Zebra mussels attach themselves to firm surfaces such as water intake structures, discharge pipes, piers, docks, breakwalls, boat bottoms and engine outdrives. Any submerged surface that is non-toxic can be colonized by zebra mussels.



Zebra Mussel (Dreissena polymorpha)

Zebra mussels filter algae and microscopic organisms from the water, which are also food for most young fish. The filtering increases light penetration and subsequent weed growth, altering habitat.

To stop the spread of these aggressive invaders, you should remove any mud or plants, wash your equipment and allow it to dry thoroughly in the sun before moving to a new water body.

Larvae cannot survive drying, but they can survive in any small pool of water. Mature mussels can survive out of the water for several days, longer if kept moist.



Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean <u>all</u> recreational equipment. www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipement.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



George E. Pataki, Governor State of New York



Bernadette Castro, Commissioner Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation



Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner Department of Environmental Conservation



Did you pick up a **HITCHHIKER**?



You could be transporting plants and animals that endanger recreational opportunities on New York State's lakes and rivers. Plants and animals cling to your boats, personal water craft, boat trailers, outboard motors, props and propellers, anchors, fishing gear and any pool of water contained within your equipment. These nuisance species use you and your equipment to invade uninfested waters such as our fragile Adirondack lakes and streams. You can help prevent the spread of these species by following the four simple steps listed on the back of this brochure and learning to recognize the hitchhiker. More information about the species presented in this brochure can be obtained from the Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources at www.dec.state.ny.us

Don't pick up aquatic nuisance hitchhikers. Inspect and clean these areas of your equipment.





Water Chestnut

is a fast growing floating aquatic plant that can grow up to 16 feet long. Dense mats hinder recreational activities such as swimming, fishing and boating.

Surface leaves are triangular and toothed while submerged leaves are feathery. Surface vegetation forms rosettes and produces four

petaled, white flowers in July. The seed is a thorny black nutlet that is produced in late July. These nutlets disperse by floating on water currents. Water chestnut

survives the winter entirely by seed.

Clean all plant material from your equipment before transporting to a new location.





Eurasian Watermilfoil (Myriophyllum spicatum)

Eurasian Watermilfoil creates

dense mats that can interfere with swimming and entangle propellers, which hinders boating, fishing and waterfowl hunting.

It is a feathery submerged aquatic plant that spreads when plant pieces break off and float



on water currents. These pieces eventually sink and root. It can cross land to new waters by clinging to water craft and recreational equipment.

Clean all plant material from your equipment before transporting to a new location. **Round goby** are thriving in the Great Lakes Basin. Gobies affect fishermen in several ways. Fishermen have reported that, at times, they can catch only gobies when they are fishing for other species. Usually only 3 to 6 inches in size, round goby can grow up to 10 inches long. It takes over prime spawning sites traditionally used by native species and competes with native fish for habitat. Gobies will eat darters and other small fish. Of perhaps more concern is their predation on lake trout eggs and young.

To minimize the risk of this fish being spread to other waters, New York fishing regulations prohibit the possession and use of round gobies as bait.



Round Goby (Neogobius melanostomus)

