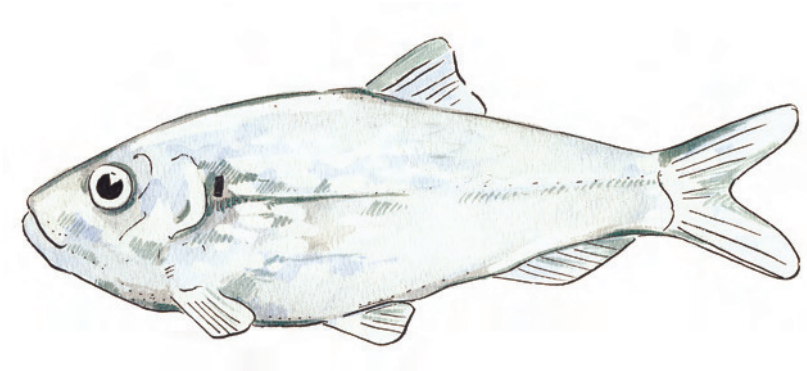

Alewife*

Scientific Name:
Alosa pseudoharengus

who?
description

Type: fish

Length: 15 cm / 6 in

Weight: 113 g / .25 lbs

Coloring: silver with blue or blue green luster on back

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: lakes and oceans

Origin: Atlantic Ocean

Interesting Fact

Alewives are usually a salt-water fish, but they spawn in freshwater. After laying their eggs, many die and wash up along the lake shoreline in the spring and summer.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
lake trout, salmon

What do I eat?
phytoplankton, zooplankton and small crustaceans

Role: consumer, omnivore

Reproduction: lay eggs in summer in water, near the shore

Grouping: swim in schools

Activity: year-round

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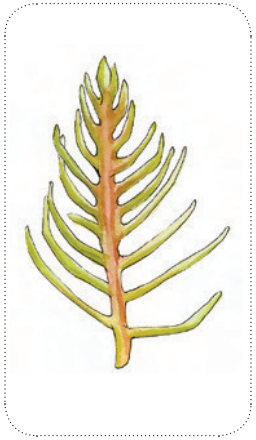

Eurasian Milfoil*

Scientific Name:
Myriophyllum spicatum

who?
description

Type: plant

Height: up to 91 cm / 3 ft

Leaves: 1.5-4 cm / .6-1.5 in long, have a feather-like outline, in groups of 4; stem is leafless towards the base, but branches out, the top often turns red

Flowers: lower ones are female, upper ones are male

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Sunlight: moderate

Habitat: lives in water from 1-3 m / 3-9 ft deep

Interesting Fact

Eurasian milfoil is an invasive species brought to North America from Europe in the 1940's. It competes with native plants and can impair water quality.

what?
habits

Feeding:

Who eats me?
water birds

What do I use to make food?
sunlight

Role: producer

Reproduction: stems release fragments that develop roots, new stems and leaves, then sink and grow from the bottom; can also be pollinated

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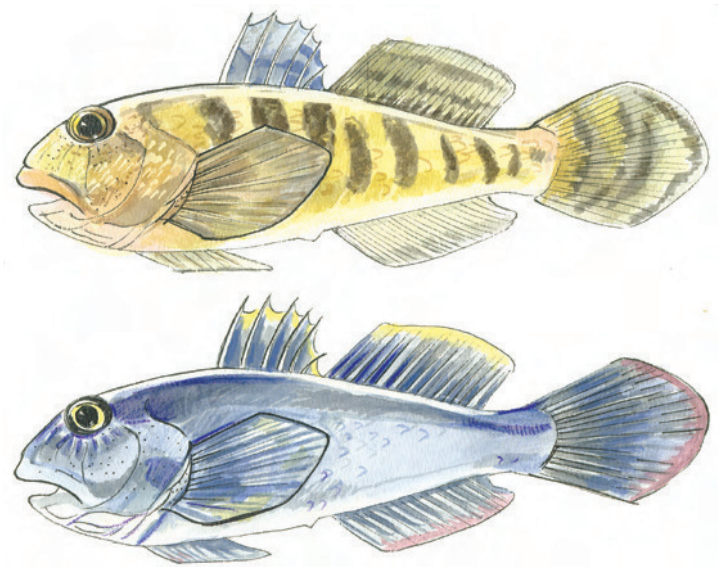


Round Goby*

Scientific Name:
Neogobius melanostomus

who?
description

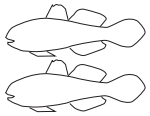
Type: fish

Length: under 18 cm / 7 in

Coloring: slate gray or black body with black or brown spots

Body Features: raised, frog-like eyes; have thick lips, front fin has a black spot, body is covered with fine scales

Invasive Species



Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: lake bottom, found in all the Great Lakes and some nearby lakes

