



courtesy of Ruby Jones

Didyaknow About Didymo?

The invasive algae known as didymo has been found in several streams in the central mountain counties of West Virginia. Samples collected this summer from the Elk River near Webster Springs, lower Glady Fork north of Alpena, and Gandy Creek near Whitmer were sent to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for confirmation. All samples contained Didymo.

Didymo is a common name for *Didymosphenia geminata*, a freshwater diatom species that can form extensive mats on stream beds. The thick mats can cover native algae and aquatic insects, making fishing very difficult and killing the insects which make up the base of aquatic food chains.

The algal mats are also called “rock snot” and can be white, yellow or brown in color. The algae form stalks that attach to rocks. While the algae eventually die and break off, the stalks persist and may impact stream habitats and aquatic organisms for weeks or months.

What You Can Do

Didymo can be attached to waders, paddles and boats. Felt-soled boots and waders are likely the worst culprit in the spread of these algae. The porous material stays damp and the algae cells can remain alive in the damp felt bottoms.

Boaters and anglers are the most important line of defense in minimizing the spread of aquatic invasive species by following a few simple steps.

- Before leaving a stream, scrub mud and debris off of boots and fishing gear.
- Disinfect boots and equipment by scrubbing or soaking in five percent salt solution (two cups of salt in 2.5 gallons of water) for one minute and then let dry completely. You may also scrub equipment with dishwashing detergent and rinse well.
- Allowing equipment to completely dry for at least 48 hours will also kill Didymo, but realize that felt bottoms of boots may require longer drying times.
- Soak items in very hot water (140 degrees).
- Freeze overnight.

Once in a stream, there is unfortunately no way to prevent the downstream spread of Didymo. Anglers are encouraged to report unusual algal mats that may be Didymo to DNR district offices and the Elkins and Charleston offices.

Calendar of Events

November

- 1 **Small Game Hunting Seasons Open**
See Hunting Regulations for complete details or go to www.wvdnr.gov
- Youth/Class Q and QQ Antlerless Deer Hunt**
Open on private land in all counties except Logan, Mingo, McDowell, and Wyoming, and on specified wildlife management areas and state forests. See Hunting Regulations for complete details or go to www.wvdnr.gov

- 24 **Traditional Buck Firearms Season opens**
See Hunting Regulations for complete details or go to www.wvdnr.gov

December

- 20 **37th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count**
Pipestem Resort State Park
Contact Jim Phillips, Park Naturalist at (304) 466-1800.

January

- 3 **Eagle Survey**
Pipestem Resort State Park
Contact Jim Phillips, Park Naturalist at (304) 466-1800.

January 30 – February 1

West Virginia Hunting and Fishing Show
Charleston Civic Center
Log on to: www.wvtrophyhunters.com or call (304) 768-9999.

Access Improved to Buckhannon River near Buckhannon

The Division of Natural Resources has completed construction of a new public fishing and boating access site on the Buckhannon River in Upshur County. The new area consists of a 14-foot-wide concrete boat launching ramp, parking spaces for seven vehicles with trailers, and four regular vehicle parking spaces. The site is located approximately three miles north of Buckhannon on county Route 4/13.

The “green” boat ramp was also poured at the boat launch site using pervious concrete. This environmentally friendly concrete contains very little sand. As a result, water passes through the gaps between the aggregate (rocks) into the ground. This will reduce the amount of stormwater runoff from the concrete, often containing motor oil and other pollutants, going directly into the Buckhannon River.

Development of the site was accomplished through a joint effort by the Upshur County Commission, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the DNR. Construction assistance was provided by the Tygart Valley Conservation District. “The DNR counts on the support of other federal, state and local government agencies as



Jim Walker

New boat ramp 3 miles north of Buckhannon built with pervious concrete to reduce water pollution.

well as private organizations in helping to make these projects happen,” said DNR Director Frank Jezioro.

The DNR, in cooperation with the City of Buckhannon and the Tygart Valley Conservation District, also improved an existing fishing and boating access site on the Buckhannon River. The site was cleaned of silt and a new concrete launching ramp was built. The parking area was also upgraded.

