

# AIS—Help Fight Off Lake Invaders

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) cause serious damage to lake ecosystems and our native plants, fish and wildlife.

You know many of them by name. Rusty crayfish mow down lake weedbeds and deplete fisheries. Zebra mussels filter out the algae and small creatures on which newly hatched fish feed. Eurasian water milfoil grows in thick mats that hinder boating and swimming. Purple loosestrife takes over wetlands.

Curly leaf pondweed. Spiny water flea. Asian carp. Sea lamprey. The list goes on. Here are a few facts to help you understand these nuisances and help keep them from spreading:

- **Many invasives (like zebra mussels) came here in ballast water that ocean ships empties into the Great Lakes. Others (like rusty crayfish) came in the bait buckets of out-of-state anglers.**
- **Invasive species proliferate because they have no natural predators or competitors. They reproduce quickly, crowd out native plants and animals, and cost millions to control.**
- **Invasives spread with help from people and animals. Some travel on boat trailers or in the livewells and bilges of boats moving from lake to lake. Others (like purple loosestrife) can hitchhike on footwear or in pet fur.**
- **It is against state law to possess, transport, transfer or introduce invasive species.**
- **More than 40 percent of the species on the federal Threatened or Endangered lists are at risk from invasive species.**
- **Invasives can be controlled by pulling them out, erecting physical barriers, and eradicating them with chemicals or biological agents.**
- **No method of control beats prevention of their spread. Prevention starts with public education and inspection of boats at landings.**

Wisconsin spends millions per year to battle invasives. If you value the lakes, rivers and forests, do your best to help – whatever it takes.

Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/>.

**One in a series of articles sponsored by the Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Association ([www.oclra.org](http://www.oclra.org)). For more information, contact Bob Martini at 715-282-5896 or email to [webmaster@oclra.org](mailto:webmaster@oclra.org). OCLRA encourages the use and distribution of this material by lake associations, their members, and other parties concerned about water quality.**

***Did you know...***  
*Wisconsin's list of invasive species includes 35 plants and 62 animals. More pose threats each year.*

**OCLRA**

ONEIDA COUNTY  
Lakes and Rivers Association