

NOT WANTED

Didymo or Rock Snot *Alias: Didymosphenia Geminata*



Distribution: Originally described as being common in the Faroe Islands north of Scotland, Sweden, Finland and Kanchou region of China in the late 1800's and early 1990's. Historic records found it in other areas of the world, including the United States, but as being rarely seen with no large scale blooms. Major blooms are increasing worldwide with major expansions in North America, Europe and New Zealand. It is distributed in the western United States and has recently been found on the east coast in Vermont, New York, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

Size: The single cell is roughly 100 um in length and resembles an old fashioned coke bottle.

Description: The diatom is a single-celled alga that form mucopolysaccharide stalks. These stalks form thick, white, gray, yellow or light brown mats that cover and suffocate stream bottoms. It looks slimy, but feels a bit gritty, like wet wool or cotton. It can look like toilet paper, fiberglass or shag carpet in the water.

Impacts to Aquatic Ecosystem:

Didymo mats occur in late winter and early spring and can form thick mats if conditions are suitable. These mats persist for two or more months and can damage macroinvertebrate and other algal communities. Research is being conducted to determine how fish and other vertebrates in the ecosystem are affected by Didymo.

Means of Introduction: Probably anglers or stream waders transporting plant material and Didymo fragments or cells on clothing and boots. Many of the areas currently infested are visited by anglers. Felt bottom wading boots have been implicated as a probable vector.

Status in Maryland: Found in early 2008 in Gunpowder Falls below Prettyboy Reservoir in Baltimore County. Since July 2008, DNR and Baltimore County/DEPRM have been monitoring Didymo occurrence monthly in the Gunpowder Falls between Prettyboy and Loch Raven reservoirs. No Didymo has been detected in the Gunpowder Falls upstream from Prettyboy Reservoir or downstream from Loch Raven Reservoir. Didymo was not detected during June 2008 in Big Hunting Creek, Casselman River, Youghiogheny River, Bear Creek, Savage River, or North Branch Potomac River.

[Click Here](#) for detailed map of Didymo locations and survey sites in Maryland.

For more information on invasive species in Maryland visit www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives.



