

# CT AQUATIC **INVASIVE** FRESHWATER MOLLUSKS & CRUSTACEANS



*Aquatic invasive animals threaten our native aquatic species. Shown here are zebra mussels growing on a native freshwater mussel. The native mussel is unlikely to survive. Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

## WHAT ARE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES?

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native species that quickly spread when they are introduced into CT's waterways. They often have no natural predators and will out-compete native plant and animal species for food and other resources. AIS can create undesirable recreation conditions, cause habitat destruction and loss, and degrade water quality. Unfortunately, AIS are costly to manage and difficult to remove once established; preventing their release is critical.

## DON'T RELEASE LIVE BAIT OR AQUARIUM PETS!

Intentional release of invasive crabs, crayfish, snails, mussels and clams into CT's waters is believed to be a common cause of their introduction and spread. Never release a live animal into a storm drain or waterbody (other than the one from which it was collected). Unwanted bait and aquarium pets should be euthanized and then either buried or properly discarded with household trash; this will protect our waterways and the animals that are meant to live in them.

## REPORT YOUR SIGHTINGS

Familiarize yourself with the list of aquatic invasive animal species of concern in CT (see reverse). If you see an invasive, photograph and report the date and location of your sighting by emailing

[DEEP.AquaticInvasiveReport@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.AquaticInvasiveReport@ct.gov)

## BOAT OWNERS: REMEMBER TO CLEAN-DRAIN-DRY!

It is illegal to transport any aquatic invasive species on a boat or trailer; you could be fined up to \$95 per violation (CGA 15-180).

**Clean** your boat and trailer by removing any attached plants, animals and mud at the launch.

**Drain** all water from your boat before leaving— check bilge, wells, tanks, buckets, etc.

**Dry** equipment for at least 5 days before entering a new waterbody.

## VOLUNTEER WITH DEEP WATER MONITORING!

Visit <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP-VolunteerWaterMonitoring!>



# Freshwater Invasive Mollusk & Crustacean Species of Concern in CT



## Mitten Crab

*Eriocheir sinensis*

Photo credit: David Kelch, Ohio Sea Grant

ID Tip: **ONLY** crab found in freshwater!



## Zebra Mussel

*Dreissena polymorpha*

Photo credit: Amy Benson, USGS

ID Tip: Small, triangular, striped shells.



## Red Swamp Crayfish

*Procambarus clarkia*

Photo credit: Drew Gaddy

ID Tip: Bright red crayfish with long thin claws.



## Chinese Mystery Snail

*Cipangopaludina chinensis*

Photo credit: Amy Benson, USGS

ID Tip: Big snails, often larger than 1 inch long.



## Asian Clam

*Corbicula fluminea*

Photo credit: Noel M. Burkhead, USGS

ID Tip: Small shells, not larger than ~1 inch wide.



## Rusty Crayfish

*Orconectes rusticus*

Photo credit: R. Jacobs, CTDEEP

ID Tip: Rusty red spot on the side of the abdomen

**REPORT YOUR SIGHTINGS!** If you see one of these organisms, photograph it, preserve it in rubbing alcohol or freeze it, and report the date and location found as soon as possible to [DEEP.AquaticInvasiveReport@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.AquaticInvasiveReport@ct.gov). Learn more about Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) at <https://www.ct.gov/deep/aquaticinvasivespecies>