



CLEAN DRAIN DRY

Prevent the Spread of Aquatic
Invasive Species

Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*)

ABOUT

This small clam is native to Southeast Asia, Asia Minor, Australia, and Africa. It was first found in North America in the early 1900s and has become an established invasive species all throughout Canada and the United States. While this species is edible and can be used as fish bait, it also overwhelms waterways, pushes out native species, and clogs water pipes.

LEGAL STATUS

Asian clam is considered an invasive species in B.C. and is listed on the B.C. Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Provincial Containment list. All efforts should be made to prevent the spread of this clam from areas where it has become established.

DISTRIBUTION IN B.C.

The exact distribution of Asian clam in B.C. is unknown, but established populations have been found in South Vancouver Island near Sooke and in the Fraser, Pitt, and Coquitlam River systems in the Lower Mainland. Asian clams were also found in two locations in the Salmon Arm of Shuswap Lake in 2020.

IDENTIFICATION



USGS, Bugwood.org

Mature clams are typically 2-2.5 cm long but can grow up to 6 cm. Shells are triangular in shape and may be yellow-green to brown or tan in colour. The exterior of their shells are marked by deep, concentric ridges.

ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Habitat: This clam inhabits brackish to freshwater rivers, lakes and streams. It can live on and within a variety of substrates ranging from silt to gravel, and can tolerate water temperatures between 2-30°C. It filter-feeds on plankton and algae, and grows best in areas with running water, where new food and oxygenated water is continuously drawn over the animal. Thus, water intake pipes may become infested.

Reproduction: These clams are hermaphrodites and can self-fertilize, meaning the introduction of a single individual can lead to the establishment of a population. They only reproduce when water temperatures reach above 16°C.

Dispersal: Asian clams are spread by human activities and can disperse naturally as larvae through water currents. In other parts of North America, this species has been known to spread through use as live bait — use of live bait is strictly prohibited in B.C.



L. Mehrhoff, Bugwood.org

IMPACTS

Economic: Asian clams could cause problems with water treatment facilities by blocking intake or outflow pipes. They are known to alter water chemistry through feeding activity, which may lead to algal blooms and the fouling of drinking water.

Ecological: Asian clams compete for habitat and food with native freshwater species, and by precipitating algal blooms they may cause serious damage in aquatic ecosystems where they reside.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Prevention: Do not purchase Asian clam for use as live bait or for private aquariums — **Don't Let it Loose!** If you are using a private boat or watercraft in an affected waterway, follow [Clean, Drain, Dry](#) protocols to ensure you are not transporting any invasive species out of the waterway.

Reporting: If you believe you have found Asian clam in a B.C. waterway, you can report it by contacting:

ISCBC:

Toll Free: 1-888-933-3722

E-mail: info@bcinvasives.ca / [Online form](#)



REMEMBER

- CLEAN**
plants, animals and mud
from my boat and gear
- DRAIN**
all water from my boat
and gear onto land
- DRY**
all parts of my boat
and gear completely

Report Zebra or Quagga mussel
signings to the R.A.P.P. Hotline:
1-877-952-7277
CleanDrainDry.ca

REFERENCES/INFORMATIVE LINKS

<https://www.saobserver.net/news/invasive-clams-discovered-in-salmon-arm-of-shuswap-lake/>
USGS profile: <https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?speciesID=92>

Clean, Drain, Dry Program: <https://bcinvasives.ca/resources/programs/clean-drain-dry>

Additional Contact Info



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

