Aquatic Invasive Species
A Guide to Identifying Threats to California Freshwater Environments

Quagga and Zebra Mussels
*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis* and *D. polymorpha*

Shell – 2-shelled (bivalve), may have dark colored “threads” on one edge.
Size – From microscopic to up to 2” long. Free-floating (planktonic) larvae are microscopic and cannot be seen by the unaided eye.
Color – Usually alternating light and dark brown stripes, but can also be solid light brown to dark brown.

Didymo or “Rock Snot”
*Didymosphenia geminata*

Algae – Appears slimy, but feels coarse, like damp wool. Can look like wet toilet paper in streams.
Size – Starts as small clumps and grows to form thick mats that can cover river and streambeds.
Color – Pale yellowish-brown to white.

New Zealand Mudsnaill
*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*

Shell – Single, elongated, right-handed coiling shell, usually consisting of 5-6 whorls, and an operculum (flap covering the shell opening).
Size – From microscopic up to 1/4” long.
Color – Variable, light to dark brown.

Eurasian Watermilfoil
*Myriophyllum spicatum*

Stems – Branched and 20-30” long, reddish-brown or whitish-pink.
Leaves – Arranged circularly around the stem in groups of 3-6 (usually 4). Each leaf is less than 2” long, soft, and feather-like.
Flowers – Form spikes 2-4” long that are held above the water. Individual flowers are 1/8-1/4” long, reddish.
Roots – Fibrous, often develop from small pieces broken off larger plant.

Channeled Apple Snail
*Pomacea canaliculata*

Shell – Single shell with compact, deeply grooved whorls.
Size – Adult shells can reach up to 3” long.
Color – Yellowish to brown.
Eggs – Eggs laid in masses of 200-600, bright pink to reddish.

Hydrrilla
*Hydrilla verticillata*

Stems – Slender, branched, up to 25” long, and green.
Leaves – Arranged in groups of 2-8 around the stem, spear-shaped, 1/2-3/4” long and 1/16” wide. Often 1-2 sharp teeth along the underside of the leaf rib.
Flowers – Grow on long stalks and float on the surface of the water. Individual flowers are 1/8-1/4” wide, white or reddish brown.
Roots – 1/2” long, white, and may have yellowish, potato-like structures, or tubers, on the ends.

To report invasive species, call 1-866-440-9530 or email Invasives@wildlife.ca.gov