

Aquatic Snails from Lake Hillman

The "freshwater" snails found in Lake Hillman (approximately 6645000N, 510000E) belong to the genus *Coxiella*, of the family Pomatiopsidae.

This family is fairly widely distributed worldwide but the genus *Coxiella* is confined to Australia, and mainly to the southern half of the continent as well as Tasmania.

The 9 mainland species – most of which live in Western Australia - are generally found in habitats liable to desiccation and to wide variations in salinity and temperature, such as inland saline lakes or in marshy areas on the edges of waterways such as the Swan River estuary. They feed on the organic matter on and in the surface layer of the sandy substrate.

The snails found by Mr Fordyce in Lake Hillman appear to belong to the species *Coxiella pyrrhostoma* (Cox, 1868). This species was first described from shells said to have come from "a salt lake, Shark Bay, WA". However, practically all of the specimens in museum collections, including those of the Western Australian Museum, have been collected much further south, from the Esperance area westwards to the area around the Stirling Range and Albany.

As far as I can tell at the moment, Lake Moore, not that far north of Lake Hillman, is the most northerly locality from which this species has been recently recorded. We do have some specimens from Lake Cowcowing to the south and from the Damboring area to the west. . However all of those specimens were collected quite some time ago. Mr Fordyce's specimens are the first from Lake Hillman and so are very welcome additions to our collections and records. I would be extremely interested to learn whether the species is still alive there – it is so hard to tell from dead-taken shells.

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April 2007

