



# CLEAN YOUR BOAT. SAVE YOUR LAKE.

**Why should you care?** Zebra mussels are invasive species that cause declines in native mussel and fish populations. They also cling to boat hulls and plug engine cooling systems. They hinder water recreation, destroy aquatic ecosystems and ruin beaches. Zebra mussels disrupt and damage municipal and industrial water supply systems by colonizing the insides of pipelines and restricting the flow of water.

**“Once zebra mussels become established in a water body, they are impossible to eradicate with the technology currently available.”**

National Atlas of the United States

**Know the law.** Possession or transportation of zebra mussels in Texas is a Class C misdemeanor for the first offense, punishable with a fine of up to \$500. A second offense is a Class B misdemeanor, punishable with a fine of up to \$2,000, a jail sentence of up to 180 days or both. Introducing zebra mussels into Texas public waters is a Class B misdemeanor.

If you see a violation, report it to (800) 792-4263.

## Thanks to our partners.

North Texas Municipal Water District  
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Sabine River Authority  
Canadian River Municipal Water Authority  
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# HELLO ZEBRA MUSSELS. GOODBYE TEXAS LAKES.

TEXAS  
PARKS &  
WILDLIFE



1 inch

### What are zebra mussels?

Zebra mussels are small, freshwater mussels. Their larvae are microscopic, and the adults are usually less than 1 1/2 inches long. This tiny bivalve mollusk, whose scientific name is *dreissena polymorpha*, is a highly invasive aquatic species that multiplies rapidly and can cause tremendous environmental and economic damage. They're already in Lake Texoma and are spread from lake to lake by unsuspecting boaters.

### The spread of zebra mussels.

Originally from the Balkans, Poland and the former Soviet Union, zebra mussels are firmly established in Europe and have invaded much of the U.S. On April 3, 2009, the first adult zebra mussel in Texas waters was confirmed in Lake Texoma. Invasive zebra mussels were also found in a stream that feeds into Lake Lavon. Experts fear they could spread throughout the Red and Trinity River systems as well as much of Texas. Both river systems extend southward to the Gulf of Mexico.

### How do you spot them?

The challenge with zebra mussels is that their larvae are microscopic—you can't see them. As they grow, they develop a "zebra" striped shell and cling to hard, underwater surfaces and often form clusters.



# ZEBRA MUSSELS HIDE HERE.



Adult zebra mussels can survive out of water for several days in hot weather and up to a month in cool, wet weather.

You can prevent damage to your boat and avoid transporting zebra mussels or other invasive species to another water body by following the steps below.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP.

**CLEAN.** After removing your boat from the lake, inspect it, your trailer and gear, and remove any zebra mussels, vegetation or debris. If you find zebra mussels or if you have kept your boat on a lake known to have zebra mussels, wash your boat, trailer and gear thoroughly, ideally at a commercial car wash or using a high-pressure sprayer with hot, soapy water. Water above 140°F will kill the zebra mussels, and the high-pressure wash will help remove them from your boat. If you have a large boat, it may be necessary to have it professionally decontaminated.

**DRAIN.** Drain all water from the boat, including the engine, bilge, livewells and bait buckets, before leaving the lake.

**DRY.** Open all compartments and livewells and allow the boat and trailer to sit completely dry for a week or more before entering another water body.

**CLEAN, DRAIN AND DRY YOUR BOAT, TRAILER AND GEAR.**



### CLEAN YOUR BOAT. SAVE YOUR LAKE.

The zebra mussel is just one of hundreds of species changing the landscape of Texas. To learn more, visit [www.TexasInvasives.org](http://www.TexasInvasives.org).



Scan this to watch a video about cleaning your boat.

Download a QR reader app using your smartphone, and then scan this QR code for more information.

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