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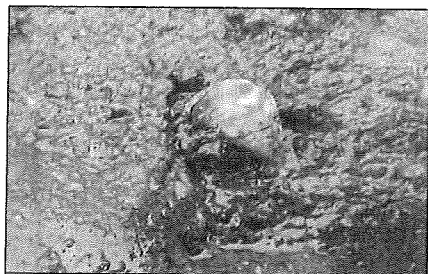
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## More zebra mussels found throughout lake



— Courtesy Steve McComas

This juvenile mussel, approximately a quarter-inch long, was found on a rock on the south-east side of the lake.

by Kristine Goodrich  
Editor

**WHITE BEAR LAKE**  
— Zebra mussels are here to stay.

More mussels have been found at multiple locations in White Bear Lake. That means there is no hope of eradicating the invasive species, according to lake officials.

Three suspected mussels were found off the southeast shore by a snorkeler last month and were confirmed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Sept. 25.

Representatives from the DNR, White Bear Lake Conservation District and Rice Creek Watershed District, as well as volunteers and a lake management consultant, searched the lake Sept. 30. According to Conservation District board member Mike Parenteau, they found multiple mussels in three areas: the Bellaire Point rock bar, near the peninsula and off the northeast Mahtomedi shoreline. The searchers looked in areas a 2009 study predicted would be the most likely habitats for the mussels.

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## Zebra mussels

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If the search hadn't found additional mussels, there would have been the option of chemically treating the area where the first mussels were found. A recent such treatment at a southwest metro lake appears to have successfully killed the mollusks.

The costly, experimental treatment is not currently an option when mussels have spread out across an entire lake, however.

"Large-scale treatment is still not economically or ecologically efficient," said Steve McComas, a lake quality expert who is a consultant for the conservation district.

The only option now is to manually remove mussels as needed from high-use areas of the lake such as beaches and boat launches. McComas said he is experimenting with a few potential cost-effective methods to do that.

It likely will be a few years before the mussel population reaches a nuisance level, McComas said. After mussels are introduced into a lake, three to five years of limited spawning typically follow. "They lay low for awhile," McComas said.

Precisely how long mussels have been living in White Bear Lake and how far they have progressed in that cycle is unknown.

McComas says he expects a phase of "exponential growth" in which the population reaches its peak. A silver lining of that phase is lake clarity will improve as the mussels eat much of the lake's algae. Once their food supply becomes scarce, the population will die back and settle into a stable level, according to the lake consultant.

There is nothing anyone can do to change the cycle, McComas said. The only

thing locals can do now is take measures to avoid transporting zebra mussels to other lakes or rivers.

### Preventing the spread

State law requires boaters who are departing a waterbody to:

- Inspect and remove all aquatic plants and zebra mussels from their boat, trailer and equipment before leaving the shoreline.
- Remove all drain plugs and leave the drains open during transport.
- Dispose unwanted bait in the trash. Do not release bait into the water. If keeping bait, drain the water and refill the container with tap or bottled water.

The DNR also recommends boaters:

- Spray boat with high-pressure water
- Rinse boat with hot water (for at least two minutes with water that is 120 degrees or at least 10 seconds with water that is 140 degrees)
- Once trailered, run motor for a few seconds to discharge water.

Shoreland property owners also are required to:

- Inspect and remove aquatic plants and zebra mussels from docks, lifts and other equipment that was in the water for an extended period
- Equipment must be dried for 21 days before it is placed in another waterbody.
- Before transporting docks and lifts from an infested body to another location, owners must complete a DNR form.

For more information go to [www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives).