

Invasive Species Alert

Spiny Waterflea

(*Bythotrephes longimanus*)

Established in Michigan waters

Identification:

- Long, straight tail spine that's twice the length of its body
- 1-2 pairs of barbs on the tail spine
- Total length: ¼ - ½ inch

Diet: Diet consists of smaller zooplankton such as small copepods and rotifers.

Habitat: Spiny waterflea can be found among the zooplankton in the upper water column of temperate lakes. They can tolerate brackish water and prefer cooler water temperatures.

Native Range: Northern Europe and Asia

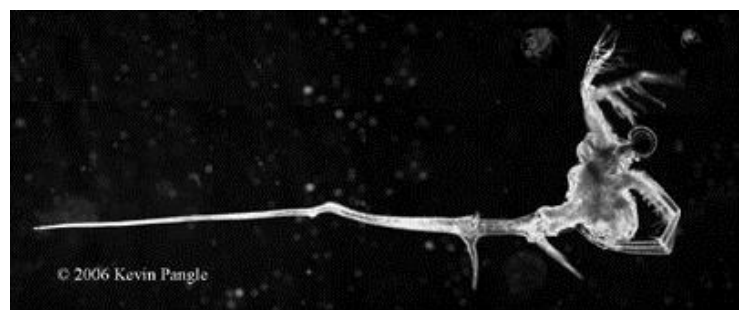


Photo credit: Emily DeBolt



Local Concern: The spiny waterflea causes major changes in the zooplankton community structure, reproduces rapidly, and competes directly with small fish for food. Additionally, they foul fishing gear when their tail spines get hooked on fishing lines.

Means of Introduction: Most likely introduced to the Great Lakes via ship ballast water, possibly as resting eggs from mud.



© 2006 Kevin Pangle