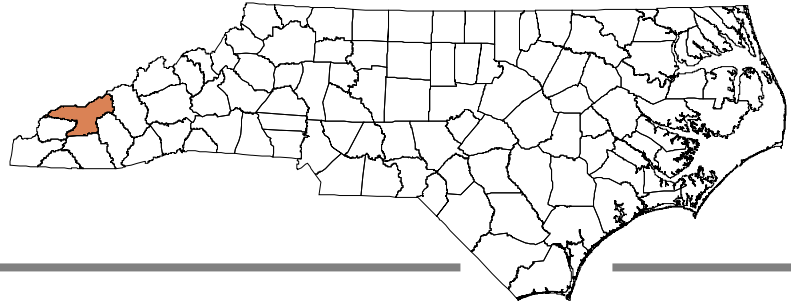

Mollusks: Terrestrial Gastropods

Noonday globe (snail)

Patera clarki nantahala

(Noonday helix)

Threatened (July 3, 1978)



Description: The shell of the noonday globe snail is rounded with five and one-half spirals. The spire (center) of shell is rounded and low, or may be depressed. The shell is 0.72 inch (18 mm) wide and 0.44 inch (11 mm) high, and is glossy brownish-yellow, or red. Coarse bands texture the shell. It is most active during wet weather, and is thought to feed on fungi.

Life History: The feeding habits and development cycle of this species are unknown. However, other related species in the genus *Mesodon* feed on the subsurface hair-like structures (mycelia) of fungi.

Habitat: Damp oak-hickory forests with thick undergrowth and rich, moist soils. Found on damp rock faces and in damp leaf litter. Prefers steep, rocky areas with northern exposure or wet ravines. Cliffs in this habitat contain calcium, which may be essential to shell formation and maintenance. Dominant tree species in habitat include oak, hickory, American beech, American elm, basswood, birch, and tulip poplar.

Distribution: Nantahala Gorge in Swain County. Occurs only on the east side of the gorge.

Threats: Both natural and human threats to habitat include forest fires, logging, destruction of cliff faces by climbing, road widening, and mine exploration, herbicide/pesticide spraying.

Management Recommendations: Protection of habitat from human destruction. Monitor natural stressors as well as human ones. Monitoring and learning the life processes of the species to document autecology.

Sources: Lowe et al. 1990; Murdock pers. com.; USFWS 1992a, 1994c.

