

Virginia Land Snails

Mesomphix cupreus (Rafinesque, 1831)

Family: Zonitidae

Common name: Copper Button

Identification

Width: 22 -25 mm

Height: 12 - 15 mm

Whorls: 4+

The shell of *Mesomphix cupreus* is large, glossy, and robust. Its color is golden-brown to deep brown, and it typically has a very dark aperture edge. The shell microsculpture lacks papillae and instead may have a fine sandpaper texture, sometimes with spiral grooves (striae). The umbilicus is small. Similar shells of large immature polygyrids are more transparent (in live animals), have fine radial ridges, and lack the dark lip edge. Virginia specimens tend to be larger than those from farther north.

Ecology

This species is a denizen of damp forest leaf litter, sometimes near logs, in mature upland forests. Walton (*in Pilsbry, 1948*) reports it feeding upon other land snails.

Taxonomy

Synonyms for *M. cupreus* are: *Helix fuliginosa*, *Mesomphix cupreus politus*, *Omphalina cuprea*, *O. fuliginosa*, *Zonites cupreus* form *sinistrorsus*, and *Zonites fuliginosus*.

Distribution

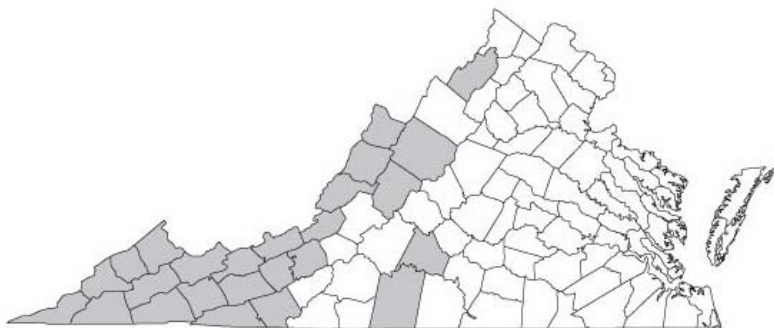
The range of *M. cupreus* extends from western New England, New York, and Michigan, south to Tennessee and North Carolina. In the Mid-Atlantic it is not found near the coast. In Virginia it is found in the western mountains and hills.

NatureServe Global Rank: G5

NatureServe State Rank: S4

Ken Hotopp, Greg Kimber 7/2012

Range Map



Photo(s): Live *Mesomphix cupreus* by Bill Frank ©, and shell by Dan Dourson ©

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