

## **Towards eradication of giant African snail *Achatina fulica* Bowdich in Trinidad and Tobago**

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The giant African snail (*Achatina fulica*) is a serious plant pest which is one of the world's worst 100 invasive alien species reported to feed on about 500 species of plants. In October 2008 the pest was discovered in Trinidad at one location in Alyce Glen, Diego Martin, northwest of the island. Delimiting surveys indicated that the pest was confined to an area < 1.0 km<sup>2</sup> therefore eradication strategies were implemented in November 2008. A four-pronged approach was initiated against *A. fulica* including surveillance, collection and destruction of snails, application of snail baits and public education. Additionally, recommendations were made to declare giant African snail a "Notifiable Pest" by legislation. More than 1400 snails were collected in November and December 2008 and between May and August 2009, the pest was found at three (3) other locations (Goodwood Gardens, Blue Range and Westmoorings) at Diego Martin where collection of snails and baiting continued. Approximately 5546 snails were collected over a 17 month period, from November 2008 to March 2010. More than 1000 properties including drains, empty lots and parks were surveyed with the conclusion that the snail was contained in the Diego Martin valley. About 10,000 cumulative properties were treated with 2.0 tonnes of snail bait containing 3.0% metaldehyde, some more than 28 times. By March 2010 no snails have been sighted which could be caused by the action taken and the severity of the drought period. The eradication programme is promising success, meanwhile monitoring and public awareness are ongoing exercises.

**Palabras Claves/Key Words:** Eradication: giant African snail; Trinidad