

Aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels, spiny waterfleas, Eurasian watermilfoil, faucet snails, and viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) now inhabit a small percent of waters throughout the state. Other harmful species, such as hydrilla and northern snakehead, may be on the way and will create new problems if they are introduced in Minnesota.



Zebra mussels attach to native mussels, plants, and watercraft. They cut the feet of swimmers and dogs, clog water intakes, and damage ecosystems by reducing food for young fish. Their microscopic larvae can be moved in bait buckets, livewells, and other boat areas if not drained.

Eurasian watermilfoil causes problems in lakes by displacing native plants and producing extensive mats on the surface, especially in clear waters less than 15 feet deep. It is spread from one lake to another when plant fragments attach to boat trailers and other water-related equipment.



Silver (pictured) and bighead carp from Asia are threats to aquatic ecosystems and water recreation. Silver carp can jump out of the water, injuring boaters and waterskiers. Because young silver carp look similar to native minnows, they could accidentally be spread if live bait is released into the water.



Round gobies are aggressive bottom-dwelling fish from Europe. They drive out native species, attack bait, and eat the eggs of other fish, such as smallmouth bass. This behavior contributes to the decline of valuable sport fish.

Curly-leaf pondweed can form dense mats that interfere with boating and other water recreation. It also can displace native aquatic plants.

Faucet snails carry parasites that infect waterfowl. When snails are consumed, a waterfowl's internal organs are attacked by the parasites, eventually causing death.

Spiny waterfleas can be a problem for anglers because they form gelatinous globs on fishing lines, lures, and downrigger cables. It is important to remove spiny waterfleas from all equipment because their eggs can live out of water for more than 12 hours under typical summer conditions. To make sure these eggs are dead, thoroughly dry all equipment for 24 hours *before* reuse.

COMMITMENT



Make a commitment

Boaters, anglers, lake associations, and local governments have worked for more than two decades to fight invasive species and to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! It's time for you to join the nationwide effort to stop the spread of AIS.

To help protect Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and wetlands, I will:

- ✓ Clean and Drain my boat and equipment *before* I leave a water access
- ✓ Dispose of all unwanted bait, worms, and fish parts in the trash
- ✓ Learn to recognize aquatic invasive species
- ✓ Follow Minnesota's AIS laws and regulations
- ✓ Share this brochure with others who spend time fishing, boating, or recreating in Minnesota

Report new infestations

If you suspect a new infestation of an aquatic invasive plant or animal, note the exact location, take a photo or keep the specimen, and call a DNR AIS Specialist at 651 259 5100, or contact a local DNR office or University of Minnesota Sea Grant office.

Every person who uses Minnesota's lakes and rivers for outdoor recreation has a responsibility to help prevent and curb the spread of AIS...because it is preventable. Make a pledge to do your part.

CONTACT US

Report a Violation

To report a violation, contact a local peace officer or a DNR conservation officer. To locate a conservation officer in your area, scan the QR code for the CO Locator page or visit mndnr.gov/officerpatrolareas.



Learn More

For more information about aquatic invasive species, contact one of the following resources:

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Aquatic Invasive Species Program
651-259-5100



For current AIS regulations, a list of infested waters, species information, and local DNR contacts, visit www.mndnr.gov/ais.

Report Invasive Carp:

If you have captured an invasive carp or fish that you think may be an invasive carp, you must report it to the DNR immediately. Call 888-646-6367 or email invasivecarp.dnr@state.mn.us.

Please take a photo and transport the carp to the nearest fisheries office or make arrangements for it to be picked up by a DNR official.

University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program
Aquatic Invasive Species Information Center
218-726-8712



For field guides, species profiles, articles, and AIS resources for educators, visit www.seagrants.umn.edu.



STOP AQUA

[www](http://www.stopaqua.org)

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Silver carp photo courtesy of *The Columbus Dispatch*

Eurasian watermilfoil close-up courtesy of Alison Fox, University of Florida

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Help Protect Minnesota Waters

Learn how to protect Minnesota waters from zebra mussels and other AIS



Boating, fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching are traditions we enjoy and want to preserve for our children and grandchildren. Today, these traditions are at risk because of aggressive aquatic invasive species (AIS) that wreak havoc with our natural resources.

