Invasive Species Alert

Eurasian Ruffe

(*Gymnocephalus cernuus*)
Established in Michigan waters

Identification:

- Olive-brown back side and yellow-white belly
- Fused dorsal fins with no notch, dark spots on membranes between the rays of the fin
- About 25 cm. in length
- Small downturned mouth

Illustration by Joe Tomelleri, Ontario's Invading Species Program

Habitat: Ruffe are bottom dwelling fish that inhabit fresh and brackish waters. They appear to do well in a variety of habitat types, but abundance appears to be correlated with eutrophication and nutrient inputs.

Gary Cholwek, U.S. Geological Survey, Bugwood.org

Diet: Diet consists of mainly aquatic insects, but Eurasian ruffe will occasionally consume the eggs of other fish. A well-developed sensory system allows this species to feed at night. They have a few natural predators and the ability to hunt at night further reduces the risk of predation.

Native Range: Northern Europe and Asia

Local Concern: The reduced risk of predation from hunting at night and having few natural predators in the United States makes them successful invaders.

Means of Introduction: Most likely ballast water from transoceanic vessels

Native look-alikes and how you can tell them apart from Eurasian ruffe:

- ✓ **Walleye:** Dorsal fins **separated,** bottom of caudal fin has white tip, large mouth
- ✓ **Sauger:** Dorsal fins **separated,** large mouth
- ✓ **Yellow perch:** Dorsal fins **separated,** no distinct spots on dorsal fin, dark vertical stripes

Report this species at www.misin.msu.edu or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone