

KALIELLA BARRAKPORENSIS (PFEIFFER), A NEW HOT-HOUSE ALIEN IN BRITAIN

Many exotic snails have been reported from greenhouses, and especially from hot-houses of botanic gardens, throughout the world. These have usually been introduced by accident, either on the plants themselves or on soil adhering to them. They often occur together with species of mollusc indigenous to the local region, but unlike most of these species, the exotic taxa generally fail to establish populations outside of these carefully controlled artificial environments. The huge diversity of plants grown in botanical gardens is not matched by a similar diversity of associated exotic land snails. Indeed, the number of exotic snails recorded is surprisingly low and often consists of the same group of species that recur in hot-houses throughout the world (see Kerney & Cameron, 1979: 206–212). These taxa must be particularly well suited to the unusual conditions existing in hot-houses, especially the relatively high, but carefully controlled, temperatures and humidities, and the regular and severe human disturbance.

This note reports the occurrence of an additional species of exotic land snail, hitherto unrecorded from hot-houses in Britain. During a visit

to the Eden Project in Cornwall (NGR SX005554) in March 2010, one of us (RCP) found several exotic species of land snails in the hot-houses of the 'Tropical Biome'. Most belonged to the familiar taxa found in such places elsewhere, such as the ground-dwelling subulinid *Subulina octona* (Bruguière), but several examples of another species were found crawling on the trunk of the Coral Tree *Erythrina poeppigiana*, a widespread plant of tropical and subtropical regions. These were identified as *Kaliella barrakporensis* (Pfeiffer, 1853), a species belonging to the Chronidae known from South-East Asia, Madagascar, tropical East Africa and Eastern South Africa (Blanford & Godwin-Austen, 1908; Herbert & Kilburn, 2004; Verdcourt, 2006). Subsequent searches elsewhere in the 'Tropical Biome' by Marc Mappley, the Pest Control Officer at the Eden Project, resulted in the discovery of further specimens of *K. barrakporensis* on young leaves of a *Sanchezia nobilis* bush. In the wild, this plant occurs in the lowlands of tropical South and Central America, a region where *K. barrakporensis* is not native. This shows that *K. barrakporensis* is able to live on a range of plants, and is not confined to those it



Figure 1 *Kaliella barrakporensis* (Pfeiffer) from the 'Tropical Biome' of the Eden Project (photographs by Harry Taylor, NHM Photographic Unit).

encounters within its native range. Voucher specimens of *K. barrakporensis* (Fig. 1) have been deposited in the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge.

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