The good news is that the vast majority of lakes and rivers in Minnesota are not yet infested – and by understanding the threat, taking responsibility, and working together we can keep it that way.





STOP AQUA

Take these decontamination actions required by law:

✓ CLEAN

Clean visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels, and other prohibited invasive species off all watercraft, trailers, and water-related equipment *before* leaving a water access or shoreland property. It is illegal to transport aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or other prohibited species whether dead or alive.

✓ DRAIN

Drain water-related equipment (boat, ballast tanks, portable bait containers, motor) and drain bilge, livewell, and baitwell by removing drain plugs *before* leaving a water access or shoreland property. **Keep drain plugs out and waterdraining devices open while transporting watercraft.** It is illegal to transport a watercraft or water-related equipment without draining water.

✓ DISPOSE

Dispose of unwanted bait, including minnows, leeches, worms, and fish parts in the trash. If you want to keep live bait, drain bait containers and refill with bottled or purified tap water. **It is illegal to release bait into the water or to release worms on the ground.**

You may not ... transport watercraft without removing the drain plug • arrive at a lake access with drain plug in place • transport aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or other **prohibited invasive species** such as faucet snails, ruffe, and round goby • launch a watercraft with prohibited species attached • transport water from Minnesota lakes or rivers; or release bait into water.

There are also many **regulated invasive species** – such as spiny waterfleas, rusty crayfish, and mystery snails – that may not be placed into another waterbody. Docks and boatlifts must be dried for 21 days *before* placing in another waterbody. Violating these regulations may result in fines up to \$1,000.

You can help prevent the introduction and spread of AIS by following both the **required** and recommended actions listed below.

Additional recommendations:

You can take additional steps to reduce the risk of spreading invasive species, especially if your boat has been in the water for more than 24 hours – or if you have recently been in zebra mussel or spiny waterflea infested waters. Take one or more of the following actions to clean your watercraft and equipment *before* visiting another lake or river.

- **Spray** with high-pressure water
- **Rinse** with very hot water. To kill zebra mussels and some other AIS, rinse with 120°F water for at least 2 minutes, or 140°F water at least 10 seconds.
- **Dry** for at least 5 days
- **Run motor and personal watercraft** for a few seconds to discharge water *before* leaving a water access.
- **Transport fish on ice** — be prepared, bring a cooler.



Know the Law.

Clean In, Clean Out.

In addition to the required and recommended actions listed in this brochure, take these specific steps when engaging in the activities below:

Sailing

- Clean aquatic plants and animals from hull, centerboard or bilgeboard well, rudderpost, trailer, and other equipment *before* leaving water access.

Personal watercraft

- Avoid areas with aquatic plants *before* trailering personal watercraft.
- Run engine for 5-10 seconds on the trailer to blow out excess water and vegetation from internal drive, and then turn engine off.
- Clean aquatic plants and animals from hull, trailer, water intake grate, and steering nozzle, *before* leaving water access.

Shore and fly-fishing

- Clean any visible aquatic plants, animals, and mud from waders and hip boots.
- Scrub any visible material off footwear with a stiff brush.
- Use non-felt-soled boots instead of felt-soled footwear, to further reduce the risk of spreading AIS.
- Dispose of unwanted bait, worms, and fish parts in the trash. When keeping live bait, drain bait container and replace with bottled or purified tap water.

Waterfowl hunting

- Clean aquatic plants, animals, and mud from boat, motor, trailer, waders or hip boots, decoy lines, hunting dog, anchors (elliptical and bulb-shaped anchors can help reduce snagging aquatic plants), pushpoles, and ATVs.
- Cut cattails or other plants above the waterline for blinds or camouflage in accordance with regulations

Scuba diving

- Clean aquatic plants, animals, and mud from all equipment *before* leaving water access.
- Drain water from buoyancy compensator, regulator, cylinder, boot, and any water-containing devices.
- Rinse inside and outside of gear with hot water.

NEW: Affirmation

Beginning in 2016, you'll need to affirm, with your signature, that you understand AIS regulations to get a new boat license or non-resident fishing license.

Learn more at trailers.mndnr.gov.