Origin: Black and Caspian Sea regions of Eurasia

Interesting Fact

The round goby has a very active sensory system which allows it to find prey and also avoid becoming prey. They have become too numerous to bring under control.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
bass, pike, walleye

What do I eat?
small fish, zebra mussels, and fish eggs

Role: consumer, carnivore

Reproduction: spawns up to five times per mating season; builds nests in rocky areas for eggs

Grouping: found in dense populations

Activity: diurnal

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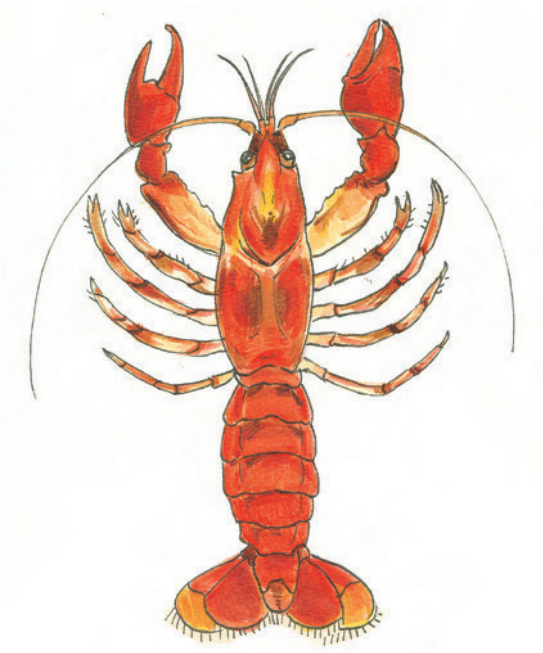

Rusty Crayfish*

Scientific Name:
Orconectes rusticus

who?
description

Type: crustacean

Height: 8-10 cm / 3-4 in

Coloring: red / brown color

Body Features: large claws and rusty colored spots on each side of the main body section

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: lakes, ponds, and streams in areas where there is debris on the bottom

Origin: Ohio River basin

Interesting Fact ★

Rusty crayfish are an invasive species that have been spread when used for bait by fishermen. They have also been spread by science classes who have released them after being classroom pets.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
predator fish, birds, raccoons

What do I eat?
aquatic plants and insects, fish eggs and small fish

Role: consumer, omnivore and scavenger

Reproduction: eggs are usually laid in the spring by the female

Grouping: young crayfish stay with their mother for several weeks. After, they tend to live independently

Activity: nocturnal

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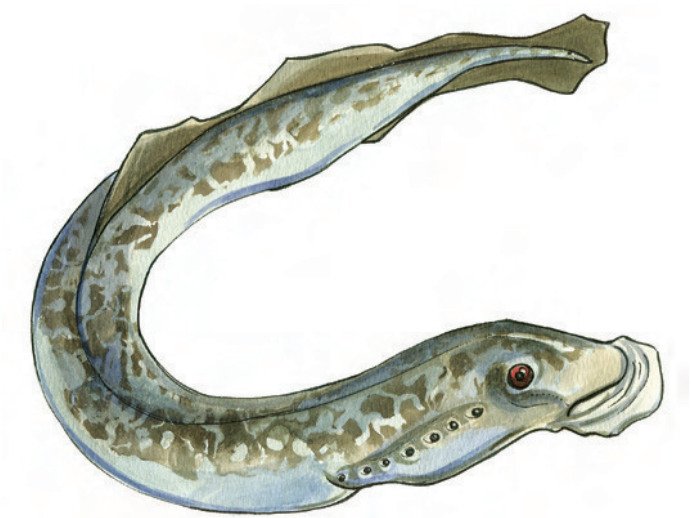

Sea Lamprey*

Scientific Name:
Petromyzon marinus

who?
description

Type: fish

Length: 30-50 cm / 12-20 in

Weight: 226-363 g / .5-.8 lbs

Coloring: grey-blue, metallic purple, and silver

Body Features: long, slender body, mouth with sharp teeth enables it to suck out the fluid and tissue of fish, especially the lake trout

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: freshwater lakes and oceans

Origin: Atlantic Ocean - Europe and North America

Interesting Fact ★

Sea lampreys naturally live in saltwater, but came into the Great Lakes through canals. There are efforts to control the lamprey population because they do not have natural predators in the Great Lakes.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
none in Great Lakes

