



Smallmouth bass;
M. Herborg

Calling All Anglers: What Else Did You Catch Today?

DO YOUR PART AND PROTECT BC'S WATERWAYS FROM AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES!

British Columbia offers a tremendous diversity of recreational fishing opportunities with over 20,000 lakes and 750,000 km of streams. These opportunities and the native ecosystems that support them are threatened by the introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS). Anglers and boaters are key partners in preventing the spread of invasive species and protecting BC's freshwater ecosystems.

What are aquatic invasive species?

Aquatic invasive species include non-native plants, fish, invertebrates and diseases that negatively impact the environment, economy, recreation and human health and safety. Once in BC waters, AIS can rapidly establish and spread, cause extensive damage and cost millions of dollars annually to control.

How do anglers spread AIS?

- » **Hitchhikers** — AIS can attach to your boat, trailer, fishing gear and clothing. Microscopic AIS can be transported as tiny larvae and spores in water, mud, on gear or infected fish (alive or dead). This is how whirling disease and zebra mussels get into new waterbodies.
- » **Live fish movement** — Some anglers illegally transport and release sport species like bass and perch into BC waterbodies. Remember, possession of live fish or use of live fish bait is **illegal** in BC. Report any suspicious activity to the RAPP Hotline (1-877-952-7277)

GET INFORMED

- » Free Phone Apps to report new sightings or for species info [Report-a-Species www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species](https://www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species)
- » BC 2017-19 Fishing Regulations www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/regulations/#Synopsis
- » Stop the Spread of Invasive Mussels www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels
- » Clean Drain Dry Program www.bcinvasives.ca/commitments/clean-drain-dry

Angler Best Practices Checklist:

- ✓ Where you **CLEAN, DRAIN** and **DRY** your boat and gear is important – ALWAYS on-site at the end of your trip on dry land, NEVER at the launch point for a new trip.
- ✓ **CLEAN** boat interior/exterior, trailer and propeller. Inspect for and remove mud, plant fragments and debris.
- ✓ **CLEAN** all gear – oars, waders, life jackets, float tubes, gear bags, nets, cushions, etc. Separate wader insoles, socks, booties and laces. Use water and a small brush to remove all dirt and debris with special care taken with crevasses, treads, seams and creases.
- ✓ **CLEAN** your pet's paws at the end of a trip. Sometimes they can carry AIS too!
- ✓ **DRAIN** onto land, ALL water from the boat, bilge, motor well, motor cooling system and any water-holding compartments.
- ✓ Pull the plug when transporting your boat.
- ✓ **DRY** everything separately before re-assembly, ideally in the sun on a hot day.



X Don't transfer dead fish parts or bait from one waterbody to another; dispose of material into a dumpster.

X Never possess or move live fish OR use live fish for bait. It is illegal!

Bringing Your Boat to BC:

- » It is mandatory that you stop and report to all boat inspection stations in BC
- » If you're coming from out-of-province, contact COS.Aquatic.Invasive.Species@gov.bc.ca to determine if your boat is HIGH-RISK and should be decontaminated for possible invasive mussel presence before accessing BC's lakes and rivers. It's free!
- » Report suspected contaminated boats carrying mussels that may be travelling from out-of-province to the RAPP line (1-877-952-7277).
- » Fishing derby organizers should check with out-of-province participants to ensure they are aware of the CLEAN DRAIN DRY best practices & regulations around AIS.



Zebra and Quagga Mussel Sightings Distribution
U.S. Geological Survey (Feb 2018)