

Cleaning methods to stop the spread of didymo

Update: July 11, 2007

Important:

According to the latest information on cleaning methods used to stop the spread of didymo (tested and recommended by New Zealand authorities at Biosecurity New Zealand), a distinction must be made between **absorbent items** like felt-soled waders and **non-absorbent items** during cleaning. Moreover, **freezing** any item until solid has been added to the methods identified to eliminate didymo cells.

Cleaning methods recommended to stop the spread of didymo

To prevent the introduction or spread of didymo or any other aquatic invasive species, it is recommended that the use of equipment, boats, clothing and any other item that may come into contact with the algae be restricted to a single river. If you must move from one river to another, it is important to clean these items in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. **Check** carefully your boat and equipment before leaving a river and remove all obvious clumps of algae. Look also for hidden clumps. Leave clumps at the affected site. After leaving the affected area, if you find any clumps, do not wash them down the drain, but rather throw them in a garbage can.
2. **Clean** any item that was in contact with water.

▪ **Non-absorbent items:**

Soak and scrub all items for **at least one minute** in one of the following solutions:

- very hot water kept above 60 °C (hotter than most tap water), or for at least 20 minutes in hot water kept above 45 °C (uncomfortable to touch).
- a 2% solution of bleach (200 ml and water added to make 10 litres);
- a 5% solution of salt (500 ml or 2 cups and water added to make 10 litres);

- a 5% solution of antiseptic hand cleaner (500 ml or 2 cups and water added to make 10 litres);
- a 5% solution of dishwashing liquid (500 ml or 2 cups and water added to make 10 litres).

▪ **Absorbent items:**

Absorbent items like felt-soled waders require longer soaking times to allow thorough saturation. Leave your absorbent material to soak:

- at least **40 minutes** in **hot water** kept above 45 °C;
- at least **30 minutes** in **hot water** kept above 45 °C containing a 5% dishwashing detergent solution.

3. Dry completely your equipment if you cannot clean it adequately and then allow it to dry for an additional 48 hours before using it in another lake or river. Drying will eliminate didymo cells, but slightly moist didymo cells can survive for months. Items must be completely dry to the touch, inside and outside, to ensure that cells are eliminated.

Freezing of material:

Freezing any item until solid will also eliminate didymo cells.