to the shell. Please contact us if you think you have found this snail.

A specific survey by conchologists (snail experts) is likely to cost \$25,000 to \$35,000.

## More information

Webpage: New Zealand Mollusca: *Potamopyrgus acus*. [Link](#)

Webpage: Wikipedia: *Potamopyrgus acus*. [Link](#)

Webpage: IUCN Red List: *Potamopyrgus acus*. [Link](#)

Scientific paper: The radiation of hydrobiid gastropods in New Zealand: a revision including the description of new species based on morphology and mtDNA sequence information. By Martin Haase. Systematics and Biodiversity Volume 6(1), pages 99 – 159, 2008.

Scientific paper: Conservation Status of New Zealand Freshwater Invertebrates. By Natasha Grainger, Kevin Collier, Rod Hitchmough, Jon Harding, Brian Smith, & Darin Sutherland. New Zealand Threat Classification Series 8. Department of Conservation. [PDF](#)

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