

*Dreissena rostriformis  
bugensis*

# Quagga Mussel

Dreissenidae, the freshwater  
mussel family



## Diagnostic Characteristics

- Small freshwater bivalve with a triangular shape
- Rounded shell margin
- Shell halves are asymmetrical
- Byssal threads protrude from shell
- Brownish-yellow to black in color
- Some with varying stripes

## Background

- Native to Ukraine; first discovered in the U.S. in 1988 and was introduced in ship ballast water
- Attaches to substrates with byssal threads
- Live in depths up to 400'
- Prolific breeder; 1 million eggs per year, per female
- Clogs water pipes and other infrastructure
- Damages watercraft
- Filter feeders that alter food webs and harm populations of native aquatic species
- New introduction occurs from mussels attached to watercraft and water flow from impacted systems

Photo Credit:

1265039 - Amy Benson, U.S. Geological Survey, Bugwood.org

5431172 - Wen Baldwin, Lake Mead Boat Owners Association, Bugwood.org

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