

# TAXONOMY IN ACTION



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**Biodiversity is Life.**  
**Biodiversity is Our Life.**

Taxonomy is the science and practice of discovering, describing, classifying and naming species.

Taxonomy in Action is a world wide campaign to highlight the relevance of taxonomy for all aspects of biodiversity conservation, management and sustainable use.

Led by BioNET – the global network for taxonomy – this activity is part of the celebrations for the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity.



## *Achatina fulica* East African Land Snail



© Arthur D. Chapman | Australian Biodiversity Information Services

The giant East African snail (*Achatina fulica*), giant Ghana tiger snail (*A. achatina*), and giant West African snail (*A. marginata*) are collectively known as "Giant African land snails". The snails grow up to 20cm in size and have been observed to feed on more than 500 different plant species. They carry pathogens and are a major bio-security risk to many tropical and sub-tropical regions.

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**Taxonomists** have helped to compile pest alerts and identification guides with descriptions and photographs to help officials and the general public to identify the giant snails as a first step towards early detection, eradication or control.

## *Brachylophus bulabula* a new endemic iguana of Fiji



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The new iguana species is closely related to the two other iguanas endemic to Fiji and Tonga: the crested iguana (*B. vitiensis*) and the banded iguana (*B. fasciatus*). This species was described after taxonomic and DNA analyses showed that *B. bulabula* was physically and genetically different from the two other species.

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**Taxonomy** is the knowledge base for conserving and sharing the benefits of biodiversity. For example, numerous nature reserves have been established because of the discovery of a rare species, or rediscovery of a species thought to be extinct.



## *Cyrtobagous salviniae* Biocontrol for a major aquatic pest.



© Katherine Parys | Louisiana State University | United States

*Salvinia molesta*, a South American water plant, is invasive in many regions in the world. The weed was originally misidentified and several attempts to manage it with known biocontrol species failed. Following the correct identification of *Salvinia molesta*, a host-specific agent was discovered – the weevil *Cyrtobagous salviniae* – and introduced to many countries where it now successfully controls the weed.

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Invasive species affect nearly every ecosystem type on the planet and pose a big threat to biodiversity. Managing these risks calls for **taxonomists** able to provide the species information and rapid identification tools needed.

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Read more on the importance of taxonomy, species & biodiversity

[BioNET case studies](#) | [GTI case study on taxonomy & climate change](#) | [UN Convention of Biodiversity – 2010 International Year of Biodiversity](#)



BioNET is a global network for taxonomy with ten government-endorsed regional partnerships encompassing institutions in over 100 countries, and a Secretariat in the UK hosted by CABI, an international not-for-profit organisation.

BioNET's mission is to enhance human well-being and biodiversity conservation by building capacity to discover, name and classify the world's living organisms.



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See next slide for guidance  
notes for your contributions

*Latin species name*

Title or vernacular name (English)

High resolution digital  
image of the species  
(jpg or other)

**Text about the species:**  
e.g. where the species was  
discovered, by who, when,  
what is special about this  
species, whether it is  
endangered, etc.  
(350 characters)

© Author of image | affiliation

Contributor: Name  
affiliation | email address

**Text linking to taxonomy:** e.g. how taxonomy helped to discover, identify or protect the species, outcomes for biodiversity conservation, human well-being, societal benefits, etc. (200 characters).