

Help Stop the Invasion of Wisconsin's Waters

ZEBRA MUSSEL

Found in the Great Lakes and a number of inland waters statewide, zebra mussels are hardy, prolific mollusks that clog water intakes, encrust piers and docks, cause significant declines in native mussels, and may alter native aquatic communities. They are small filter feeders (adults 1-2 inches in size) that strain the same plankton from the water that young native fish depend on for food. Adults and larva can be spread in water or on equipment that is transported from one water body to another.

EURASIAN WATER-MILFOIL

Eurasian water-milfoil often forms dense stands that entangle boat propellers, interfere with other water recreation, and crowd out native plants. Stem fragments cling to boats, motors and trailers and drift with currents to colonize new areas. Fragments can root and grow into new plants, allowing it to spread long distances to waterways throughout the state.

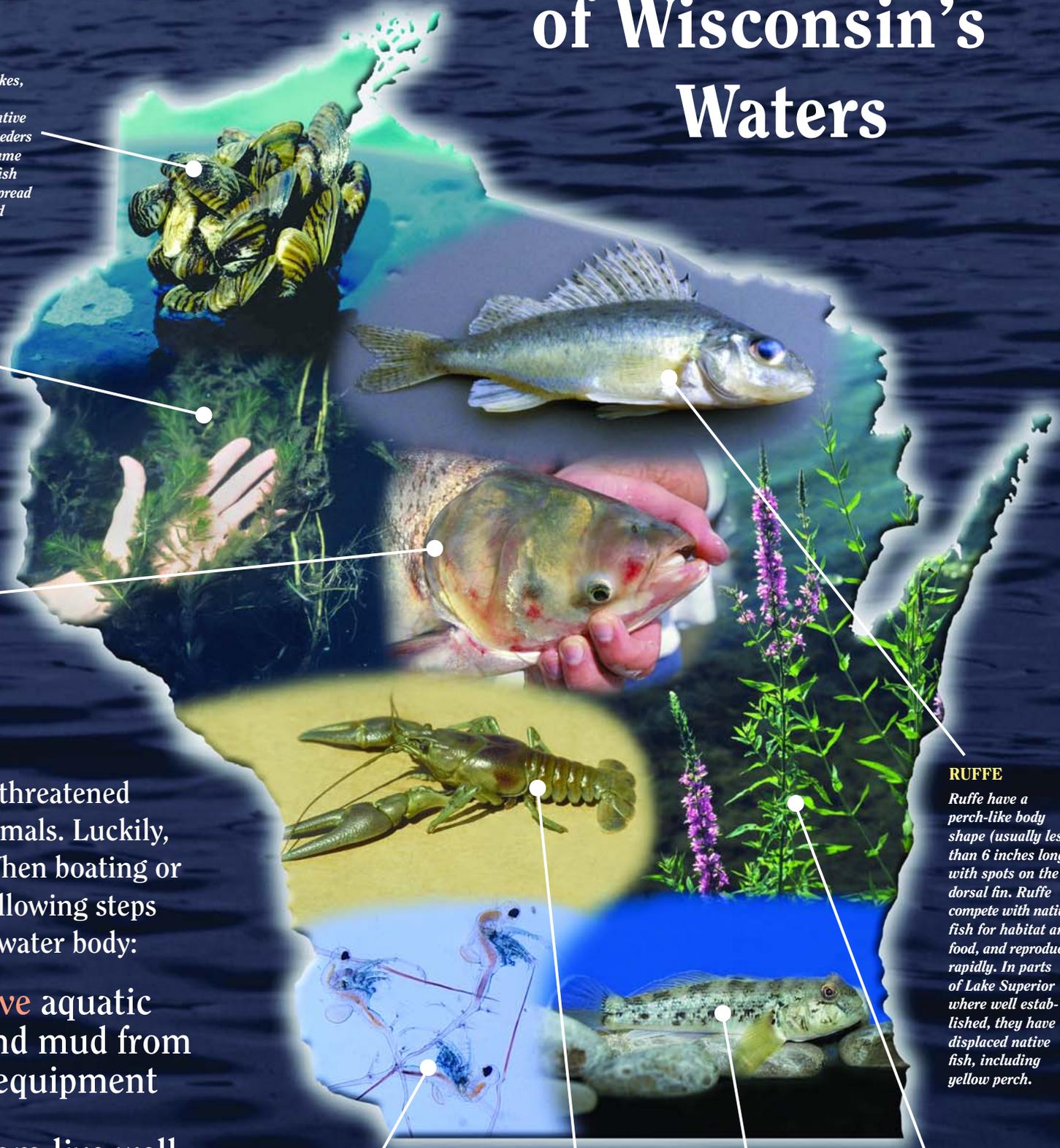
ASIAN CARP

Bighead (pictured) and silver carp are species of Asian carp that were introduced to fish production ponds in the southern U.S. to consume algae. They escaped into adjacent rivers and are moving up the Mississippi River. These large-bodied filter feeders compete directly with other fish and native mussels for food. Both species may "jump" out of the water, posing a hazard to boaters!

Wisconsin waters are threatened by invasive plants and animals. Luckily, we can help stop them. When boating or fishing, please take the following steps before traveling to a new water body:

- ✓ **Inspect** and **remove** aquatic plants, animals and mud from boat, trailer, and equipment
- ✓ **Drain** all water from live well, bilge, motor, etc.
- ✓ **Dispose** of unused bait in the trash, not in the water
- ✓ **Wash** boat and equipment with high-pressure or hot water, OR
- ✓ **Dry** boat and equipment thoroughly for 5 days

of Wisconsin's Waters



RUFFE

Ruffe have a perch-like body shape (usually less than 6 inches long) with spots on the dorsal fin. Ruffe compete with native fish for habitat and food, and reproduce rapidly. In parts of Lake Superior where well established, they have displaced native fish, including yellow perch.

INVASIVE WATERFLEAS

Spiny (pictured) and fishhook waterfleas are tiny (usually less than 1/2 inch) crustacean predators with long, spiny tails. They compete with small fish for food, and young fish have difficulty eating them due to their spines. They collect in masses and foul fishing lines and equipment. They invaded the Great Lakes and have spread to some inland lakes in the region. Some females can reproduce without males, and the resting eggs in dead females can survive for weeks out of water!

RUSTY CRAYFISH

Rusty crayfish eat small fish, insects, and fish eggs, and feed on aquatic vegetation, depriving native fishes of food and cover. They also displace native crayfish. Rusty crayfish are found in numerous inland lakes and rivers in Wisconsin. They are native to the Ohio River drainage and were most likely introduced to Wisconsin waters by anglers who dumped bait buckets.

ROUND GOBY

Round gobies are small (usually 3-6 inches long) fish that are becoming increasingly common along Lake Michigan and Lake Superior shorelines. They compete directly with native fish for food and habitat, in addition to preying on their eggs and young. They also spawn several times per year and survive in poor water quality, which makes them tough competition for native fish.

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

Purple loosestrife is 3-7 feet tall with spikes of small purple flowers. It invades wetlands, lake and river shorelines, roadsides and other moist areas statewide. It spreads by seeds and by broken stems that root in moist soil. This plant can grow so thick that it crowds out native plants, reducing the food and habitat available for native wildlife.

More information on invasive species:
www.dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/invasives

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Clean Waters

