

The Asian Clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) bears many similarities to the zebra mussel, but in most ways it is even more dangerous. It can survive in both fresh and estuarine water (it is found in the upper Shannon, the lower Shannon, and in the tidal sections of both the Barrow and the Nore). It was first found in Ireland in the Barrow at St. Mullin's in 2010.

The Asian Clam is described as "the world's most notorious freshwater invasive species," and with good reason. Among the most alarming reasons are that it completely carpets the river bed and chokes out almost all other life, that it takes only one individual to start a new population (an individual can clone itself), that it reaches extremely high population density (in areas of the Barrow at St. Mullin's, one would find over 67,000 individuals in an area the size of a snooker table), and - perhaps most worrying of all - that it can render Salmonid spawning grounds useless. The shells do not break down easily, so that a lot of energy is removed from the ecosystem. Over time, the sheer volume of shells can cause the river bed to rise and so cause the river to flood.

Identification: Yellow-green to brown clam. The shell often flakes, leaving white patches. The shell has concentric thick ridges. The clam is usually less than an inch wide, but can grow up to two inches. Photographs can be seen by clicking on the below links.

It is imperative that we ensure that we either use different angling equipment on different waters or that we clean our equipment when we move between waters (particularly from an infected water to an uninfected one). The Asian Clam is particularly easy to transport and all careless water users risk transporting them; the larvae are microscopic and equipped with a sticky appendage to help them latch on. Please follow the links below for more information and to see what you can do. We must all be biosecurity-aware.

http://invasives.biodiversityireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Asian_clam_Species_Alert_Feb_2011.pdf

http://invasives.biodiversityireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/alert-asianclam_alert-poster.jpg

<http://invasivespeciesireland.com/most-unwanted-species/established/freshwater/asian-clam>

<http://www.protectyourwaters.net/>

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/quality/surfwq/pdfs/corflu.pdf>

For more information on the other invasive species which threaten the Slaney our freshwater ecosystems, see <http://invasivespeciesireland.com/most-unwanted-species/>