

# COMMON AQUATIC INVASIVE ANIMALS OF NEW YORK

### WHAT ARE INVASIVE SPECIES?

Invasive species are non-native species whose introduction can or is likely to cause harm to the environment, economy, and/or human health. These species can be plants, animals, pests or pathogens.

#### WHY ARE INVASIVE SPECIES A THREAT?

Invasive species effect nearly every aspect of our world and are one of the greatest threat to New York's biodiversity. The spread of invasive species eventually leads to a reduction in biodiversity, including the loss of native fish, wildlife, plant, and tree species. Invasive species are the greatest threat to endangered plants and animals while also contributing to habitat destruction.

### HOW DO INVASIVE SPECIES IMPACT SOCIETY?

Invasive species cost millions of dollars to manage and have devastating consequences on New York State's ecosystems, economy, and human health. Invasive species cause damage to our crops, livestock, and food supply. They have large impacts on our forest industry. Invasive species can cause a decrease in recreational opportunities along with the aesthetic enjoyment of our environment. In rare cases, can cause diseases in humans.

# CHINESE MITTEN CRAB (Eriocheir sinensis)



**Characteristics:** Equal – sized claws with white tips and hair. Has eight legs with a smooth round carapace (upper shell) that has four spines on the side. Has a brownish to olive color and can grow up to 10 cm

**Habitat**: Found in both freshwater and saltwater **Distribution**: Currently found in the Hudson river





### SPINY WATER FLEA (Bythotreoges longimanus)



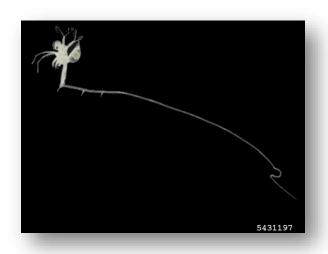
**Characteristics:** Less than 1.25cm with long barbed tails

**Habitat**: Found in freshwater and brackish (fresh and saltwater mix) lakes

**Distribution:** Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake George, Saratoga Lake, Lake Champlain and a number of smaller water bodies in New York

**Look – Alike:** Fishhook water flea (invasive) which likes cooler water temperatures and has a hooked tail rather than a straight one

# FISH HOOK WATER FLEA (Cercopagis pengoi)



**Characteristics:** Has an angled tail – spine that looks like a fish hook at the end. Body length is 1-3 mm and with the tail, the length is 6-13

*Habitat*: Found in both freshwater and brackish lakes with cooler water temperatures

**Distribution:** Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake George, Saratoga Lake, Lake Champlain and a number of smaller water bodies in New York are infested

**Look – Alike:** Spiny water flea (invasive) which likes cooler water temperatures and has a straight tail rather than a hooked one



### BLOODY RED SHRIMP (Hemimysis anomala)

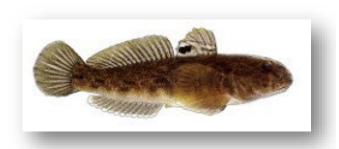


**Characteristics:** Has a long sharply pointed spine at both corners of the telson (last segment). Grows to about 1.5 cm, is ivory in color with red – orange patterns, and has eight pairs of legs

**Habitat**: Found in both freshwater and brackish reservoirs and lakes. Sometimes found in moving bodies of water such as rivers and streams.

**Distribution:** Originally found in the Great Lakes

# ROUND GOBY (Neogobius melanostomus)





**Characteristics:** Small, brown, and black in color and have frog – like heads. Their dorsal fin, the fin on the back of the fish, has a black spot. Grows to about 30cm, and has fused pelvic fins

**Habitat**: Bottom dwellers of freshwater or brackish water bodies. Can be found in open sand the rocky bottoms

**Distribution:** Found in the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River

**Look – Alike:** Can be confused with native sculpins

which do not have the fused pelvic fin



#### NORTHERN SNAKEHEAD (Channa argus)



ZEBRA MUSSEL (DREISSENA POLYMORPHA)



**Characteristics:** Long bodies, up to 3 feet, with one fin running down their back. Are brown with dark splotches, have a flat head and a large mouth containing many teeth

*Habitat*: Shallow stagnant, non – flowing water, like ponds, swamps, reservoirs, and lakes

**Distribution:** Found mostly in Queens

**Look – Alike:** Can be confused with the native bowfin. This fish has a shorter anal fin, the last fin on the underside of the fish, and a rounded tailfin.

**Characteristics:** Very small in size, usually smaller than an inch long, and have the "D" shape of a clam. Has a yellowish to brownish color with dark stripes

**Habitat**: Found in slow moving water where they can attach to a hard surface underwater.

**Distribution:** Originally found in the Great Lakes, but now in the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers as well as the bodies of water fed from these rivers, and the Finger Lakes.

**Look – Alike:** Can be confused with the quagga mussel. This mussel is slightly larger, rounder in shape, and lighter in color with dark rings on its shell rather than stripes like zebra mussels.



#### ASIAN CARP (HYPOPHTHALMICHTHYS SPP.)

**Characteristics:** Has a very large mouth that is toothless. The eyes are at the front of the head and are lower on the head than most fish. The fish is a dark grey color.

Habitat: Found in freshwater lakes and rivers

Distribution: Found in the great lakes regions and

adjacent bodies of water

**Look – Alike:** The silver carp does not have dark blotches and has a bigger and slightly rounder body



### SILVER CARP (HYPOPHTHALMICHTHYS MOLTITRIX)

**Characteristics:** Has a very deep belly and is silver in color when young. Mature fish remain silver on the belly, but greenish on their back

Habitat: Found in freshwater lakes and rivers

**Distribution:** Found in the Great Lakes regions and

adjacent bodies of water

**Look – Alike:** Can be confused with other species of carp such as the bighead carp which does not have as deep of a belly and is darker in color



## GOLDFISH (CARASSIUS AURATUS)

**Characteristics:** Has two sets of paired fins and is typically orangish in color although can varies greatly

Habitat: Found in undisturbed bodies of water

**Distribution:** Found throughout New York State

except for the Adirondack State Park

**Look – Alike:** There are around twenty different species of goldfish, all varying in size, color, and fins