What do I eat?
fish, including lake trout

Role: consumer, carnivore

Reproduction: lay eggs

Grouping: solitary

Activity: year-round

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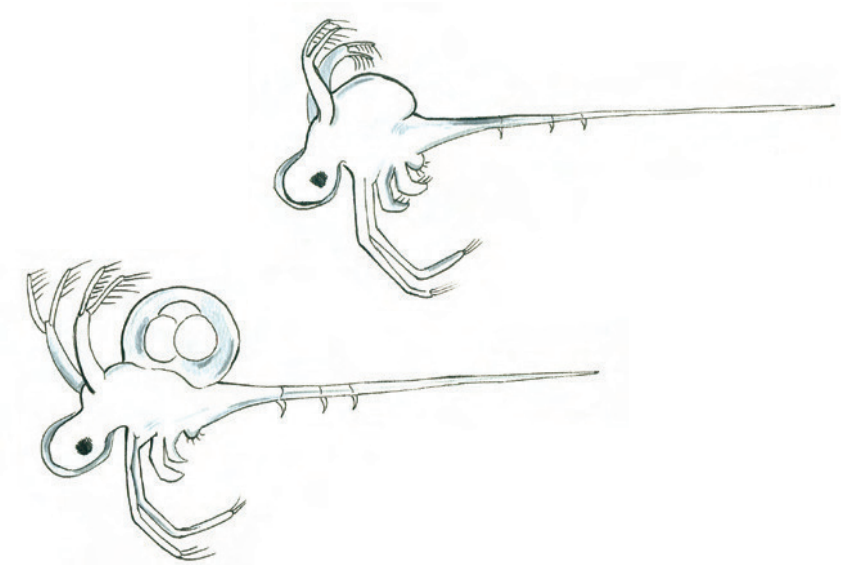


Spiny Water Flea*

Scientific Name:
Bythotrephes cederstroemi

who?
description

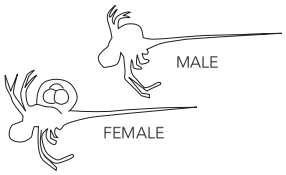
Type: zooplankton, crustacean

Length: less than 1.3 cm / .5 in

Coloring: clear

Body Features: crustacean with long, sharp, barbed tail spine

Invasive Species



Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: throughout the Great Lakes and some inland lakes

Origin: Eurasia

Interesting Fact ★

This creature is not a flea, but a crustacean. Only some larger fish can eat it because the sharp tail spine is hard for smaller fish to swallow. It competes with fish for plankton.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
some large fish

What do I eat?
plankton

Role: consumer, omnivore

Reproduction: reproduce rapidly; during warm summer temperatures each female produces 10 offspring every 2 wks

Grouping: form clusters with each other

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Zebra Mussel*

Scientific Name:
Dreissena polymorpha

who?
description

Type: mollusk

Length: up to 5 cm / .75 in

Coloring: tan and blackish stripes (like a zebra)

Body Features: two connected shells hold a small mussel between them, they attach to hard surfaces with byssal threads

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: freshwater; depths of 2-7 m / 6-23 ft

Origin: Eastern Europe and Western Russia; Caspian and Black Sea

Interesting Fact

Zebra mussels in some parts of the Great Lake region have been outnumbered by the quagga mussel, a close relative of theirs. Zebra mussels are in all Great Lakes and some inland lakes.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
round goby

What do I eat?
algae

Role: consumer, omnivore

Reproduction: eggs expelled by females and fertilized outside of the body by males in spring / summer

Grouping: singly or in colonies

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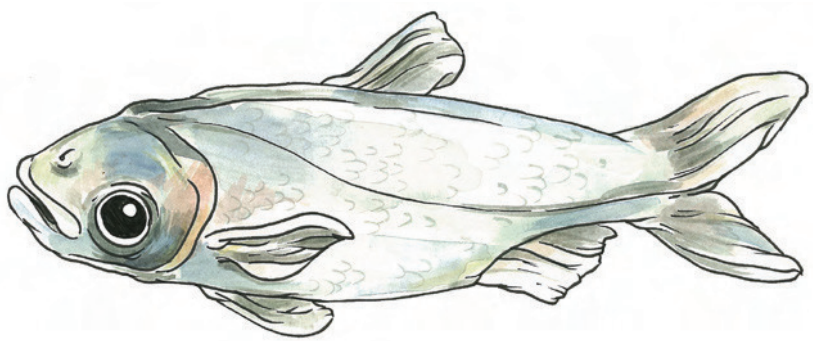

Bighead Carp*

Scientific Name:
Hypophthalmichthys nobilis

who?
description

Type: fish

Length: 76 – 102 cm / 30-40 in (as big as 4 ft)

Weight: up to 50 kg / 110 lbs

Coloring: silvery white abdomen, black dorsal and upper lateral sections, black spots on the side of their bodies, fins are a shade of grey

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: lakes, rivers and reservoirs

Origin: China

Interesting Fact

Bighead carp eat up to 20% of their body weight per day. Carp are currently in waterways connected to the Great Lakes and humans are trying to ensure that the fish do not establish a permanent presence in this ecosystem.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
humans

