

# CHECK, CLEAN, DRY

**The threat: Didymo is an invasive species that can form massive blooms. Didymo can adversely affect aesthetics, recreation, fishing, boating and irrigation activities.**

## Whitebaiters please Check, Clean, Dry

Whitebaiters are reminded to clean nets and other gear between waterways to help slow the spread of didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) during this year's whitebait season. Didymo can be a problem for whitebaiters, clogging nets as it floats down rivers. Please help to protect our waters, including whitebait habitat, against didymo.

Didymo is a single-celled micro-organism that can spread from one river or lake to another by the movement of water, equipment, clothing and any other damp item. People and their activities are the main cause of spread. To ensure you don't spread didymo or other aquatic pests, please restrict equipment, boats, clothing and other items for exclusive use in a single waterway between cleaning.

## Protect our waterways – Check, Clean, Dry whitebaiting gear

- Nets, neoprene waders and other items made of absorbent material can be decontaminated by soaking in a 5% solution of dishwashing liquid or nappy cleaner for as long as it takes to thoroughly saturate the item. Then leave the item for an additional minute to kill didymo cells trapped deep within the cracks, crevices and absorbent parts of the item. Non-absorbent items such as metal set nets, tyres, trailers and buckets can be soaked or sprayed with the above products.
- Diluted seawater, such as found in whitebaiting areas is ineffective at killing didymo. Whitebaiters who prefer to decontaminate their gear with salt should use a 2% by volume salt solution (saltier than seawater) prepared by adding one small cup (200mls) of table salt to water to make 10 litres. Soak for as long as it takes to thoroughly saturate the item, then leave the item to soak for an additional 10 minutes.
- Seawater will kill didymo. Submerging your net in 100% seawater for four hours will kill didymo.
- Other options for decontaminating gear include soaking in hot water above 45°C for at least 20 minutes (longer for absorbent items), freezing until solid or drying. Although drying will kill didymo, slightly moist didymo can live for months. If you are hanging up your nets to drain and dry, ensure the entire item is completely dry to the touch, inside and out, then leave for at least 48 hours before use.
- Whitebait nets with hollow frames will hold water inside the frame; drill holes in the frame, flush through with decontamination solution and allow the solution to drain out.



WHITEBAITERS

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WHITEBAITERS

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July 2008

## Information for whitebaiters who use felt-soled waders

Fishing footwear containing absorbent material, such as felt-soled waders and boots, pose high risk of didymo transfer – these items are likely to come into direct physical contact with didymo cells (e.g. stepping on or brushing against algal mats), and the moisture in these helps cell survival.

Choose one of the following treatments specific to felt-soled waders and boots:

- Absorbent items require longer soaking times to allow thorough saturation. For example, felt-soled waders require:
  - Hot water: soak for at least 40 minutes in hot water kept above 45°C for the entire time; or
  - Hot water plus detergent: soak for 30 minutes in hot water kept above 45°C containing 5% dishwashing detergent or nappy cleaner; or
- Freezing any item until solid will also kill didymo.

**DRY:** Drying will kill didymo, but slightly moist didymo can survive for months. To ensure didymo cells are dead by drying, the item must be *completely dry* to the touch, inside and out, then left to dry for at least another 48 hours before use.

If cleaning or drying is not practical, restrict equipment to a single waterway.

**NOTE:** The thicker and denser the material, the better it will be at holding moisture (and live cells), the slower it will be to dry out and the more difficult it will be to soak completely with cleaning solutions.

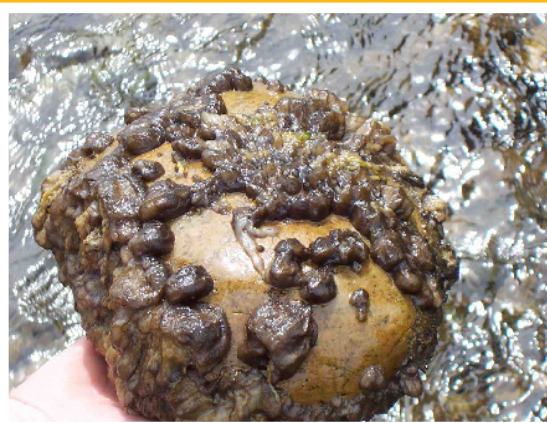
When cleaning equipment, we recommend that you:

- soak porous materials for longer than the specified treatment times to ensure cleaning solution has soaked right through the item.
- choose a decontamination solution that will not adversely affect your equipment.
- follow manufacturer's safety instructions when using products.
- dispose of cleaning waste well away from waterways.

**Cleaning is only necessary when moving between waterways**



EARLY MORNING WHITEBAITER



DIDYMO



DIDYMO

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