

Help Stop the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

New York State Parks needs your help to safeguard our waterways

Here in the Empire State we are fortunate to have such a variety of amazing waterways. From small streams and ponds to the Hudson River, Finger Lakes, two Great Lakes and the Atlantic ocean, these natural assets offer popular recreation such as swimming, boating and fishing, as well as providing scenic views and valuable sources of drinking water for New Yorkers and visitors. These water bodies are also home to an incredible array of diverse native plants, animals and ecosystems. We have fresh water mussels, interesting invertebrates, beautiful brook trout, large sturgeon, and many others. To ensure their longevity for future generations, we need to protect them from aquatic invasive species.

Aquatic invasive species

Aquatic invasive species are plants, animals and microorganisms that invade water bodies, degrading water quality, habitat, fishing, boating, swimming and other recreation as well as property values. Once established these species are almost impossible to eradicate and are expensive to control. For example, some states spend millions of dollars each year to just to manage the invasive plant *Hydrilla* and clear paths through its dense infestations.



To see some examples of common invasive, visit the [NYS DEC's website](#).

To prevent the spread of Invasive species be sure to **Clean, Drain** and **Dry** (and disinfect when possible) boats, trailers and all equipment that has been in contact with the water.

CLEAN

Clean any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.



Don't forget to clean equipment such as anchors and other gear.

Remove all invasive species from your boat and equipment.



Discard items in an upland area or in one of the invasive species disposal stations that have been installed at many boat launch sites for your convenience or on dry ground, away from water.



Zebra mussels can be difficult to remove from a boat hull. They first need to be killed by exposure to water or steam at least 140 degrees F and then removed by brush or pressure washer.

Photo courtesy of Utah DWR

DRAIN

Drain all water holding compartments including live wells, bait wells and bilge areas.



Drain your boat before you leave the access site!



Be sure to drain boat ballast tanks if your water ski or wakeboard has them.



Drain your live well if you have one!

DRY

Dry your boats, trailers and all equipment before use in another water body.



Drying your boat takes at least 5-7 days in dry, warm weather.

The most effective method to ensure that no invasive species or fish diseases are transported to a new body of water is to completely dry your boating and fishing equipment. The key is to make certain that equipment is COMPLETELY dry before using it in a new water body. Drying times vary significantly depending upon the type of equipment, air temperature and relative humidity. While the outside of a boat will dry relatively rapidly, bilge, live wells and other areas of a boat not reached by the sun or lacking good air circulation will take additional time to dry completely. A minimum of 5-7 days drying time in dry, warm conditions is recommended. [Drying time estimates.](#)

DISINFECT

Disinfect anything that came into contact with water, if it cannot be dried before reuse.

[Details on how to disinfect your boat and fishing equipment](#)

Information courtesy of NYS DEC's common aquatic invasive species [website](#).