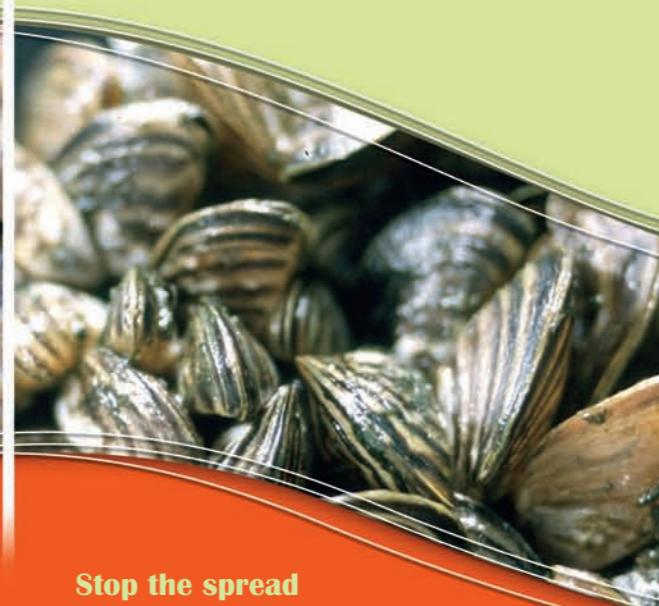




What can you do to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species?

To prevent the introduction or spread of aquatic invasive species, it is recommended that the use of equipment, boats, clothing and any other item be restricted to a single body of water.

Each time you move from one water body to another, invasive species may travel with you. Learn to recognize them and take measures to prevent the spread of these hitchhikers.



Stop the spread of aquatic invasive species

Before you leave the water body:

- ✓ **Remove** all aquatic plants, mussels or other visible organisms and put them in the garbage.
- ✓ **Drain** the water from your boat, including the motor, live well, and bilge.
- ✓ **Make sure** that both the rudder and propeller are clean.
- ✓ **Do not release** live bait! Empty your bait bucket on land, or freeze or salt the bait to use later. Follow regulations on live bait.
- ✓ **Remove** organisms you can't see on your boat, fishing gear, trailer or any aquatic equipment by:
 - ✓ Rinsing with hot water, or
 - ✓ Spraying with high-pressure water, or
 - ✓ Drying in the sun for 5 days.

To report a didymo bloom or invasive **plants**,
or for more information, visit:
www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca.
You can also call **1 800 561-1616**.

To report invasive **animal** species,
or for more information, visit:
www.mrnf.gouv.qc.ca.
You can also call **1 866 248-6936**.

Aquatic invasive species

**Don't give a ride
to intruders**

Photos :

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www.forestryimages.org

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What are exotic invasive species?

An alien species is a plant or animal occurring in an area outside of its known natural range as a result of accidental or intentional introduction by human activities. An exotic species is considered invasive if its introduction and spread causes harm to the environment, economy or society.

You may recognize the names of some aquatic invasive species that have already invaded Québec waters:

- 1 Didymo
- 2 Zebra mussel
- 3 Round goby
- 4 Eurasian watermilfoil
- 5 Chinese mitten crab
- 6 Water chestnut



Didymo...a new intruder

Didymo is a freshwater microscopic alga that produces stalks by which it attaches itself to rocks and vegetation. During blooms, the stalks form mats ranging in colour from brownish yellow to white. The mats can cover river beds as well as the edges of lakes subject to wave action. To the touch, didymo feels like wet cotton wool. Dried clumps look like toilet paper or parchment paper. Didymo is not harmful to human health. It does not render water unfit for consumption and it is not toxic. However, didymo blooms can modify natural habitat and species composition of algae and invertebrates living on the bottom of water bodies.

Why do we need to stop the spread of exotic species?

When aquatic invasive species are introduced and survive, their population usually increases very rapidly. They may feed on native species and compete for food and space, as well as introduce parasites and diseases that could infect native species. Invasive species are known to be one of the leading causes of native species populations becoming threatened or endangered. In fact, alien species are now recognized as a serious problem threatening global biodiversity and human health worldwide.

How do they get here?

Fish, snails, clams, aquatic plants, parasites and pathogens can be transported in ballast water of merchant ships. Aquatic invasive species can arrive and spread through:

- ✓ recreational boating;
- ✓ sport fishing;
- ✓ aquarium and water garden trade;
- ✓ release of live bait;
- ✓ aquaculture;
- ✓ canals and derivations.

Once established in a water body, invasive species are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to control or eradicate.

How are they spread once they get here?

Once they are here, the most common way aquatic invasive species are spread is by hitching a ride on a boat, trailer, boating equipment or fishing gear, including bait buckets.

How do aquatic invasive species affect you?

Aquatic invasive species affect everyone that uses our waters, including boaters, shoreline property owners and anglers. These invaders can:

- ✓ Clog cottage water intake lines;
- ✓ Choke lakes and waterways and restrict use by boaters and swimmers;
- ✓ Reduce populations of native fish, clams, waterfowl and other species that inhabit our waters;
- ✓ Reduce the numbers and diversity of popular sport fish;
- ✓ Degrade the natural beauty of our lakes and waterways;
- ✓ Clog boat engines and jam steering equipment, which may lead to expensive repairs;
- ✓ Foul fishing gear;