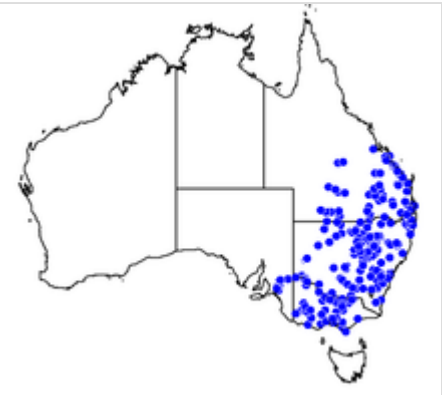
# Floodplain mussel

***Velesunio ambiguus***, the **floodplain mussel**,[2] or the **billabong mussel** (South Australia),[3] is a species of freshwater bivalve in the family Hyriidae.

There are four other cryptic species in the genus *Velesunio* (which all look similar to *Velesunio ambiguus*) in Australia.[4]



distribution map

## Distribution

Australia: Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria,[5] and South Australia, where it is known as the billabong mussel.[3]

## Biotope

Static waters.[5]

Comparison of the size of *Velesunio ambiguus* with a man's hand. This shell is 85 mm long and 49 mm wide.

## Life cycle

The lifespan of this mussel is over 20 years.[5]

It can survive temperatures from around 4 °C to over 30 °C.[5]

## Human uses

*Velesunio ambiguus* serves as a food for Australian Aboriginal people, although its flesh is tough.[5]

**Floodplain mussel**

View of the right valve of *Velesunio ambiguus*, from Ashley via Moree, Australia.

**Scientific classification**

| | |
|---|---|
| Domain: | Eukaryota |
| Kingdom: | Animalia |
| Phylum: | Mollusca |
| Class: | Bivalvia |
| Order: | Unionida |
| Family: | Hyriidae |
| Genus: | *Velesunio* |
| Species: | ***V. ambiguus*** |

**Binomial name**

***Velesunio ambiguus***
(Philippi, 1847)

**Synonyms**[1]

*Unio ambiguus* Philippi, 1847
*Unio balonnensis* Conrad, 1850
*Unio balonensis* Lea, 1852
*Unio vittatus* Lea, 1859
*Unio philippianus* Küster, 1861
*Unio* (*Alasmodon*) *evansi* Adams & Angas, 1864
*Unio danellii* Lea, 1870
*Unio daniellii* Villa, 1871
*Unio jeffreysianus* Lea, 1871

This species can also be used in fish ponds to filter microscopic algae out of the water.[5]

*Unio fairfieldi* in coll. UMMZ
*Unio ambiguus* E.A. Smith, 1881
*Hyridella australis* E.A. Smith, 1881
*Unio protovittatus* Hale & Tindale, 1930
*Velesunio balonnensis adjunctus* Iredale, 1934
*Velesunio balonnensis intricatus* Iredale, 1934
*Velesunio transitus* Iredale, 1943
*Velesunio mckeowni* Iredale, 1943
*Velesunio testatus* Iredale, 1943
*Velesunio ambiguous* Graf & Cummings, 2006

# References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2. Wright, D.; Thiem, J.; Blackman, E.; Beatty, S.; Lymbery, A.; Davis, S. (February 2022). *Desiccation tolerance of river and floodplain mussels in the Murray-Darling Basin. Report to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office* (https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/desiccation-tolerance-river-floodplain-mussels-murray-darling-basin.pdf) (PDF). NSW Department of Primary Industries. p. 10. Retrieved 9 September 2023. "While neither of the two species widely distributed through the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) (the river mussel *Alathyria jacksoni* and the floodplain mussel *Velesunio ambiguus*) are currently listed as threatened"
3. Wade, Sam; Corbin, Tracey; McDowell, Linda-Marie (June 2004). *Critter Catalogue: A guide to the aquatic invertebrates of South Australian inland waters* (https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/files/8543_critters.pdf) (PDF). Original illustrations by John Bradbury. Environment Protection Authority (South Australia). p. 28. ISBN 1-876562-67-6. Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20210226091158/https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/files/8543_critters.pdf) (PDF) from the original on 26 February 2021. Retrieved 24 November 2020. "Two species of freshwater mussels (family Hyriidae) occur in South Australia-the river mussel (*Alathyria jacksoni*) and the billabong mussel (*Velesunio ambiguus*)."
4. Fawcett J.H.; Hughes J.M.; Baker A.M. (2006). "Conservation of the Australian freshwater mussel" (https://web.archive.org/web/20071214083744/http://www.benthos.org/database/allnabstracts.cfm/db/Anchorage2006abstracts/id/88). *North American Benthological Society*. Archived from the original (http://www.benthos.org/database/allnabstracts.cfm/db/Anchorage2006abstracts/id/88) on 14 December 2007.
5. "Freshwater Mussels - Velesunio ambiguous. Environmental Remediation of Wetlands and Dams" (https://web.archive.org/web/20200615173124/http://www.aquablueseafoods.com.au/other-mussels.shtml). *Aquablue Seafoods*. Archived from the original (http://www.aquablueseafoods.com.au/other-mussels.shtml) on 15 June 2020. Retrieved 13 March 2009.