

# ADIRONDACK NORTH COUNTRY Be a Byway Champion INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT



To make the most of your travels along the Adirondack Region's Scenic Byways, scan this QR code with a smart phone or visit [www.adirondackscenicbyways.org](http://www.adirondackscenicbyways.org) & click on "Explore by Interest."

**Be a champion. Spread the word, not the "hitchhikers!"** While traveling the Adirondack North Country Region's Scenic Byways, we invite you to help sustain the touring routes' special places for all visitors. While breathing the invigorating air, taking in the amazing vistas, hiking in the woods, and playing in the sparkling waters, we invite you to become a champion of these extraordinary natural resources. Here are guidelines for how you can help protect the outdoor recreational experiences that we all enjoy. **Byway Champions are careful to avoid picking up or dropping off any "hitchhiking" plants or animals when they move from place to place during their visits. Learning about non-native and invasive species is the only way to prevent their uncontrollable spread and damaging impact to our natural resources. Prevention is where Byway Champions can make all the difference.**



# 2 Outdoor Enthusiasts Campers Off Roaders Hunters Hikers Cyclists Sight-Seers Birders

# Flower Lovers Gardeners Land scape Architects Nursery Owners Road Workers

## Champion

## Champion

### Adirondack Backcountry

### Open Lands

#### Local firewood rules

**The Situation:** Move the wood, move the pest. Exotic insects and tree diseases can't move far on their own, but they can move hundreds of miles when people move firewood.

**Possible hitchhiker:** A non-native, the Asian long-horn beetle (shown actual size), tunnels through wood & bark.

**At risk:** The diversity of NYS forests including the majestic sugar maple. Invasive species kill trees.

#### Byway Champions:

Don't transport firewood. Use only wood that is available locally.

#### Check out:

[www.dontmovefirewood.org](http://www.dontmovefirewood.org)  
[www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html)

#### Advisory:

In many states, including NY, the DEC prohibits the transport of untreated firewood more than 50 miles from its source.

#### The great brush off

**The Situation:** Humans contribute to the rapid spread of invasive species in the mud packed into boots, shoes and tire treads.

**Possible hitchhiker:** Garlic mustard (below) and other invasive seeds or fragments of plants that fall on trails.

**At risk:** Native plants and animals. One seed may be all it takes to disrupt natural habitats that nourish the abundant wildlife in our forest and stream ecosystems.

**Byway Champions:** Prevent seeds from spreading.

- 01 Give your clothes and boots or shoes a good brushing at trailheads *after* every hike.
- 02 Clean backpacks and camping equipment before going to a new area or trail.
- 03 Shake out tents before breaking camp to dislodge invasive seeds.

**Check out:** [www.dec.ny.gov/23.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/23.html)

**Advisory:** All it takes to propagate plants is one seed or a little broken bit of leaf, stem or root.

#### A bloomin' nuisance

**The Situation:** One plant can crowd out a diverse array of desirable plants. Deprived of food sources, animals are displaced.

**Possible hitchhikers:** Seeds of non-natives, or a fragment of leaf, stem or root.

**At risk:** Birds, butterflies and beneficial insects due to habitat loss. Dense growth of purple loosestrife (left) chokes out large areas of wetlands. Other invasives can cause erosion, dominate forest undergrowth, or degrade productive pastures and open meadows.

#### Byway Champions:

Resist picking or transporting any road- or river-side flowers or plants. Use only non-invasive or native plants in gardens, along shorelines and in ornamental ponds.

**Check out:** [www.adkinvasives.org](http://www.adkinvasives.org)

**Advisory:** A few plants are toxic to humans. Don't touch is a good rule of thumb. The clear, watery sap of giant hogweed can cause skin irritation, sometimes severe, with blistering and scarring. Call the toll-free **Giant Hogweed Hotline, 845-256-3111** for more information and to report the location if you see the plant.

#### Seed awareness

**The Situation:** Seed mixes that include potentially invasive non-native seeds are disseminated. Invasive plants are sold.

#### Possible hitchhiker:

Potentially invasive seeds and plants like Japanese barberry or



Bishops goutweed (above).

