

# Zebra Mussel

# Quagga Mussel



**Common name:** Zebra Mussel

**Scientific name:** *Dreissena polymorpha*

**Common name:** Quagga Mussel

**Scientific name:** *Dreissena bugensis*

## Description:

Zebra and quagga mussels are fingernail-sized freshwater mollusks that attach to objects and other organisms. Their shells generally have alternating light and dark bands. Zebra mussels (less than 0.5 cm) have a “D” shaped shell which allows them to sit flat on their sides. Quagga mussels are rounder in shape (up to 4 cm). Compared to zebra mussels, quagga mussel populations can tolerate cooler water temperatures, lower dissolved oxygen content, and are commonly found as deep as 100 feet or more.

The reproductive cycles of these invasive mussels allow for successful and rapid infestation. One female can produce up to one million eggs. Eggs develop into a free-swimming veliger, which can float in the water column for three to four weeks before settling on a hard surface where it develops a shell. Both mussels can survive out of water for up to five days.

## Range in Yukon

**Not present** in Yukon. The probability of survival (habitat suitability) is determined primarily based on calcium concentrations in the water.

## Similar Species

The native Yukon floater does not attach to surfaces.

## Ecological impact

Zebra and quagga mussels are capable of straining one liter of water per day to consume the microscopic plants and animals, called plankton, found in it. They selectively filter for certain types of green and brown algae, while they reject blue-green algae. This results in higher concentrations of blue-green algae in the algal community, which can become toxic to aquatic life.

## Prevent

To prevent the spread of zebra and quagga mussels to new locations, **check, drain and clean** boats and equipment including bilges, pumps, coolers, buckets and waders.

For more information <http://www.env.gov.yk.ca/animals-habitat/Stop-Aquatic-Invasive-Species.php>



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