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PHYTOPHAGOUS GASTROPEID, *OPEAS GRACILE* (HUTTON) AS A
PEST OF COWPEA IN KERALA

Heavy infestation of a phytophagous snail, *Opeas gracile* (Hutton) feeding on the leaves of cowpea and other pulse crops was observed in Trivandrum district during June, 1973. Adults and young ones were found feeding on the green matter of the foliage, leaving the veins intact, thus skeletonising the leaves. In severe infestation yellowing and falling of the infested leaves occurred. The snails were found hanging on the stems and twigs and also in the soil, near the base of the plants. The adult animal is about 13-15 mm long and sluggish in nature, and the males are smaller than the females. The snails ate the leaves of castor and bhindi plants also in the laboratory. The adults could live without food for more than a week. This is the first record of its occurrence as a pest of crops in Kerala. Satyamoorthy (1960) described this animal as occurring in moist localities, in flower pots and in fernaries in different parts of India.

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REFERENCE

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