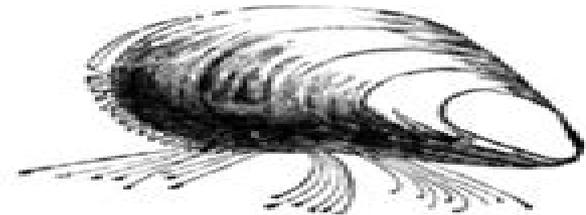


Are zebra mussels really invading?

In the mid-1980s a new species found its way to North America. The zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*), a small, clamlike mollusk that grows to about 25 cm as an adult, was introduced into the waters of the Great Lakes, probably carried in the bilge of a Russian freighter. The zebra mussel can reproduce in less than a year, and a single female can release 1 million eggs each year.



In the absence of their natural pathogens, parasites, and predators, the zebra mussel populations in the Great Lakes has grown enormously and are now invading eight major river systems, including the St. Lawrence, Hudson, Mississippi, Ohio, Illinois, Tennessee, Susquehanna, and Arkansas rivers. The mussels are spread from one body of water to another by natural flow, carried on the feathers or feet of migrating waterfowl, or by human transport in bait buckets or on trailered boats. Most of the freshwater systems in North America are now threatened by invasion of the zebra mussel.

The zebra mussels grow in massive colonies, where nearly a half million individuals may grow on each square meter of substrate. These colonies encrust the hulls and rudders of ships, the hinges of lock gates, and block the drains and intake ducts used by industries and power stations. In 1990, for example, Detroit Edison spent over \$500,000 to remove zebra mussels from the intake pipes of its power plants.

The zebra mussels also have severe negative effects on the local ecosystem. As filter-feeders, they take in water and filter out algae as food, excreting their waste as sediment. A single individual can filter 1 liter of water each day, and a colony covering 1 square meter of substrate can filter 180 million liters of water per year. Enormous colonies of zebra mussels can reduce the algal populations of lakes and rivers, thus removing a significant portion of the base of the food chain and resulting in a decline in the fish populations. Thus, these mussels are a threat to the local biodiversity.

The tremendous filtering capacity of these organisms may have some positive consequences. Zebra mussels have been a major factor in cleaning Lake Erie after a century of pollution from fertilizers and sewage. After the first 10 years of zebra mussel existence in Lake Erie, light penetration in the water has increased from only a few centimeters to nearly 10 meters. If these organisms could be controlled, they may become a useful tool in the treatment of sewage and pollution.

Are Zebra Mussels Really Invading Answer Key

**Ontario. Ministry of Natural
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Are Zebra Mussels Really Invading Answer Key:

Decoding **Are Zebra Mussels Really Invading Answer Key**: Revealing the Captivating Potential of Verbal Expression

In a period characterized by interconnectedness and an insatiable thirst for knowledge, the captivating potential of verbal expression has emerged as a formidable force. Its capability to evoke sentiments, stimulate introspection, and incite profound transformations is genuinely awe-inspiring. Within the pages of "**Are Zebra Mussels Really Invading Answer Key**," a mesmerizing literary creation penned by way of a celebrated wordsmith, readers embark on an enlightening odyssey, unraveling the intricate significance of language and its enduring impact on our lives. In this appraisal, we shall explore the book's central themes, evaluate its distinctive writing style, and gauge its pervasive influence on the hearts and minds of its readership.

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