

FISHHOOK WATERFLEA

Cercopagis pengoi
Cercopagididae, the water flea family

FACTSHEET INFORMATION

Summary of Invasiveness

- Fishhook waterfleas are invasive zooplankton that preys on other zooplankton thus reducing the availability of those species as food for organisms higher up the foodchain.
- They also increase the predator avoidance of native zooplankton, forcing them deeper in the water and decreasing their fecundity.
- Reproduces asexually which results in extreme populations.

Diagnostic Characteristics

- Pronounced head with 2 pairs of antenna.
- Large single eye and 8 legs.
- Front pair of legs are 3-4 times longer than other legs.
- Long tail has 3 barbs and a loop near the end.

Introduction and Movement

- Fishhook waterflea is native to the Baltic Sea area of Europe and Asia.
- It was introduced into Lake Ontario in 1988 via the ballast water of transoceanic vessels.
- Recreational and commercial activities such as fishing and boating are thought to be the primary means of spread for this species.

Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, ensure that your watercraft and water related equipment is thoroughly cleaned, drained, and dry.
- When passing inspection stations during their hours of operations, make sure to stop for an inspection and decontamination.
- After visiting waters that are out of state, especially states with infested waters, ensure that your boat has been inspected or allowed dry time of at least 30 days prior to launching in Idaho waters.
- Do not transport live bait or standing water.
- Always Remember To: **CLEAN & DRAIN & DRY**

Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/89859>.

