

# 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



Graphic: Igor Grigorovich, University of Windsor

**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 waterflea has been reported in Lakes Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Huron, Superior, Muskegon Lake, and the Finger Lakes of New York.

**Local Concern:** Dietary preference put this species in direct competition with native planktivores. 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.



Photo: NOAA, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory

**Means of Introduction:** Ballast water, recreational boating, fishing equipment

Report this species at [www.misin.msu.edu](http://www.misin.msu.edu) or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone