

Aquatic Invasive Species Update Washington & Waukesha Counties



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[Washington County Website](#)
[Waukesha County Website](#)

Drain Campaign/Landing Blitz Results!

The AIS teams from both Washington and Waukesha had an extremely successful combined campaign over the Fourth of July Weekend! The Drain Campaign/Landing Blitz took place from July 2nd to July 5th. Over the course of these 4 days the AIS teams worked **308 hours** and did boat inspections on the following lakes:

Washington County: Big Cedar, Little Cedar, Wallace, Green, Erlen, Smith, Barton Pond, Druid, and Amy Belle Lakes

Waukesha County: Lac La Belle, Pewaukee, Nagawicka, Upper/Lower Phantom, Big/Little Muskego, Silver, Ashippun, Golden, Pretty, Hunters, Nemahbins, Oconomowoc, Okauchee, Moose, and Denoon Lakes.

**The team inspected 1097 boats and spoke to
2328 people!!!**

****A HUGE thank you to anyone who was inspected during this 2020 campaign****

Snapshot Day 2020

Snapshot Day is Saturday, August 15, 2020

Join other water enthusiasts at a location near you for the annual statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Snapshot Day. Learn how to check for invasive species that can harm waterways. At some sites friendly waters will beg you to wade in to get a better look, while at other sites volunteers will be asked to simply search from the safety of the shore with binoculars and rakes. Help from the shoreline or by wading into the water. It's up to you!

To register, please contact Samantha Lammers @ Samantha.lammers@co.washington.wi.us

Snapshot Day is coordinated in partnership with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, UW Extension, over 20 partners, and volunteers like YOU!

Battle of the Invasives: Starry Stonewort vs. Chara vs. Nitella

Steven Schwartz

Though the word “algae” often conjures images of loose, filamentous mounds of green glop clinging to rocks or aquatic plants, Wisconsin has a handful of algae that resemble more advanced forms of plant life. Though not true plants, these algae, like the oceanic kelp, have structures that resemble stems, leaves, and roots, referred to as the thallus, branchlets, and rhizoids respectively. One of these types of algae, starry stonewort, is an invasive species from Europe and can be difficult to tell apart from the native Chara and Nitella . However, there are a few key differences between the three. For ease of use, I will use both plant and complex algae terms when referring to different structures of the algae.

Bulbils



- These are small tuber-like structures usually grown on the rhizoids/roots of certain macro-algae
- Most macro-algae, including Nitella and Chara, do not grow bulbils
- Starry stonewort bulbils resemble a six-pointed star

Branchlets/"Leaves"



-Starry stonewort branchlets tend to grow much longer than either Chara or Nitella branchlets, giving "meadows" consisting of starry stonewort a much shaggier appearance, like mats of sago pondweed. When young, starry stonewort branchlets can be of a similar length to Nitella, making it difficult to identify early

-Nitella branchlets will fork evenly at the tips, while starry stonewort branchlets will branch out more unevenly if at all

-Late in the growing season, starry stonewort branchlets may contain bulbils

Rhizoids/"Roots"

- Both Nitella and Chara rhizoids are typically pale or off-white, while starry stonewort rhizoids are clear, similar in appearance to fishing line
- Starry stonewort rhizoids contain bulbils throughout the season

Thallus/"Stem"

- Chara species have notable ridges along the length of their thallus, while starry stonewort and Nitella do not
- If the thallus is pinched flat between the fingers, Chara will bounce back to its original shape, while Nitella and starry stonewort will remain flat

Other Traits

- Chara, when pulled up out of the water, will often be accompanied by a rancid, rotten odor (giving it the common name skunkweed), while starry stonewort and Nitella do not produce these smells
- Chara will often be heavily encrusted with carbonates, giving it a gritty texture

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The Aquatic Invasive Species Program is a cooperative effort between Washington & Waukesha Counties, supported by grant funds from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and a number of generous local lake groups working to control the spread of AIS. Thank you for your support!

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