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The Larval Development Stages of the Japanese Snail, *Rapana thomasi*, Gross 1861, in the Egg Capsule

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**Abstract:** In the present study, the larval development stages in the egg capsule of the Japanese snail (*Rapana thomasi*, Gross 1861), distributed in the Black Sea were investigated. At the moment of capsule release, the diameter of the spherical egg was  $151.5 \pm 2.61 \mu\text{m}$ . After the capsule was released, the eggs gradually lost their spherical structure. After the completion of the early larval development stage in the egg capsule, the larvae hatched from the capsule as a veliger on day 20. The larvae were pelagic during the following 5 days and settled to the bottom day 25. The length and width of the settled larvae reached  $426.8 \pm 2.84 \mu\text{m}$  and  $305.6 \pm 2.2 \mu\text{m}$  with a growth rate of 181.2% and 101.7%, respectively.

**Key Words:** Japanese snail, *Rapana thomasi*, Gross 1861, Larval development, Black Sea

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