FAUCET SNAIL

Bithynia tentaculata

SPECIES + ORIGIN:

The faucet snail is an aquatic snail native to Europe; introduced to the Great Lakes in the 1870s. They were most likely brought into North America unintentionally via large timber transport ships, or perhaps with vegetation used in packing crates.

Blackduck Lake is currently the only Beltrami County waterbody with a confirmed faucet snail population!

Credit: iNaturalist

IMPACTS:

Faucet snails are intermediate hosts for 3 intestinal trematodes that cause mortality in ducks and coots. When waterfowl consume the parasite-infected snails, adult trematodes attack the internal organs, causing lesions and hemorrhage. The trematodes contributed to the deaths of almost 10,000 coots in 2007-08 on Lake Winnibigoshish. Faucet snails also compete with native snails for resources + habitat. There is NO EVIDENCE that fish, or other wildlife apart from waterfowl, are adversely affected by trematodes present in faucet snails. Faucet snails are also NOT known to be co-hosts for swimmers' itch!

MEANS OF SPREAD:

Faucet snails spread by attaching to aquatic plants, boats, anchors, decoy anchors, and other recreational gear or equipment placed in the water. Some movement by waterfowl may also spread this invasive to new waters!

In the early 1900s, the Faucet Snail began infesting municipal water supplies, including household faucets, giving rise to the snail's common name!

HOW TO IDENTIFY:

Faucet snails can be difficult to identify. Adults grow up to ½ inch in length, but are generally much smaller! They are light brown to black, with 4-5 whorls and a cover on the shell opening. When the shell is pointed up, the shell opening is on the right.

WHAT CAN I DO?

You can help stop the spread of faucet snails! Inspect for and remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from boats and equipment before transporting from one waterbody to another. Decontaminate your watercraft and gear when leaving a known infested waterbody. FS are found on rocky shorelines, river and lake bottoms, aquatic plants, docks, and other submerged surfaces.

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