

BOATERS

HELP STOP ZEBRA MUSSELS FROM COMING TO MARYLAND



The zebra mussel is an exotic and harmful species that is trying to hitchhike into Maryland waters on boats, trailers, anchors, SCUBA gear and in engines, live wells, bilge areas, bait buckets, and coolers. Zebra mussels are a form of biological pollution. They can multiply quickly and clog drinking water and power plant cooling water intakes. They damage aquatic ecosystems by out-competing and crowding out native fish and mussels. Zebra mussels were discovered in Maryland for the first time in Fall 2008 in the lower Susquehanna River. DNR needs the help of boaters and anglers in preventing their spread and keeping zebra mussels out of other State waters.

Why should boaters be concerned about zebra mussels?

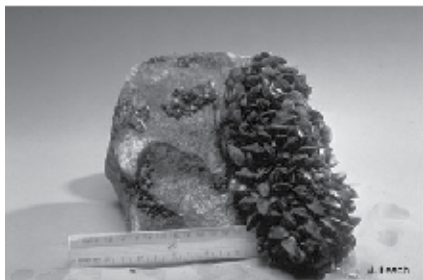
Zebra mussels are bad news and can:

Ruin your engine by blocking the cooling system and causing overheating.

Jam steering equipment or the centerboard wells on sailboats.

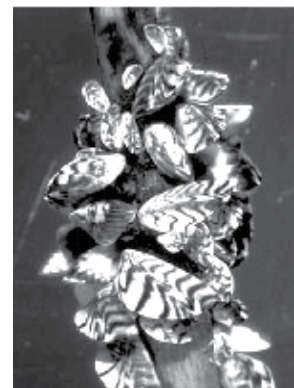
Increase fuel consumption when mussels attach to the hull and increase drag.

Require scraping and repainting of hull bottom.



How to identify them?

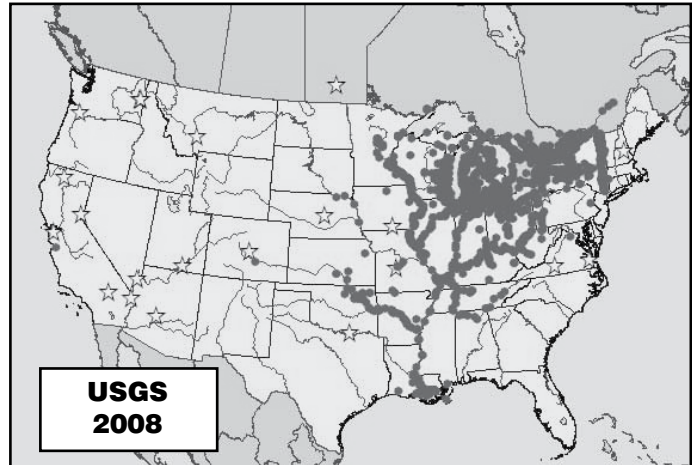
They look like small clams; yellow or brown with stripes, usually about thumbnail size, often occur in clusters.



DON'T LET ZEBRA MUSSELS HITCHHIKE WITH YOU!

What can you do?

Zebra mussels can sneak into Maryland with boaters, canoeists, jet skiers, anglers, and divers who travel from infested waters (see map) to the State's still uninfested waters. If your boat or trailer or dive gear has been used recently in a water body outside MD that is known to be or might be infested with zebra mussels, here's what you can do to help stop their spread. Before you launch your boat into Maryland waters,



Dots represent confirmed collections or observations of adults, juveniles, or veligers, but not always established populations. Stars represent the discovery of the overland transport of zebra mussels on trailered boats.

- REMOVE** all visible mussels and aquatic plants from your boat, drive unit, propeller, trolling plates, anchor, and trailer; put debris in a trash can.
- DRAIN** all waters from live wells, bilge areas, bait buckets, SCUBA gear, and coolers.
- FLUSH** engine cooling system, drive unit, live wells, bilge areas, bait buckets, and coolers with hot water, if available. If not, use tap water. DO NOT use chlorine bleach.
- RINSE** boat hull, trailer, and SCUBA gear with hot water or a hard spray from a garden hose.
- DUMP** leftover bait in a trash can; do not release it to the water body.
- DRY** your boat, engine, and trailer in the sun for at least 5 days between outings, longer if possible. Adult zebra mussels can close up and survive for up to a week in damp areas on a boat hull, inboard/outboard engine, or trailer frame.

If you spot a suspected zebra mussel, freeze it in a plastic bag or preserve it in a small bottle of rubbing alcohol, then call Maryland Department of Natural Resources (Toll Free 1-877-620-8DNR extension 8615 or 410-260-8615). For more information, check our website:

<http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/irc/zebra/>

ZEBRA MUSSELS ARE ON MARYLAND'S NOT-WANTED LIST



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