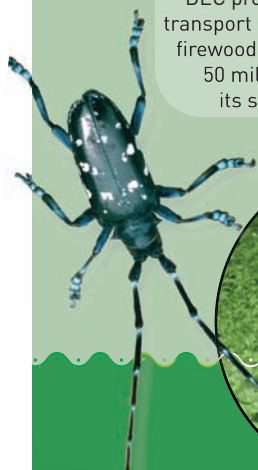
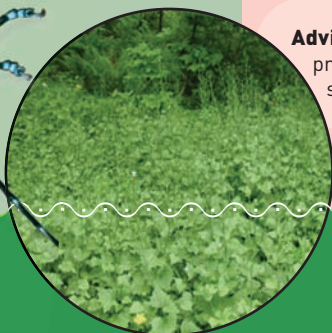
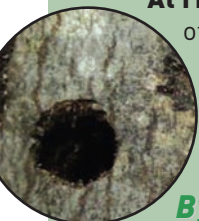
**At risk:** Habitat. Invasives can displace native species and reduce forage for wildlife. They can alter nesting sites for insects, birds and small mammals and replace pollen-, fruit- and seed-bearing plants with varieties that native animals and insects can't eat.

#### Byway Champions:

Don't buy, sell, transport or plant aggressive and invasive plants. Know what's in seed mixes. Use weed-free fill, topsoil and mulch. Choose native and non-invasive plants when landscaping. Support your local wildlife by supporting your local native plants.

**Check out:** [www.bepplantwise.org](http://www.bepplantwise.org)

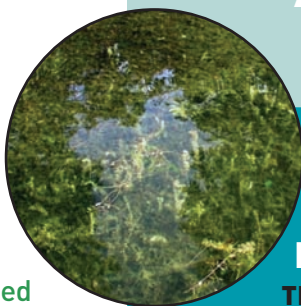
**NOTE to Road Workers:** Along roadsides and utility right of ways, mowers transport seeds and bits of plants that can self-propagate. Clean equipment before changing locations.



# Champion

## Adirondack North Country Byway Waters

While touring the Adirondack Region's many Scenic Byways, you are encouraged to help sustain our waterways for future generations. Be careful to avoid picking up or dropping off any "hitchhiking" aquatic plants or animals. Learning about non-native species is the only way to make a difference and prevent the spread of their damaging impact. So, sit back, relax and enjoy your visit, **AND, be a Byway Champion.** Help us maintain these natural wonders for the next visitor.



### The water ritual

**The Situation:**

When moving from one water body to another for outdoor recreational activities, clean boating, fishing and swimming gear. Non-native species are transported on them.

**Possible hitchhiker:**

A fragment of plant, like Eurasian watermilfoil, can break off and easily stick to the bottom of your boat, on propellers, pontoons, flip flops, etc. When a tiny bit of Eurasian watermilfoil inadvertently is carried from one waterway to the next, a new population rapidly forms dense mats that grow to the surface (above).

**At risk:** Waterways. Overgrowth degrades habitat for fish and other wildlife and chokes off waters you love to visit.

**Byway Champions:** Avoid navigating through any aquatic weedpatch visible under the water's surface. Follow **Clean Gear Guidelines** after recreation in water.

**Check out:** [www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)

### No bait and switch

**The Situation:** Transporting uncertified baitfish spreads fish diseases. Destructive Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) was confirmed in NY waters in 2006 in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. VHS causes hemorrhaging of fish tissue and internal organs.

**Possible hitchhikers:**

A host of common bait: non-native minnows, rusty crayfish, round gobies (below), alewives, etc.

**At risk:**

Uninfected waterways and preferred game fish.

**Byway Champions:**

Never transport fish between

waterways. Uncertified baitfish collected for personal use must be used only in the water where you found it. Empty unwanted bait into the trash, away from surface water.

**Check out:**

[www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/31920.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/31920.html)

**Advisory:** NYS DEC regulations help prevent the spread of invasive species and the dreaded VHS. **Strict compliance makes a difference.** Use of fish as bait in many Adirondack ponds is prohibited.



### The hazards of stowaways

**The Situation:**

You may be transporting a rapidly-reproducing aquatic non-native species that infiltrates water wells of boats and bait buckets or can attach to fishing lines and anchor lines.

**Possible hitchhikers:**

Masses of tiny spiny water fleas (left), a crustacean in direct competition for food with local fish populations. It sucks its prey dry.

**At risk:** Native game fish and fisheries.

**Byway Champions:**

Follow **Clean Gear Guidelines** for whatever gets wet on a fishing trip.

