

## ROCK SNOT....THE INVASION CONTINUES!

By Tom Marks

We are not winning this battle and it continues as we speak. *Didymosphenia geminata* or better known as didymo has now infested six streams in New York State and Vermont tributaries to Lake Champlain. The invader is mainly by contaminated boots.



Didymo on the Batten Kill

Felt soled wading shoes, boots and waders are the main carrier of didymo from one stream to the next. Trout Unlimited has asked fishing equipment suppliers to stop making felt soled boots by 2011 to halt the spread. I have written a letter to the NYS DEC Fisheries Manager Steve Hurst asking that the DEC ban felt soles by 2010 in New York State.

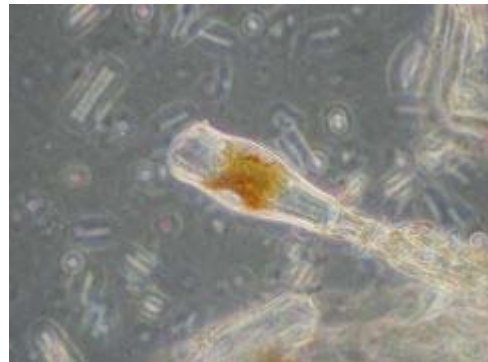


I understand that many FFF and TU members understand the seriousness of this invader and will properly follow procedures to stop the spread but I doubt the casual angler will be that aware of the serious nature of this invader until it is too late and we loose another stream. It is time we all write the DEC asking to protect our streams.

Please review the procedures below... and plan on getting rid of felt soled boots.

How can I properly disinfect my recreational equipment?

**DISINFECTION PROCEDURES** – Disinfect prior to moving to another waterbody, watershed, or upstream site.



Single didymo cell magnified 400X

There are a number of disinfection techniques that will kill most aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens, including Didymo. Solutions of bleach or dishwashing detergent products are suggested as they provide the best combination of availability, cost AND effectiveness against Didymo as well as other aquatic invasive species and fish and wildlife pathogens, such as whirling disease. Choose the appropriate agent based on the actual items requiring disinfection (i.e. bleach solutions will destroy some items). It is recommended that all disinfected equipment be rinsed on dry land, away from state waters. It is preferable to drain used solutions into treated wastewater (e.g. pour down a sink drain).

Non-absorbent items (boats, canoes, rubber waders, and 'hard-sided' objects)

- Dishwashing Detergent: soak and scrub for at least one minute in 5% solution (add 6.5oz of detergent with water to make one gallon). ‘Green’ products are less effective and not recommended for disinfecting.
- Bleach: soak or spray all surfaces for at least one minute in 2% household bleach (2.5oz with water added to make one gallon). Bleach solutions must be replaced daily to remain effective.
- Hot Water: soak for at least one minute in very hot water (above 140°F – hotter than most tap water) OR for at least 20 minutes in hot water kept above 120°F (hot tap water, uncomfortable to touch).
- Drying: Drying will kill Didymo, but slightly moist environments will support some organisms for months. This approach should only be used for gear that can be left in the sun for extended periods of time (i.e. a canoe that’s left in the yard for several days between uses).

**Absorbent items require longer soaking times to allow thorough penetration into the materials. Felt-soled waders, for example, are difficult and take time to properly disinfect.** Other absorbent items include clothing, wetsuits, sandals with fabric straps, or anything else that takes time to dry out. The thicker and denser a material, the longer it will require for adequate disinfection. *Err on the side of caution.* Bleach solutions are not recommended for absorbent materials.

- Hot Water: Soak items for at least 40 minutes in very hot water kept above 140°F (hotter than most tap water).
- Dishwashing Detergent and hot water: (‘Green’ products are less effective and not recommended for disinfecting): soak for 30 minutes in a hot 5% detergent/water solution kept above 120°F.

A simple, portable DISINFECTION KIT might include:

- Large trash can and/or medium sized Rubbermaid-type bin for soaking wading boots
- Large stiff bristle brush for scrubbing
- Spray bottle(s) or herbicidal pump spray can(s)
- Graduated cylinder or measuring cup
- 5% detergent solution and/or 2% bleach Solution