

# Bangam | Mitchell's rainforest snail

**Scientific name:**

*Thersites mitchellae*

**Common names:** Mitchell's rainforest snail

**Status:** Endangered in NSW; Critically Endangered in Commonwealth

Land snail rainforest species are particularly diverse and an important part of the food chain, representing a significant proportion of overall biodiversity in a given area. They are a very good indicator species, telling us about the condition of ecosystems and when changes occur. Certain Bangam (rainforest snail) species were an important food source for local Aboriginal people.

The Mitchell's rainforest snail is generally found in remnant lowland subtropical rainforest and swamp forest on the coastal plain between the Richmond and Tweed Rivers. It has also been recorded in lowland subtropical rainforest at higher elevations in the hinterland. Active at night, they feed on leaf litter, fungi and lichen. Due to extensive land clearance, Mitchell's



rainforest snail is now restricted to small remnant areas of habitat. Stotts Island Nature Reserve, in the Tweed River near Murwillumbah, provides the largest single area of remaining habitat and largest known population of the species.

Little is known about the threats to this species, although its habitat is under pressure from agriculture, urban development, fire, weed invasion and for much of its preferred floodplain habitat, climate change induced sea level rise. Additionally, the species may also be threatened by predation by introduced rats and the use of herbicides and pesticides near their habitat. Mitchell's rainforest snail is also preyed upon by the colourful

native noisy pitta bird, *Pitta versicolour*, which cracks the shells on rock or other hard surface, using it like an anvil.

**How you can help:**

- Look out for the Mitchells rainforest snail. Report any sightings to Tweed Shire Council.
- Support a local Landcare group or bush regeneration team to rehabilitate habitat.
- Retain and protect areas of rainforest, swamp forest and forest on wetland margins. Even small areas of habitat can be valuable.
- Avoid the use of snail baits, pesticides and herbicides in or near known and potential habitat.
- Fence rainforest remnants and wetland margins to exclude grazing by stock.
- Undertake weed control in known and potential habitat ensuring minimal disturbance of leaf litter and fallen logs.