“These sites provide excellent opportunities for smallmouth bass, rock bass and muskie fishing on the river,” said Jezioro. The projects were funded

by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses through the DNR and matching funds made available through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program. The matching funds come from a tax on the manufacturing of fishing equipment and the sale of motorboat fuel. In the end, the cost is passed on to the anglers and boaters when they purchase the equipment and fuel. “Anglers and boaters are to be commended for providing the funding for projects such as these around the state,” Jezioro said.

West Virginia Bald Eagle Nests

West Virginia’s nesting bald eagle population hit an all-time high in 2008 with 30 reported nests in the state. Twenty-seven of these nests remained active producing 32 fledgling eagles.

The first bald eagle nest in the state was documented in 1981 along the South Branch of the Potomac River in Hardy County. Although the Potomac River drainage is still the center of eagle activity in the state, nesting eagles are expanding south and west along the Ohio, Cheat and Greenbrier river drainages. Nesting occurred in nine different counties in 2008. Since 1981, nesting has been documented in 12 counties with an impressive 294 fledglings produced during that time.

Even though the bald eagle was removed from the Endangered Species List in August 2007, DNR biologists are still charged with monitoring nesting populations in the state. Certainly, several undiscovered or unreported nests exist in the state. Wildlife biologists suspect nesting activity along the following rivers: Ohio, Kanawha, Cheat, Greenbrier, New and Potomac. If you are aware of bald eagle nesting activity in these or other areas of the state, please contact DNR wildlife biologist Rob Tallman at (304) 637-0245 or robtallman@wvdnr.gov.



Steve Straluda

Bald Eagle nest in West Virginia

White-nose Syndrome Killing Bats in Several States

No bats in West Virginia have died from a mysterious disease called White Nose Syndrome which has killed thousands of bats in the Northeastern United States the past two years. Lab results from two bats found dead in Trout Cave last spring were inconclusive. These bats, however, did not exhibit the classic symptoms of the condition.

The disease was first noticed when approximately 8,000 bats died during the winter of 2006-07 in upstate New York. Since that time, confirmed cases have been found in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. It is not known whether the white fungus growing on the face of infected bats causes the disease or is just a symptom. Because the disease has shown up in hibernation sites that have been closed to human access for years, it is assumed that the condition may be spread from bat to bat. Several studies are underway to unlock the secrets of the disease.

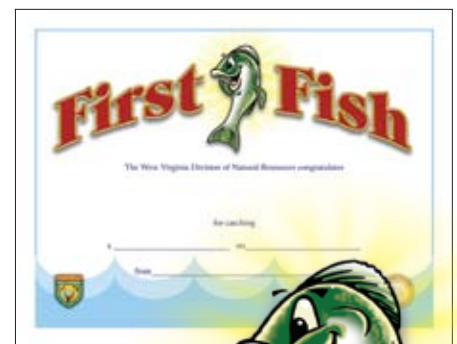
The West Virginia DNR Wildlife Resources Section, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, has closed numerous caves in the state to human access. This is a precaution to prevent the spread of the disease in case the disease could be passed on to bats from contaminated clothing, footwear or caving gear. The agencies also ask cavers to clean and disinfect all gear before entering caves known to shelter bats. DNR officials are particularly concerned about caves containing the endangered Virginia big-eared bat because the spread of the disease to a few caves could threaten the majority of the world's population of this bat.

For updated information on the disease, check online at: http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html. A list of cave closings in West Virginia as well as other states can be found on the web at www.VAR-caves.us.



Hibernating Indiana bats in New York showing White Nose Syndrome.

Nancy Heaslip, NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation



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Proud parents or relatives can now present a First Fish Certificate to a young angler to commemorate that memorable first catch. The eye-catching certificate is available on the DNR website. The online certificate is a colorful, tangible way to record a youngster's first fish. The certificate is easily completed with the angler's name, species of fish, and date and place of catch. The certificate can then be printed at home at no cost. The design is suitable for framing or placing in a scrapbook for posterity.

The First Fish Certificate can be found online at www.wvdnr.gov/Fishing/First_Fish.shtm.

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