**Dreissena polymorpha**  
**Zebra Mussel**

Dreissenidae, the freshwater mussel family

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**Diagnostic Characteristics**

- Small freshwater bivalve with a triangular shape
- Striped and zig-zag shell with colors that vary from dark to light to none
- Stable flattened ventral side; will sit flat, unlike the Quagga Mussel
- Byssal threads protrude from shell

**Background**

- Native to the Black, Caspian, and Azov seas; Introduced into the Great Lakes through ballast water
- Usually found attached to objects in the water by means of byssal threads
- Clogs water systems and other infrastructure
- Efficient filter feeders (1 liter of water per day)
- Competes for food with other species
- Invades other waterways via watercraft
- Alter fish habitat
- Increases power, food, and recreational costs

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Photo Credit:

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