**Check out:** [www.nyis.info](http://www.nyis.info)

**Advisory:** Some states have **HEFTY FINES**

for the transport of any aquatic plant or animal. Check with boat launch stewards and DEC personnel about new laws on the books to help prevent the introduction and spread of non-native species. Remember, laws apply when crossing Lake Champlain into Vermont.

**Check out:**

[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)  
[www.vtwaterquality.org](http://www.vtwaterquality.org)  
[www.lcbp.org](http://www.lcbp.org)



ADIRONDACK NORTH COUNTRY

## Be a Byway Champion



### INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT



# Anglers Boaters Swimmers Sea Plane Pilots Scuba Divers

## Champion

### Adirondack North Country Byway Waters

ADIRONDACK NORTH COUNTRY

## Be a Byway Champion

### A wet blanket

#### The Situation:

Anglers pull up their lines covered in gunk. Bits of a single-celled nubby brown algae is blanketing stream beds and sticking to wading gear. Plus, it's hard to clean off.



#### Possible hitchhiker:

*Didymo* or "rock snot" (above), overgrows into wooly-like mats. Tiny plant cells can be transferred, unknowingly, on anything damp—the soles of wading gear, a tied fly or inside the flyline reel.

#### At risk:

Aquatic habitat. *Didymo* seriously threatens aquatic insect and fish populations by smothering food sources. It leaves bigger fish, like brook trout, little to eat.

#### Byway Champions:

Disinfect your fishing equipment, especially absorbent wading gear. Alternatives to felt-soled footwear are readily available. There's no way to get rid of *Didymo*; the only hope is to keep it from spreading. Follow **Clean Gear Guidelines**.

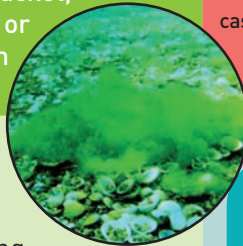
#### Check out:

Disinfection techniques at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/50267.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/50267.html)

### Don't move a mussel (or a clam)

#### The Situation:

Once pristine bays are now littered with clams which may have hitchhiked in a bait bucket, bilge water or an aquarium release.



#### Possible hitchhiker:

Asian clams are now taking hold in Adirondack waters. They reproduce as many as 4,000 offspring twice a year, growing rapidly into dense populations.

#### At risk:

Water quality. Beaches, boating, fisheries, and drinking water systems can be polluted from intense algae blooms (above) caused by the excretion of high concentrations of nutrients that can turn water from blue to green.

#### Byway Champions:

Before launching in or leaving any body of water, follow **Clean Gear Guidelines**. Once Asian clams are in a lake, eradication is unlikely and management is extremely costly.

#### Check out:

[www.stoptheasianclam.info](http://www.stoptheasianclam.info)

### UNWANTED AQUATICS?

How Byway Champions dispose of non-native plants and pets (including alligators!)

- 01 Some boat launches have aquatic plant collection boxes.
- 02 If none, aquatic plants can be baked in the sun on dry land.
- 03 Never release aquarium cast offs into any body of water.

#### Check out:

[www.habitattitude.net](http://www.habitattitude.net)



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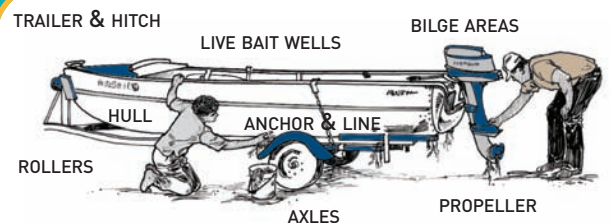
Byway Champions don't take chances.

## Clean Gear Guidelines

Before launching your boat into a body of water:

**CHECK** gear including boats, canoes, kayaks and recreational equipment and remove any clinging plants, mud and organisms.

**CLEAN** Drain, wash and, where possible, disinfect water carried ashore. Wash gear and boating equipment with hot water at home or at a commercial car wash. Do all of this away from surface water.



Double check difficult-to-dry areas in boats that can harbor invasive species. Inspect wheel wells of cars, too. Small amounts of water can carry early stages of life that can be invisible to the human eye.

**DRY** gear completely when moving between bodies of water. Drying is the most effective disinfectant. Ideally, let boats and trailers dry out for 5–7 days before recreating again. Keep in mind, drying time depends on the type of equipment, where it is stored and weather conditions.

**LAUNCH then REPEAT**