



Identifying Invasive Zebra and Quagga Mussels

Zebra and quagga mussels are similarly sized, growing to approximately 1.5 inches in length. Unlike native freshwater mussels, these invasive mussels are somewhat triangular in shape, attach to boats and hard surfaces, and have a shelf-like structure called a septum on the inside of the pointed end of the shell.

Zebra Mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

- Color patterns vary widely from light-colored to dark brown to striped.
- Mussels have an obvious, lengthwise ridge on each side of the shell. When placed on a level surface, a zebra mussel will stand upright on its flattened underside.



Quagga Mussel (*Dreissena bugensis*)

- Colors range from almost white to tan or brown. Shells may have dark concentric rings and be paler towards the narrow end.
- Shells typically are without a ridge, more rounded or fan-shaped and will fall flat when placed on a hard surface.



Native Look-alike: Conrad's or Dark False Mussel (*Mytilopsis leucophaeata*)

- Usually found in brackish water; often found in sea strainers of boats from coastal areas.
- Up to approximately 1.5 inches.
- Brown to tan, usually without stripes.
- Shell shape similar to that of zebra and quagga mussels but often more elongate.
- Distinguished from zebra and quagga mussels by the presence of a small, tooth-like projection near the septum at the pointed end of the shell. Zebra and quagga mussels lack the tooth-like projection.

