

THIS INVASIVE ALGAE HAS INFESTED MANY RIVERS IN THE NORTHEAST USA

# DIDYMO

Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*), also known as Rock Snot, is a diatom (a single celled algae) that has been identified just outside the Adirondack Park within Washington County's Battenkill River and Vermont's Connecticut River. It is native to Europe and parts of China. When didymo blooms in late summer, it covers the substrate of streams in large mats and can alter the biological and physical properties of a stream, which can negatively impact fish, invertebrates, and the public recreation and tourism economy.

When didymo blooms in streams and rivers it can clog canals, hydropower generators, and water intakes. The blooms may affect tourism that relies on streams or rivers for recreational activities, such as fly-fishing, aesthetics, or paddling. Fishermen have difficulty casting their lines in the thick blooms. Didymo blooms may



When Didymo blooms, it can cover the substrate for miles, negatively impacting wildlife and recreation.

also have a negative effect on local fish populations by smothering possible breeding substrate and removing important food sources by forming a barrier to caddisflies, mayflies, and stoneflies. Most benthic macro-invertebrates cannot graze on didymo. While didymo is not considered a significant risk to human health, there have been cases of swimmers down river from a didymo bloom having itchy eyes. A single drop of water containing didymo cells can spread it to a new

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# Didymo

## LAKE GEORGE FACT SHEET

body of water. Cells can survive up to 40 days in a cool, damp, dark location. Human activity is the main method of transportation. Any fishing equipment (felt-soled waders in particular), boats, float airplanes, canoes, kayaks, flotation devices, paddles, clothing, irrigation systems, or any damp item that came into contact with infected waters can transport didymo or other invasive aquatics to a new body of water. Didymo can be distinguished from other species of algae by color, feel and its strength.



Didymo can be spread to a new body of water by a single drop of water containing cells.

An effective way to permanently eliminate infestations has not been found; emphasis must be on prevention. Here are the best ways to prevent the spread of didymo to the Lake George watershed:

- **Check Equipment:** Before leaving a stream, river or lake site outside of Lake George, inspect all equipment, or anything that has contacted the water or sediment.
- **Clean Equipment:** Soak, scrub, and/or expose all equipment in one of the solutions described below for at least 1 minute. Absorbent items like felt-soled waders require 30-40

minutes of soaking.

- **Recommended Cleaning Solutions:** 1) Hot Water: 140 degrees F; 2) Bleach: soak for at least one minute in 2% solution of household bleach (three ounces of bleach added for every gallon of water); 3) Detergent: soak in 5% dish detergent solution, (one cup detergent to one gallon of water). Unfortunately, some eco-friendly brands may not be effective, so check the label.
- **Dry Equipment:** Dry gear completely, inside and out. If cleaning is not possible, drying alone is sufficient if items are thoroughly dried and then kept dry for at least another 48 hours.

Do not use any equipment in Lake George that has not been cleaned thoroughly or stored in a dry area for a long period of time. If neither drying nor thorough cleaning is possible, restrict use of gear to a single waterway and use separate sets of equipment for infested and non-infested waters.

**We need your help to protect Lake George from invasive species.**

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