the spread today!

Here's how:

Inspect
all parts of your fishing gear, boat, and trailer that have been in contact with water.

Remove
all mud, plants, or animals and dispose of on dry land.

Drain
all bilge water, live wells, bait buckets, and all other water from your boat, engine and equipment.

Wash
all parts of your fishing gear and boat that have been in contact with water. Do not allow wash water to flow into any water-body or storm sewer.

Dry
fishing gear, boats, and trailers in the sun for FIVE days before launching into any waterbody.

Purchase
non-invasive plants and fish for your land-scapes and aquaria.

Dispose
leftover bait into the garbage.

Don't Release
unwanted plants or animals into the wild.

For more information or to report an invasive species sighting:

- Lake Champlain Basin Program
  800.468.5227 (VT & NY)
- Lake Champlain Sea Grant
  800.745.5520
- VT Department of Environmental Conservation
  802.241.3777
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
  518.897.1291
- Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
  518.576.2082
- Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec
  450.928.7607

Aquatic Invaders of the Lake Champlain Basin

What's at Stake...

This brochure was made possible with funds from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink. Cover photo: Atlantic salmon by Timothy Knepp/USFWS.

You can help stop

Here's why:

Non-native aquatic invasive species...

Jeopardize fishing and swimming!
Invasive plants and animals degrade fish habitats, reduce fish egg and fry survival, and alter water clarity and chemistry. Invasive plants also limit access to good fishing and swimming spots.

Threaten biodiversity!
Invasive species compete with and feed on many native species. They are a primary threat to 42% of federally-listed endangered species and are the second highest threat to biodiversity in the United States.

Hand-pulling water chestnut, The Nature Conservancy.

Are expensive!
Invasive species reduce property values and are costly to control. In the long run, it is much cheaper to prevent introductions than to control infestations.

How do the aquatic invaders get here?

Over 40 species of non-native invasive plants and animals have entered the Lake Champlain Basin.

Boating

Aquatic plants on boat, Dr. Ladd Johnson, Laval University, Québec.

Invasive species can hitch a ride to new lakes by attaching to boat hulls, trailers, and motors, or by hiding in live wells and bilges. Tiny Eurasian watermilfoil fragments, for example, can grow to dense, impenetrable mats that limit recreation and impair fish habitat. It is illegal to transport Eurasian watermilfoil in Vermont.

Gardening

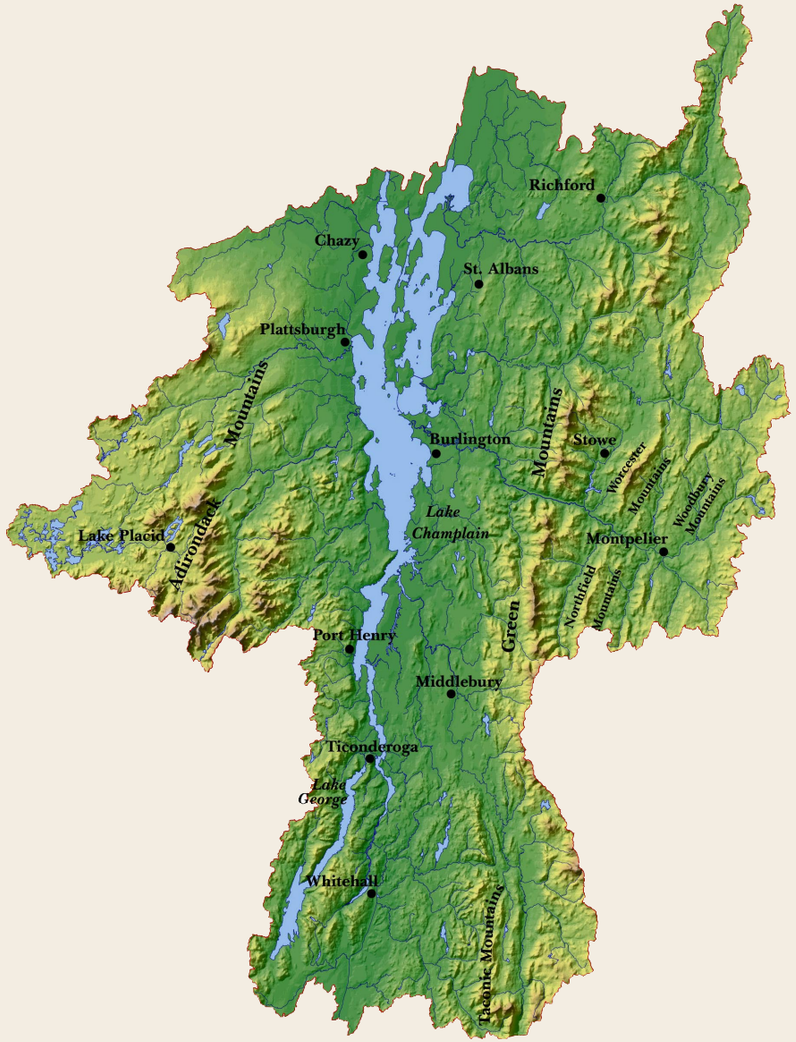
Purple loosestrife, Barry A. Rice/The Nature Conservancy.

Several invasive species have beautiful, showy flowers favored by home gardeners. Purple loosestrife is a striking, purple-flowered plant sold at some local nurseries. It has taken over wetlands, outcompeted native wetland plants, and is located throughout the Basin. It is illegal to buy or sell purple loosestrife in Vermont.

Baitfish

Alewife, NYSDEC.

Baitfish are sometimes intentionally introduced to lakes by anglers hoping to improve fishing. This is likely how alewives were introduced to Lake St. Catherine, Vermont. Alewives compete with native fish for food and feed directly on fish eggs and larvae. If introduced to Lake Champlain, alewives could cause major problems for the Lake's fishery.



Lake Champlain Basin

Canals

The Champlain Canal, completed in 1823, is a major source of invasive species introduction to Lake Champlain. Over $400,000 is currently spent each year to control the spread of water chestnut, a floating plant which entered southern Lake Champlain from the Hudson River through the Canal.

Champlain Canal, Michael Hauser.

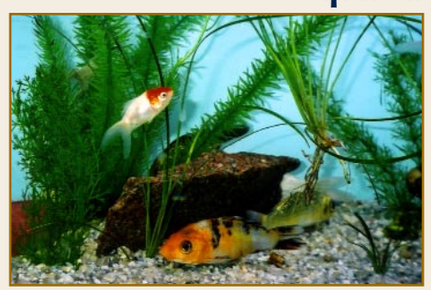
Fish Farms

Invasive species can escape from aquacultural operations and become established in adjacent waters. Tench, an invasive fish, escaped from an aquaculture facility in Québec in 1990 and has been found in the South River, Québec and in the Great Chazy River in New York. Impacts of this new invasion are largely unknown.

Tench, Lake Champlain Sea Grant.

Aquaria

Many invasive plants and animals cross state borders through the aquarium trade. Hydrilla is a popular aquarium plant that is highly invasive and difficult to control. While not in the Basin as of 2004, it was recently discovered in Maine and Massachusetts. Please watch out for and report sightings of this species quickly.



Aquarium, LCBP.