

Intercepting Aquatic Organisms:

What to do when an aquatic organism has been found during a greeter inspection

Protocol for Public Access Area Greeters 2016

If a greeter finds plants or animals during an inspection on the watercraft, trailer or associated equipment, remove all material, record what water body the watercraft was last in, if known, and follow the appropriate protocol below for either plant or animal material. Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species Management program staff will follow-up with you on submitted samples.

Plant Material

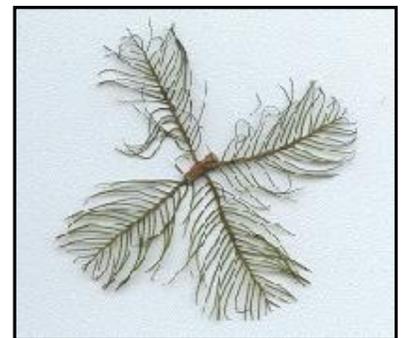
1. If you can, use the guidance materials provided by the State of Vermont to identify the plant.
2. If you determine or suspect that the plant is an aquatic invasive species, cross reference it with the list of Vermont water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. If the plant came from a location where its establishment is known, record the incident, but no further action is required. If the plant is not on the list, continue to step 3.
3. If you identified a plant species that is not on the list of water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species or are unsure of the identification, within two days either:

- a. **Take several photographs of the plant.** Include a view of the entire plant as well as a close-up of the leaves (see photos on right). Email these pictures to josh.mulhollem@vermont.gov, or text photos to (802)490-6121. In your message, include the suspected identification and the name of the water body it came from. Press or freeze the plant in the event its identity needs to be confirmed at a later date if the plant cannot be identified from the photographs. Or,



View of the entire plant

- b. **Mail the plant.** Wrap the plant specimen in a wet paper towel and place it into a *sealable* plastic bag. If there is more than one species, wrap them individually. Fill out a **sample submission form** (see page 2) and follow the mailing directions on the form. Mail samples Monday through Wednesday only. Keep the sample(s) in a cool place until mailing can occur. Sample submission forms can be downloaded from the [Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species webpage](#).



Close-up of a cross section of a plant stem with leaves

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Animal Material

1. If you suspect that the animal found is invasive (e.g., zebra mussel), carefully check the watercraft, trailer or equipment again, removing all material found. Explain to the watercraft/equipment owner your suspicions, why it is of concern and encourage them to wash their watercraft/equipment before launching or after retrieving.
2. If you suspect that the animal collected is an aquatic invasive species, cross reference it with the list of Vermont water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. If the animal is coming from a location where its establishment is known, record the incident, but no further action is required. If you are unsure of the identification or uncertain if the water body it came from has that species, continue to step 3.
3. **Take several photographs of the animal.** Include a view of the entire specimen as well as a close-up. Email these pictures to josh.mulhollem@vermont.gov, or text photos to (802)490-6121. In your message, include the suspected identification and the name of the water body it came from.
4. **Save the sample.** Place the animal sample in a *sealable* plastic bag or container, note what you suspect the species is, the date collected and where it came from, and store it in a freezer.

Out-of-State Watercraft

If a suspected invasive species is intercepted from a watercraft, trailer or associated equipment last in a water body *outside* of Vermont, follow the appropriate plant or animal protocol above as if the species came from the list of Vermont water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. Contact Josh Mulhollem at josh.mulhollem@vermont.gov or (802)490-6121 and we will contact the appropriate authorities.

