

ZEBRA & QUAGGA MUSSELS

Dreissena polymorpha & *Dreissena bugensis*



Zebra and Quagga mussels will colonize standing water, running waters, inland water bodies and brackish coastal estuaries.

Zebra mussels are native to the Black, Caspian and Aral seas, and Quagga to Black Sea estuaries. They have likely arrived in North America in ballast water discharge in the late 1980s.



Preventing the arrival of Zebra and Quagga mussels to the Maritimes is important. Once they are established in a body of water there is little chance of eradicating them.

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

- 1) They are filter feeders—feeding on plankton and significantly altering food webs
- 2) They alter water quality and composition. This increases the growth of aquatic vegetation, and the risk of toxic algal blooms.
- 3) Large colonies can limit the survival of fish eggs by covering spawning areas
- 4) They can cause millions of dollars in damage to boat engines, and public water intakes by fouling infrastructure and blocking water flow
- 5) They can endanger native freshwater mussels



Zebra & Quagga Mussels can catch a ride to new freshwater locations on improperly cleaned watercraft, boat trailers and gear

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The Zebra and Quagga Mussel have rapidly dispersed throughout the Great Lakes due to their ability to cling to the hulls of boats as well as being transported through standing water when they are in the larval stage. Lets prevent these mussels from arriving in PEI as they cause significant environmental and economic harm. By feeding on phytoplankton they alter the food web and threaten the success of native plants and animals. They can threaten the hatching success of **Atlantic Salmon** and **Brook Trout** eggs. They also outcompete native freshwater mussels like the **Eastern Floater**, the **Freshwater Pearl Mussel** and the **Alewife Floater**.



When you **CLEAN, DRAIN, and DRY** your boat, watercraft, trailer and gear after every use you help to reduce the spread of invasive plants and organisms to PEI waters.

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