

# CONTACTS

## State Regulations and Information Sources

Many states have regulations that prohibit the possession, transportation and release of specific aquatic invaders referred to as prohibited species. In North Carolina the regulatory agencies are:

N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Plant Industry – Plant Protection Section. 919-733-6930

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Division of Wildlife Management. 919-707-0050

To report a sighting or learn more about invasive species, contact one of the natural resource managers listed below:



Kevin Hart  
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Habitat Section  
252-946-6481  
kevin.hart@ncdenr.gov

Rob Emens  
N.C. Division of Water Resources  
Aquatic Weed Control  
919-733-4064  
rob.emens@ncdenr.gov



<http://www.gsarp.org>



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

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## HELP STOP Aquatic Hitchhikers



Cover photo: Deborah Rose, MINDNR



**STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment.

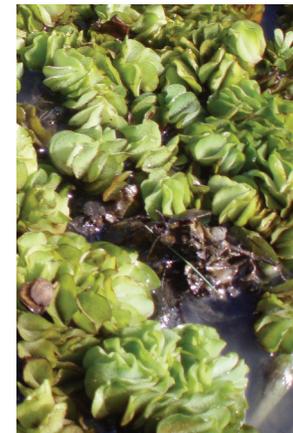
[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)

## 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, applesnails, snakehead fish, jellyfish, hydrilla and flathead catfish 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 and/or economic harm.



The main way invasive species get into lakes, rivers, and wetlands is by “hitching” rides with boaters and other outdoor recreationists. If you leave a body of water without taking precautions recommended in this brochure, you may be transporting these harmful species from one lake, river or wetland to another. These “aquatic hitchhikers,” such as Giant Salvinia (right), have invaded our waters; doing harm to lakes, streams, wetlands and their native inhabitants.



Giant Salvinia

Dennis Riecke, MDWFF

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

# INSPECT

## Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!



Fortunately, there are a few simple actions you can take to prevent the spread of non-native plants and animals.

In many states and provinces it is illegal to transport aquatic invasive species, so taking the following actions may also help avoid a citation (see back page).



“Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!” is a national campaign that helps recreational users to become part of the solution in stopping the transport and spread of aquatic invasive species.

**INSPECT** your boat, trailer and equipment and **REMOVE** visible aquatic plants, animals and mud before leaving the water access.

It is important to carefully inspect and remove all plant fragments and debris before you leave the access area to ensure you are not transporting an invasive species. This practice will reduce the chance of moving organisms to new locations.



Rob Emens, NCDENR

# REMOVE

# DRAIN DISPOSE SPRAY, RINSE, or DRY

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

Many types of invasive species are small and easily overlooked. For example, green mussel larvae are invisible to the naked eye. Seeds or small fragments of invasive plants, eggs of fish and small aquatic animals, and fish diseases can be carried in water. **Draining water before you leave the access area will effectively reduce the chance that any unwanted plants and animals survive.**



Deborah Rose, MNDNR

**REPORT** new sightings.

If you suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, save a specimen and report it to a state natural resource person (see back). Many agencies have "ID" cards, Websites and volunteer monitoring networks to help you identify and report invasive species.



Mark Kelley, MS Dept. Agriculture and Commerce

Island Applesnails, native to South America.

**DISPOSE** of unwanted bait and aquatic plants in the trash.

Releasing live animals and plants in a lake, river or along the shore often causes invasive species to become established. Identifying fish when they are small is difficult and it is hard to be sure there are no invasive fish in your bait bucket. Many baits are not native and should NOT be dumped in or near the water; dispose of in the trash. All excess water-garden plants should be composted or disposed of in the trash and NOT put in any water body. Likewise, unwanted aquarium animals and plants should NOT be released into any water body. Most of the ornamental plants and animals being sold are non-native organisms.



Deborah Rose, MNDNR



Rob Emens, NCDENR

*Hydrilla verticillata* continues to infest new areas across North Carolina since it was first observed in Wake County in 1980. Hydrilla grows aggressively as a submersed plant; it interferes with recreation activities and alters habitat.

**SPRAY, RINSE, or DRY** boats and recreational equipment to remove or kill species that were not visible when leaving a waterbody. Before entering 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.



USGS

*Zebra Mussels*, above, native to freshwater lakes and rivers of eastern Europe. First found in the Great Lakes in late 1980's, have spread to many parts of the Mississippi River basin and the western United States.

**CONSULT** your natural resource agency.

Do-it-yourself control treatments could be illegal and can make matters worse by harming native fish, wildlife and plants. It is best to contact your natural resource agency before you try to control an invasive species. These agencies can provide recommendations for ecosystem enhancement and notify you of any permit requirements. (see back for contact information)



USFWS

Snakehead fish, has invaded the Potomac River.

**ADDITIONAL STEPS** are recommended for the following activities.

■ **Shore and fly-fishing**

Remove aquatic plants, animals and mud from waders and hip boots. Drain water from bait containers and equipment. Avoid using felt soles.



Susan Roemer, NCDENR

■ **Personal watercraft**

Avoid running watercraft through aquatic plants. Run engine for 5 -10 seconds on the trailer to blow out excess water and vegetation from internal drive, then turn off the engine. Remove the aquatic plants and animals from the water intake, grate, steering nozzle, watercraft hull and trailer.

■ **Sailing**

Remove aquatic plants and animals from the hull, center-board, or bilgeboard wells, rudderpost area and trailer.

■ **Scuba diving**

Remove aquatic plants, mud and debris from equipment. Drain water from buoyancy compensator, regulator, tank boot and other containers. Rinse suit and inside of buoyancy compensator with hot water.

■ **Waterfowl hunting**

Remove aquatic plants, animals and mud from boat, motor, trailer, decoy lines and anchors. Elliptical and bulb-shaped anchors can help reduce snagging aquatic plants. Cut cattails and other emerged plants above the water-line when they are used for camouflage or blinds.



Deborah Rose, MNDNR

# REPORT

# CONSULT

# REMOVE