

# Invasive Species Alert

## FISHHOOK WATERFLEA

(CERCOPAGIS PENGOI)

\*DETECTED IN MICHIGAN\*

### IDENTIFICATION:

- Translucent body with black eyes.
- Body length: 1-3 mm; 6-13 mm including tail.
- Tail contains 3 pairs of barbs and an s-shaped hook near the end.
- Generally, in clusters of at least 10 individuals.
- Clusters appear as wet cotton on items like cables, ropes, and fishing lines.



**DIET:** Fishhook waterfleas consume other zooplankton species.

**HABITAT:** Fishhook waterfleas live in freshwater and brackish lakes.

**NATIVE RANGE:** Aral, Azov, Black and Caspian seas of Asia and Europe.

**U.S. DISTRIBUTION:** The fishhook water flea has been reported in Lakes Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Huron and Superior; Muskegon Lake and the Finger Lakes of New York.

**LOCAL CONCERN:** Dietary preference puts this species in direct competition with other plankton eaters. The long tail spine and barbs make this zooplankton less appealing to planktivorous fish, so population regulation from predation is unlikely to occur. This could have a serious effect on planktivore food supply in the Great Lakes region.



**MEANS OF INTRODUCTION:** Ballast water, recreational boating, fishing equipment.

**REPORT THIS SPECIES:** Visit [MISIN.MSU.edu](https://MISIN.MSU.edu) or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone.

Photos courtesy of Igor Grigorovich, University of Windsor (top) and NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (bottom).