



April 8, 2021

Enhanced Guidance to Eliminate Zebra Mussel Invasive Species Threat

On March 5 we at PIJAC alerted you to the invasive species threat posed by Zebra mussels that had recently been discovered in aquarium moss ball products and provided you with information to deal with the mussels. Zebra mussels are regarded as one of the most troublesome invasive species in North America and were found within a variety of moss ball products being sold and used in aquariums in stores in multiple states, including Oregon, Washington and Florida.

Since then, we have been engaging on this threat with state and federal regulatory bodies led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). These regulatory bodies have identified a need for more comprehensive guidance for use by the aquarium trade.

PIJAC has developed an **enhanced guidance document** for use across the supply chain as well as for the aquarium hobbyist. [Download a PDF here.](#)

Take Action Immediately:

- If you currently have, or in the past have had moss balls in your aquariums, you should follow the [guidance](#) immediately.
- Euthanize any zebra mussels you find in accordance with your state's humane euthanasia laws.
- Unless you are implementing a full recall of moss balls you have sold, we urge you to share the [guidance](#) with your aquatic product customers right away.

Information from USFWS on Zebra Mussels can be found here:

<https://www.fws.gov/fisheries/ans/zebra-mussel-disposal.html>

About Zebra Mussels:

Zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*), are small, fingernail-sized mollusks native to the Caspian Sea region of Asia. They have three life stages: larval, juvenile, and adult. In the larval stage, the mussels live freely in the water column, where they can be easily transported. Adult zebra mussels can stay alive for several days outside of water and commonly attach to boats, fishing equipment and aquarium plants. In spite of their small size, zebra mussels clog pipelines used for water filtration, render beaches unusable, and damage boats. **They also negatively impact aquatic ecosystems by harming native organisms.**

For more information on invasive species prevention and making wise pet choices to protect the environment, go to:

- StopAquaticHitchhikers.org
- Habitattitude.net