

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about aquatic invasive species, the problems they cause, regulations to prevent their spread, or methods and permits for their control, contact one of the following offices:

Wisconsin Department Of Natural Resources
888-WDNRINFO
DNR.WI.GOV search "Aquatic Invasives"

University of Wisconsin- Extension
(715) 346-2116
WWW.UWSP.EDU/CNR/UWEXLAKES

Wisconsin Sea Grant
(608) 262-0905
WWW.SEAGRANT.WISC.EDU
WWW.PROTECTYOURWATERS.NET

Thanks to the following for supporting educational efforts on aquatic invasive species:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
- National Park Service

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under and Affirmative Action Plan. If you have questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington D.C. 20240.

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STOP Aquatic HITCHHIKERS



ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Enjoying the great outdoors is important to many of us. Boating, fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching are traditions that we want to preserve for our children and their children. Today, these traditions are at risk. Aquatic invaders such as zebra mussels, purple loosestrife, Eurasian water-milfoil, bighead and silver carp, threaten our valuable waters and recreation. These and other non-native, or exotic, plants and animals do not naturally occur in our waters and are called invasive species because they cause ecological or economic harm.

These invasive species can get into lakes, rivers, and wetlands by "hitching" rides with anglers, boaters, and other outdoor recreationists, who transport them from one waterbody to another.

Once established, these "aquatic hitchhikers," can harm native fisheries, degrade water quality, disrupt food webs and reduce the quality of our recreational experiences.



The good news is that the majority of waters are not yet infested with invasive species and by taking the necessary steps you can help protect our valuable waters.

If you think you have found an **INVASIVE SPECIES**:

REPORT NEW SIGHTINGS

If you suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, save a specimen and report it to a local Department of Natural Resources or Sea Grant office. Wisconsin has "ID" cards, websites, and volunteer monitoring networks to help you identify and report invasive species.



Eurasian Watermilfoil



Eurasian Ruffe



New Zealand Mudsnail

CONSULT YOUR NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCY

Do-it-yourself control treatments may be illegal and can make matters worse by harming native fish, wildlife, and plants. Before attempting to control an invasive species or add new plants along your shoreline, contact your local Department of Natural Resources office. DNR staff can provide recommendations and notify you what permits are required.



Spiny Water Fleas



Zebra Mussels



Curly Leaf Pondweed



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS

IS A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN THAT HELPS RECREATIONAL USERS TO BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION TO STOP THE TRANSPORT AND SPREAD OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES.

IN WISCONSIN IT IS THE LAW...

Aquatic hitchhikers can spread in many ways such as on recreational equipment, and in water. Fortunately, there are a few simple actions you can take to prevent them from spreading.



INSPECT boats, trailers, and equipment

REMOVE all attached aquatic plants, animals, and mud before launching and before leaving the water access.

Many invasive species spread by attaching themselves to boats, trailers, and equipment and "hitching a ride" to another waterbody. Therefore, Wisconsin law requires that you remove these aquatic hitchhikers before you launch your boat or leave the access area.

DRAIN all water from your boat, motor, bilge, live wells, bait containers and all equipment before leaving the water access.

Many types of invasive species are very small and easily overlooked. In fact, some aquatic hitchhikers, like zebra mussel larvae, are invisible to the naked eye. To prevent the transport of these aquatic hitchhikers drain water from all equipment before you leave the access area.



For more information visit: **DNR.WI.GOV** and search "bait laws"



Draining ballast water and lake or river water can prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and fish diseases, like VHS.

NEVER MOVE

plants or live fish away from a waterbody.

In Wisconsin, it is illegal to transport any aquatic plants, mud, live fish or live fish eggs away from any state waterbody. This includes live gamefish and roughfish, like gizzard shad. There are exceptions for minnows obtained from a Wisconsin licensed bait dealer or registered fish farm, which may be transported away live and used again:



- *On the same waterbody, or*
- *On any other waterbody if no lake or river water, or other fish were added to their container*

BUY minnows from a Wisconsin licensed bait dealer.

For more information on collecting your own minnows visit:

DNR.WI.GOV and search "VHS Prevention"



DISPOSE of unwanted bait and other animals or aquatic plants in the trash.

If possible, dispose of ALL unwanted bait (including earthworms) in a trash can at the boat landing or access point. Otherwise, take them home and dispose of them by placing them in the trash, composting them, or using them in a garden as fertilizer. Likewise, other aquatic plants or animals that you collect, or buy in a pet store, should NEVER be released into the wild.



When possible, dispose of unwanted bait in the trash at access points. Never release them into the environment.

WISCONSIN REGULATION

Wisconsin has several laws to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and the fish disease Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS). Failure to follow Wisconsin law can result in fines up to or exceeding **\$2000**. Don't be caught unaware!

ADDITIONAL STEPS:

Although not required by WI law, additional steps are highly recommended, particularly if you are transporting a boat and/or equipment from one waterbody to another. Additional steps include:

SPRAY, RINSE, or DRY boats and recreational equipment to remove or kill species that were not visible when leaving a waterbody. Before transporting to another water: *Spray/rinse with high pressure, and/or hot tap water (above 104° F or 40° C), especially if moored for more than a day. OR Dry for at least five days.*

DISINFECT boats and recreational equipment to kill species and fish diseases that were not visible when leaving a waterbody. Many aquatic hitchhikers can survive out of water for some period of time. *To prevent their spread, you can sanitize your boat, trailer or equipment by washing it with a mixture of 2 Tbs of household bleach per 1 gallon of water.*

OTHER WATER USES:



Don't get caught spreading aquatic invasive plants or animals! Wisconsin laws, as highlighted above, can apply to many types of water activities, not just boating and fishing. Although these activities might not seem dangerous, they CAN establish and spread invasive species. It is important you follow the steps above for all water activities in order to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. These activities include:

- *Using personal watercraft*
- *Shore and fly-fishing*
- *Sailing*
- *Scuba Diving*
- *Waterfowl hunting*



FAILURE TO FOLLOW WISCONSIN LAWS CAN LEAD TO FINES.

For additional information contact your local DNR staff or visit: **DNR.WI.GOV**