

ZEBRA MUSSELS *Dreissena polymorpha*



USFWS, Flickr



BJ Schoenmakers, Wikipedia Commons



Paul Skawinski UW-Stevens Point Extension Lakes

SIZE:

Larvae are microscopic, young mussels are as small as a grain of sand, and adults can be about the size of a fingernail, or 4 cm.

COLOR:

Dark concentric rings on shell, bands in colors that range from cream to black. Paler color closer to the hinge.

SHAPE:

Convex ventral side that will cause it to tip over if placed on side (distinguishes quagga from zebra mussels). The mid-ventral line is uneven. Round in shape with tapering at hinge.

QUAGGA MUSSELS *Dreissena rostriformis bugenis*

SIZE:

Larvae are microscopic, young mussels are as small as a grain of sand, and adults are about 2.5 cm long.

COLOR:

Usually marked with a zigzag pattern that can range from brown to yellowish white in color.

SHAPE:

Flat ventral (underside) and more triangular in shape than quagga. Straight mid-ventral line.



J.N Stuart

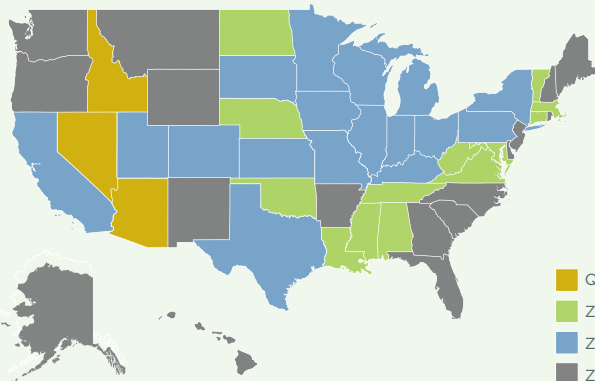


Dave Brenner, Michigan Sea Grant

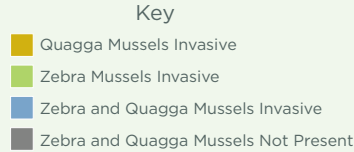


Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center

DISTRIBUTION Currently not found in Montana



Source:
USGS NAS; May 2023



Zebra Mussels

Paul Skawinski UW-Stevens Point Extension Lakes

HABITAT:

Lakes, rivers, and reservoirs. Attaches to any hard surface via byssal threads (boats, rocks, cement, etc.)

NATIVE TO:

Eurasia

PREVENTION AND SPREAD:

Originally introduced in basalt water in the Great Lakes. The mussels were able to spread rapidly due to free floating larvae and the ability to attach to boats that would be introduced into new water bodies. To prevent the spread to unimpacted waters, inspect waders, boats, and fishing equipment and clean, drain, dry.

IMPACTS:

Cause massive problems for agriculture because of their ability to clog irrigation and water uptake pipes. Can also impact recreation because they infest beaches and lake bottoms and are sharp enough to cut people. Impact native mussels by attaching to them and/or outcompeting them for resources. Can also drastically alter the habitat of a water system.

IN MONTANA:

Larvae were found on Canyon Ferry and Tiber reservoirs in 2016, but no adult species have been located. After monitoring, Canyon Ferry and Tiber Reservoir have been delisted as a suspect and positive reservoir, respectively.

Sources:
USGS, Montana Field Guide, *Aquatic Invasive Species Threatening the Crown of the Continent*

NATIVE LOOKALIKES:

Can be distinguished from native mussels because the invasive mussels attach to surfaces with byssal threads.



Zebra Mussels
Dreissena polymorpha

Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center



Quagga Mussels
Dreissena rostriformis bugensis

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If you see or suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, please save a specimen, and record the location.

Report observations to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species/report-an-ais>
Or call the MT FWP front desk at 406-444-2440

