

INVASIVE VS NATIVE: FRESHWATER MUSSELS

INVASIVE FRESHWATER MUSSELS

Zebra and **Quagga** mussels are invasive freshwater mussels that primarily spread in North America by clinging to boats or catching a ride to new locations in standing water when they are in the larval stage. They have significant ecological and economic impacts.

Invasive mussels *cling* to surfaces and colonize inland water bodies and brackish coastal estuaries. They endanger native freshwater mussel species.

These invaders are **not yet present** on PEI. To protect our native species is important we keep it that way.

To prevent the spread of unwanted invasive species, ensure that you:

CLEAN

plants, animals and mud from your boat, trailer and gear

DRAIN

all water from your boat, trailer and gear onto land

DRY

all parts of your boat, trailer and gear completely



Take action in reporting invasive species. To report a sighting or for more information please contact PEI Invasive Species Council at peiinvasives@gmail.com or go to peiinvasives.com

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NATIVE FRESHWATER MUSSELS



There are three known species of freshwater mussels **native** to PEI. The Eastern Pearlshell or Pearl Mussel (critically imperiled), the Alewife Floater (imperiled) and the Eastern Floater (considered secure).

Native mussels have an interesting life-cycle as they are dependent on fish. The larval mussels spend their life on the gills, body or fins of a fish to develop. They then drop off the fish to begin their juvenile lives.

There is a lot to learn about native freshwater mussels on PEI. They are important *biological indicators*. **Preventing the establishment of invasive mussels protects native species like our freshwater mussels.**