

Beware of Hitchhikers

We aren't talking about someone looking for a ride. These hitchhikers could be as small as a minnow or even the period at the end of this sentence. They come from as far away as Russia or China.

The hitchhikers in question are clams, fish and plants. These organisms were in the ballast water of ocean-going freighters. Ships take in water in their home ports and store it in tanks to help stabilize the ship. After crossing the ocean to our shores, they let out the ballast water. This often happens in the shallower waters of rivers and bays. When it does, the hitchhikers go out, too. They go into new waters where



they compete with our native species. These new arrivals often find the new waters to be a great place to multiply. Since they have no natural predators in the new habitat, populations grow quickly. Examples of these hitchhikers include zebra mussels, European ruffe and gobies. These new arrivals threaten the survival of other aquatic animals where they live.

Pennsylvania anglers and boaters accidentally spread these invaders, too. This happens by moving bilge or bait bucket water from one lake to another. Read on for updates on aquatic invaders and what we can do to stop them!



Hitchhikers such as the round goby threaten the survival of other aquatic animals.



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It's the Law!

From the 2008

Pennsylvania Fishing Summary:

It is UNLAWFUL to possess, to introduce or import, transport, sell, purchase, offer for sale, or barter the following live species in the Commonwealth: Snakehead (all species), black carp, bighead carp, silver carp, zebra mussel, quagga mussel, European rudd, rusty crayfish, ruffe, round goby, and tubenose goby.



It is unlawful to possess, to introduce or import, transport, sell, purchase, offer for sale, or barter snakehead (all species) in Pennsylvania.