

NDG&F July 1st Newsletter

Zebra Mussel Still Present in Red River

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has confirmed zebra mussel veligers were recently found in the southern Red River in the same vicinity where they were discovered last year.

The zebra mussel veliger, a microscopic free-swimming (young) stage, was originally found in a plankton sample taken at Kidder Dam in Wahpeton in June 2010. Sampling efforts conducted twice in the past month found veligers in the area on both occasions. Additional zebra mussel veligers were found in the lower Otter Tail River at Breckenridge, Minn.

The Otter Tail and Bois de Sioux rivers join at Wahpeton-Breckenridge to form the Red River.

Biologists believe the zebra mussels sampled in the Red River originated from Pelican Lake in Minnesota, which is in the Otter Tail River's drainage. Adult zebra mussels were found in Pelican Lake in fall 2009.

Zebra mussels are an aquatic nuisance species introduced into North America and currently found in many states east and south of North Dakota. Adult zebra mussels have not been found in North Dakota or the Red River.

Zebra mussel veligers can float along in river currents for weeks before eventually attaching to hard structures and growing into dime-sized mussels. When established, these invasive mussels reproduce at rapid rates. One female can produce up to a million eggs a season and each egg has the potential to develop into an adult.

Adult mussels attach to hard surfaces such as rocks, submerged trees, bridge abutments, docks and industrial or municipal water intake pipes. When in dense colonies they can block water flow in pipes, causing costly damages annually in the United States.

Zebra mussels can also alter natural ecosystems. They are siphon feeders capable of filtering about one liter of water per day while feeding primarily on plankton. These exotic mussels have the ability to alter the food chain and eventually deplete native flora and/or fauna in the affected water.

Game and Fish staff will continue periodic sampling of the Red River during the open-water season, as well as work with local government entities along the Red to monitor boat docks and other hard structures for the presence of adult zebra mussels.

Zebra mussels, like most aquatic nuisance species, are extremely difficult and costly to eliminate once they are established. The Game and Fish Department reminds water recreationists to abide by laws that are already in place to prevent introduction of ANS into new waters.

Existing ANS regulations include:

- All water must be drained from boats and other watercraft, including livewells, baitwells, bilges and motors before leaving a water body.
- All aquatic vegetation must be removed from boats and construction equipment, personal watercraft, trailers and associated equipment such as fishing poles/lures before leaving a body of water.
- All aquatic vegetation must be removed from bait buckets when leaving the water.
- Live aquatic bait or aquatic vegetation may not be transported into North Dakota. Also, all water must be drained from watercraft prior to entering the state.

Sampling and monitoring for zebra mussels is a cooperative effort with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, and Manitoba Water Stewardship.

More information:

<http://gf.nd.gov/fishing/ans-animals.html>

http://www.protectyourwaters.net/hitchhikers/mollusks_zebra_mussel.php

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticanimals/zebramussel/index.html>

Game and Fish Advises Boaters to use Common Sense

North Dakota boaters are reminded to follow a few simple regulations to ensure safe boating this summer.

Nancy Boldt, boat and water safety coordinator for the state Game and Fish Department, said using good judgment is what it takes to be a safe boater. "It's just a matter of using common sense and making the right decisions," Boldt said.

Boating regulations are found in the [2010-12 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#), the [North Dakota Boat and Water Safety Guide](#) or the [Boat North Dakota](#) education book. These guides are available online at the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov, by email at ndgf@nd.gov, or at a local Game and Fish Department office.

Some of these regulations include:

- No person may operate any motorboat or vessel, or manipulate any water skis, surfboard, or similar device while intoxicated or under the influence of any narcotic drug, barbiturate or marijuana.
- No person may operate a motorboat or vessel within 100 feet of a person fishing from a shoreline, swimmer, swimming diving raft, or an occupied anchored or nonmotorized vessel, or

within 250 feet of a reduced speed or slow or no wake sign at greater than slow or no wake speed.

- No person may operate any motorboat or vessel, or manipulate any water skis, surfboard, or similar device in a reckless or negligent manner so as to endanger the life, limb, or property of any person. Reckless or negligent operation of a motorboat or vessel includes weaving through congested motorboat or vessel traffic, jumping the wake of another motorboat or vessel within 100 feet of the motorboat or vessel, or in any other manner that is not reasonable or prudent.
 - Reckless or negligent operation includes, but is not limited to:
 - Use of excessive speed during periods of reduced visibility while in close proximity to other vessels, while in narrow, winding channels, or near docks or marinas.
 - Operating in an overloaded condition.
 - Operating within swimming areas designated by markers or by the presence of swimmers.
 - Operating near dams and other hazardous waters.
 - Operating in such a manner as to cause a dangerous or damaging wake.
 - Towing water skiers near other vessels or obstructions, into other hazardous areas, or into swimming areas designated by markers or by the presence of swimmers.
 - Operation in such a manner as to molest or annoy persons lawfully engaged in fishing.
 - Continued use or refusal to terminate use of a boat after being ordered to correct an especially hazardous condition by a law enforcement officer.

Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest

The deadline for submitting photos to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's annual Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest is Sept. 30.

The contest has categories for nongame and game species, as well as plants/insects. An overall winning photograph will be chosen, with the number of place winners in each category determined by the number of qualified entries.

Contest entries are limited to 5x7-inch or larger color prints, or digital files submitted on disk or via email. Contestants are limited to no more than five entries. Photos must have been taken in North Dakota.

By submitting an entry, photographers grant permission to Game and Fish to publish winning photographs in *North Dakota OUTDOORS* magazine, and as part of the magazine on the Department's website, gf.nd.gov.

Prints or photo disks should be sent to Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest, C/O Patrick T. Isakson, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095.

Send emailed digital photos to photocontest@nd.gov. Digital submissions can be either original digital photographs, or scans made from prints or slides/transparencies. Photographers will need to supply the original image if needed for publication.

Prints will be returned if requested following judging. Photo disks will not be returned. All entries must be accompanied by the photographer's name, address, phone number and email address if available. Other information such as photo site location and month taken are also useful.

Although care will be taken with submitted material, the Game and Fish Department assumes no financial responsibility for lost or damaged materials.

Fall Turkey Applications Due July 6

Prospective turkey hunters are reminded that applications for this fall's season must be in the mail and postmarked before midnight July 6.

Interested hunters can [submit a lottery application online](#), or print out an application to mail, at the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov. Applications are also available at Game and Fish offices, county auditors and license vendors, or by calling (800) 406-6409. Only North Dakota residents are eligible to apply in the first lottery.

Individuals mailing applications to the department are advised to mail early because some post offices use the following day's postmark for parcels received after regular hours. The department's online application feature will be deactivated July 6 at midnight.