

IT 'S THE LAW! (2)

(Public Acts 03-136, 04-203 and 09-52)

Boaters must inspect their vessel for vegetation and properly remove and dispose of any vegetation before transporting the vessel. You can be fined up to \$100 per plant and may have to appear in court for failure to comply.

The importation, transportation, sale, purchase, possession, cultivation or distribution of a number of invasive plants including the following aquatic plants is prohibited:

— Curly leaved pondweed, Fanwort, Eurasian water-milfoil, Variable water milfoil, Water chestnut, Egeria, Hydrilla, Common reed, Purple loosestrife, Pond water-starwort, Parrotfeather, Brittle water-nymph, American water lotus, Yellow floating heart, Giant salvinia, Yellow iris, Water lettuce, Watercress, Onerow yellowcress. Violators can be fined up to \$100 per plant!



I want to do my part to protect the waters where I recreate and any waters that I might visit. I pledge to abide by the following each time I visit a body of water.

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment
- Drain water from equipment before transporting
- Clean and dry anything that came in contact with water (Boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.)
- Never release plants, fish, or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water

Funded in part by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection through a United States Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant in conjunction with Connecticut Federation of Lakes.

*Amos Lake Public
Awareness Project*

Why should you want to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers?

Because they can

- 1. Reduce game fish populations**
- 2. Ruin boat engines and jam steering equipment**
- 3. Make lakes and rivers unusable by boaters and swimmers**



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!™**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.

www.ProtectYourWaters.net

Why should we protect our waters from invasive organisms?

Because these hitchhikers can:

Reduce game fish populations (1)

One of the most significant impacts of Aquatic Hitchhikers is on game fish populations. Game fish have been impacted in numerous ways.

Reducing oxygen content. Nuisance plants such as water hyacinth and hydrilla reduce oxygen levels in the water putting stress on fish certain times of the year as well as actually causing fish kills due to lack of oxygen.

Negatively impacting reproduction:

Non-native species such as the common carp can make waters so turbid that eggs of native fish cannot survive. Nuisance plants, such as purple loosestrife, take over wetlands and eliminate native plants animals depend on for shelter and nesting.

Through reduction of their food

sources: Species such as the zebra mussel impact the food chain for native fish. Zebra mussels disrupt the food chain by removing significant amounts of phytoplankton from the water, which are in turn food for larval and juvenile fish, which are in turn food for sport fisheries.

Ruin boat engines and jam steering equipment

Another significant impact of Aquatic Hitchhikers is the effect on recreational boats. Non-native plants such as hydrilla and water hyacinth can clog water intakes on motors and thereby overheat and ruin your engine. Zebra mussels can also clog water intakes and have the potential to attach themselves to the prop and all areas of the motor, thereby either affecting the performance of the engine and or actually jamming steering equipment.

Make lakes and rivers unusable by boaters and swimmers

Some harmful, non-native species, particularly plants like hydrilla and water hyacinth, are so detrimental that they completely cover the waters they invade. Waters become so choked with these non-native plants that it is practically impossible to get a boat through, and there is no open water left for swimmers to enjoy. Other nuisance species such as zebra mussels leave sharp-edged shells along swimming beaches which can be a hazard to unprotected feet.

Sources:

(1) www.Protectyourwaters.net

(2) CT Anglers Guide

You Can Help!

You can help prevent the spread of problem species by following these simple suggestions.

Before leaving a boat launch

Completely drain all water from the boat, including bilge water, livewells and engine cooling systems.

Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment. Remove and discard all aquatic plants and animals, mud and debris you may have picked up while on the water.

At home

Rinse boat, trailer and equipment with tap water. A bleach solution can be used to clean livewells. Dispose of all rinse materials properly!

Remember

Do not dump your bait bucket or release live bait! Avoid introducing unwanted plants and animals. Unless your bait was obtained on site, dispose of it in a suitable trash container.

Do not transport fish, other animals or plants between water bodies. Release caught fish, other animals and plants only into the waters from which they came.