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New Zealand Mud Snail compared to a penny!

BCK CISMA

July 2019

NEW ZEALAND MUD SNAIL

When taking a walk along the water's edge we have learned that seeing zebra mussels is a bad sign, but what about the snails? Well, that all depends on the snails you see. Michigan has native snails that are beneficial to the ecosystem, but there is also the looming threat of the invasive New Zealand mud snail!

It may come as no surprise, that the New Zealand mud snail is native to New Zealand. The first US population was discovered in Idaho in 1987. This infestation quickly spread and populations were in the Great Lakes area by the early 90's. Currently, there are three main areas with confirmed reports in Michigan.

New Zealand mud snails are a tiny creatures, only reaching the size of 1/8 of an inch. They range in color from light brown to black. Their shell has five to eight whorls that spin to the right. Their shell also opens to the right and has a retractable cover, allowing them to survive out of the water for long periods of time. Although it is difficult to differentiate a few of the native snail species, some distinguishing characteristics are that New Zealand mud snails have a longer narrower shell, and the native species typically have five or less whorls.

95% of the New Zealand mud snail populations are females, but that does

not slow down reproduction. These females can self-clone. One female is able to produce 40 million snails in a year. These massive population booms will out-compete the native snails, mussels and aquatic insects becoming 95% of the total macroinvertebrate biomass and consuming half of the available food. The food web destruction does not stop there. Many fish and birds will try to feed on New Zealand mud snails, but unlike the native snails they will pass through unharmed leaving their consumer with no nutritional gain.

The first line of defense against any aquatic invasive species is prevention. New Zealand mud snails can be spread by attaching to boating and fishing gear, especially soft bottom waders. It is important that every watercraft user and angler cleans boats and equipment, drains water out of boats, dries boats and equipment, and disposes of unwanted bait in the trash before leaving the water body they were in. These steps are of extra importance to stopping the spread of New Zealand mud snails, because they have to ability to survive 24 hours in dry conditions and 50 days in damp conditions!

BCK CISMA this month in numbers

- 393** acre surveyed
- 4** acres treated
- 4** active outreach events
- 172** impressions
- 10** passive outreach efforts
- 500** impressions
- 2** publications with articles
- 60,000** impressions
- 40** red swamp crayfish caught

Meeting Updates

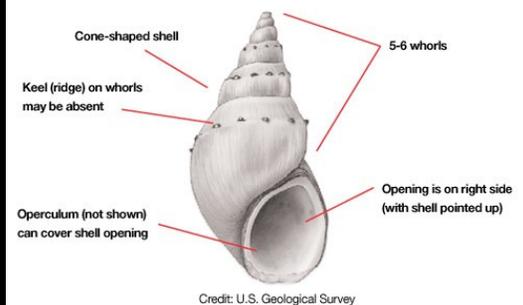
The next BCK CISMA Meeting is Thursday, August 15th from 1-3pm at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary Auditorium.

Shoreline Symposium

Friday, August 23rd

@ Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Last day to RSVP is August 14th!



Identification Tips!

BCK CISMA is dedicated to combating the threat of invasive species in Barry, Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties. If you have invasive species concerns within those counties, please contact Fallon Januska at fallon.januska@macd.org or 269-908-4136.



Barry • Calhoun • Kalamazoo

BCKCISMA
Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area