

## DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL.....OR A MILFOIL

Aquatic nuisance species (ANS), non-native invasive plants and animals threatening our aquatic ecosystems, are potentially a huge threat to the ecology and economy of many western states. Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra/quagga mussels, well established in other states, are just beginning to be identified in Colorado. These invasive species:

- degrade ecosystems by altering habitat and diminishing food supplies that desirable plants and animals need to survive.
- entangle swimmers and boats in dense mats
- ruin boat engines and jam steering equipment
- clog water distribution systems of drinking water plants, power plants, canals, and industrial processes increasing the cost of maintenance and ultimately increasing the end user fees
- affect human health by accumulating toxins.

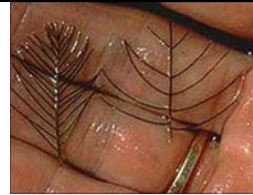


Eurasian watermilfoil is a feathery submerged aquatic weed on the Colorado Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Act List B category. Though not widespread in Colorado yet, infestations have been identified in several Front Range counties. Contact the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, Noxious Weed Management Program for more information ([www.colorado.gov/ag/csd](http://www.colorado.gov/ag/csd)).

Zebra mussels are invasive freshwater bivalve mollusks, with light and dark stripes, and are the only freshwater mollusks that will attach to hard surfaces in North America. For years they have been held east of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian. Lake Powell's surveys turned up a Quagga mussel population in 2006, and a lake in southern California discovered zebra mussels earlier this year. Zebra/Quagga mussels have now hitchhiked their way into Pueblo Reservoir, Colorado, primarily by attaching themselves to boats like yours. For more information on Zebra/Quagga mussels and how to prevent their spread, please visit [www.100thmeridian.org](http://www.100thmeridian.org) or [protectyourwaters.com](http://protectyourwaters.com).

Once aquatic nuisance species are in your waters, they are nearly impossible to get rid of. Colorado Division of Wildlife has written an Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan and a Rapid Response Plan. State and County reservoir parks will be inspecting high risk vessels.

What you can do to prevent the spread of Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra/quagga mussels:

- INSPECT boats, trailers, boots, gear, waders, and equipment.
- REMOVE any mud, plants, fish or animals.
- DRAIN water from boat, motor, bilge, live wells, and bait containers before leaving the water access area.
- CLEAN and DRY anything that comes in contact with the water.
- IF SPOTTED, CONTACT:
  - Zebra Mussel Hotline: 1-877-STOPANS
  - Colorado Department of Wildlife, ANS coordinator: 303-291-7362
  - Larimer County Natural Resources, Weed District: 970-498-5768

		
<p>On the left, a leaf of Eurasian watermilfoil, on the right, a leaf of the native milfoil.</p>	<p>Zebra mussels with byssal threads.</p>	<p>Zebra Mussels attached to fishing rod. <i>Marc Murrell, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks</i></p>