What do I eat?
zooplankton, algae

Role: consumer, omnivore

Reproduction: lay semi-buoyant eggs in warm, current-driven water during the summer

Grouping: travel alone or in small groups

Activity: more active in warmer waters

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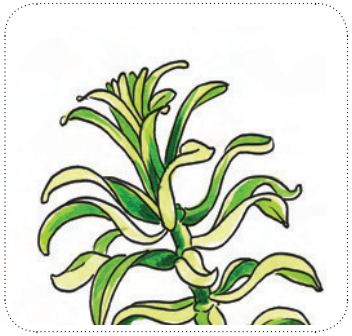
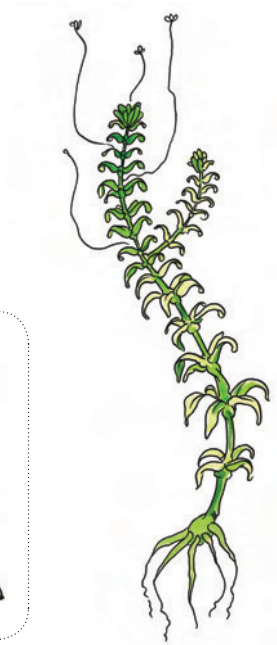




Hydrilla*

Scientific Name:
Hydrilla verticillata

who?
description

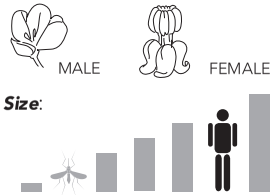
Type: plant

Height: up to 8 m / 25 ft

Leaves: green with red ribbing, saw-toothed, four to eight around the stem

Flowers: transparent or white (female) or green (male), with three petals and three sepals

Invasive Species



Size:

where?
environment

Sunlight: require less than 1% of full sunlight or less

Habitat: any partially submerged body of water with a salinity level of less than 7%

Origin: Africa

Interesting Fact ★

Hydrilla, not yet in the Great Lakes, is anticipated to "invade" the system due to its presence in nearby aquatic ecosystems. It is made up of nearly 95% water, which allows for rapid growth.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

- ***Who eats me?***
  coots and other bird species
- ***What do I use to make food?***
  oxygen and sunlight

Role: producer

Reproduction: re-growth of stem fragments and by auxiliary buds (tubers) that can each produce up to 6,000 new plants in 4 years

Other: male and female flowers produced separately on a single plant

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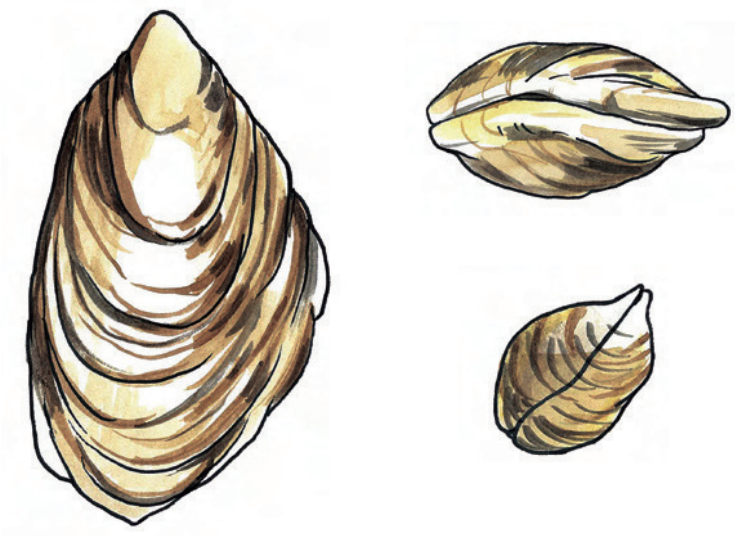

Quagga Mussel*

Scientific Name:
Dreissena rostriformis bugensis

who?
description

Type: mollusk

Length: 28 mm / 1+ in

Coloring: tan and blackish pattern to all black depending on location

Body Features: a connecting tissue holds the two shell halves together, often with the animal inbetween, this tissue helps connect to hard surfaces and other mussels

Invasive Species

Size:

where?
environment

Habitat: freshwater

Origin: Eastern Europe

Interesting Fact ★

The quagga mussel can live at any depth as long as oxygen is present, while the zebra mussel, a relative, can only survive at depths less than 12 meters.

what?
characteristics

Feeding:

Who eats me?
ducks, crayfish and lake whitefish, gobies, sculpins

What do I eat?
phytoplankton, diatoms

Role: consumer, omnivore

Reproduction: up to one million eggs per year expelled by females and fertilized outside of the body by males in spring / summer

Grouping: singly or in colonies

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