Snail Egg clutch collection

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Introduction

The egg clutches (masses) of *Biomphalaria glabrata* and *Bulinus truncatus truncatus* typically contain a variable number of embryos. From the time the egg clutches are deposited by the adult snails, embryos begin to emerge in about 2 weeks. Snails prefer to deposit egg clutches on any hard surface, including the shells of other snails. Plastic strips, or pieces of styrofoam, placed in an aquarium containing adult snails serve as convenient materials on which to collect and manipulate the egg clutches.

Equipment

Small spatula or flat forceps

Materials

Small, clear plastic strips or pieces of styrofoam (~100 mm x 100 mm)
Aerated "Pond H20"

Procedure

- Place the plastic strips or styrofoam on the surface of the water containing adult *B. glabrata* snails.
- After a few days remove the plastic/styrofoam strips.
- Gently lift the egg clutches with a small spatula, and place them in a container of aged tap water (photos – clutch 1 and clutch 2).

Follow-up comments/recommendations

Removal of egg clutches from the adult snails allows the embryos to hatch and grow unimpeded by crowding (or other effects) due to the presence of the adult snails. One can also treat the surface of the egg clutches with a sodium hypocholorite solution (1% commercial bleach in aged tap water) for 10 minutes to eliminate most contaminating commensals such as rotifers.

References

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