



# Zebra Mussels

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# Zebra Mussels

- Scientifically known as *Dreissena Polymorpha*
- The zebra mussel is a small freshwater mussel. The species originates from the lakes of southern Russia and Ukraine, but has been accidentally introduced to numerous other areas and has become an invasive species in many countries worldwide.
- one-quarter inch to one and one-half inches long, depending on age, with alternating yellow and brownish colored stripes. Adults are typically fingernail-sized.  
They're kind of ugly if i'm being completely honest, like i thought they'd be a lot cuter with their name and all.

# Facts about zebra mussels

- These mussels reach sexual maturity after 1-2 years and one female can release up to 1 million eggs in a spawning season, releasing up to 5 million eggs a year.
- As their name implies, they're stripes look somewhat like zebra stripes
- In North America, zebra mussels have few natural predators. Several species of fish (for example, catfish, green sunfish, freshwater drum) and ducks have been known to eat them, but these species are not an effective control.

# Effects of Mussels

## Cons:

- Causes cuts and scrapes for people and animals in water
- Over time they negatively affect the food web With the zebra mussels coating lakebeds and filtering so much of the nutrients in the water column, a lot of energy is transferred to the bottom, which makes it more available for organisms living in the benthic—or bottom—zone of a water body.
- Crowd out native mussels and, in most cases killing them by attaching to them
- Coating and clogging pipes or water intakes creating costly problems for residents, power plants, and cities

## Pros:

- With zebra mussels coating lakebeds and filtering so much of the nutrients in the water column, a lot of energy is transferred to the bottom, which makes it more available for organisms living in the benthic -or bottom- zone of a water body.
- They are capable of filtering up to 1 liter of water within a 24 hour time period.

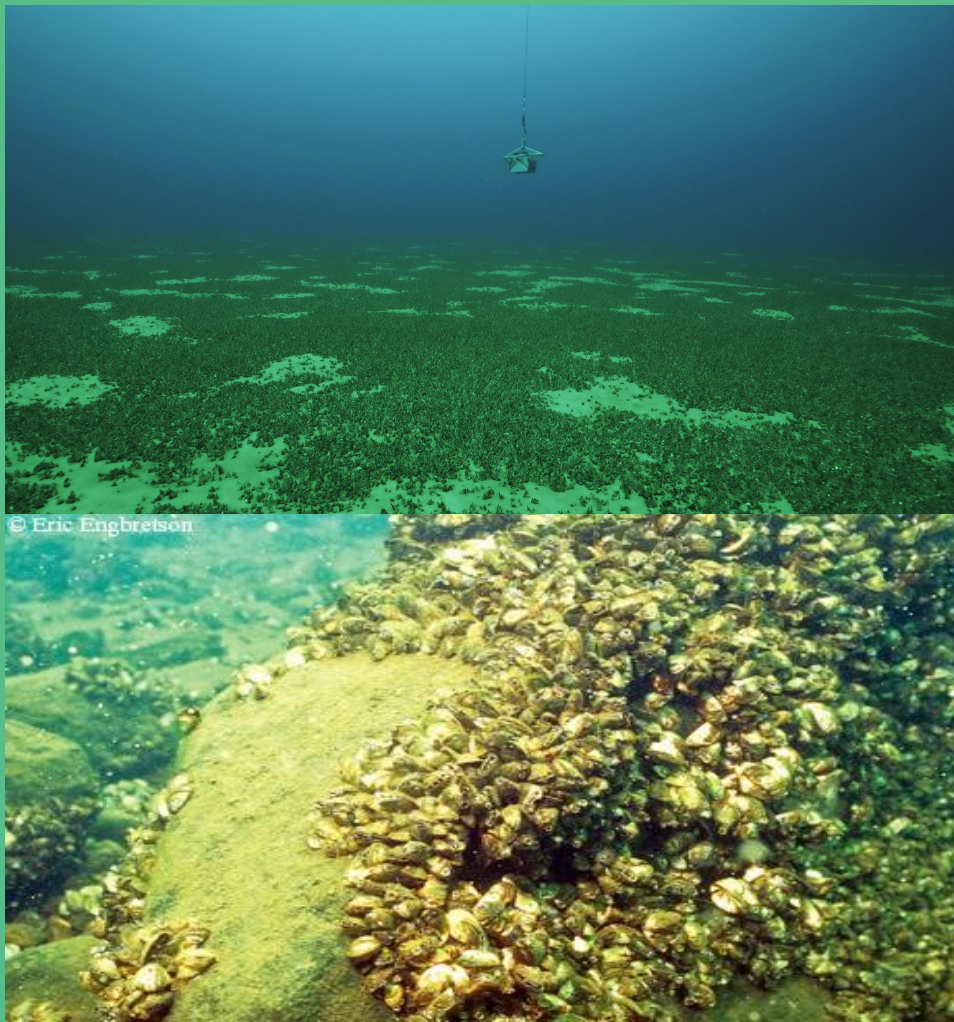
# What is being done to stop them?

Last Friday, me, my group, and our mentor met with someone who is working on a safe method to reduce the zebra mussel population. It involves using copper based control. Using copper by injecting it into lakes, using a boat to spread it, and using this to eliminate small amounts of the large zebra mussel populated lakes. I feel the goal is not to get rid of them, but to more or less have some control over them.



A shopping cart that was found in a body of water (not completely sure which body of water my groupmate found this on google) , completely covered in zebra mussels.





An alarming amount of zebra mussels covering the floor of what looks to be a larger body of water

Zebra mussels grouping up and almost completely covering the rock.

# Links used

Slide # 2: basic google rundown

slide# 3: cons of zebra mussels

<https://www.waterfrontrestoration.com/effects-of-zebra-mussels-in-our-lakes/>

Pros of zebra mussels

<https://www.greatlakesnow.org/2020/02/zebra-mussels-impact-good-bad/#:~:text=With%20the%20zebra%20mussels%20coating,zone%20of%20a%20water%20body.>

Slide #5

<https://maisrc.umn.edu/copper-control>