



Aquatic Invasive Species in the North Saskatchewan Watershed



Kallum McDonald, MSc
Megan Evans, MSc
Nicole Kimmel



What are Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)?

- Overtake resources and habitat, reducing biodiversity
- Inhibit aquatic recreation
- Interfere with water-dependent infrastructure



AIS Monitoring in the NSR

- eDNA
- Plankton tow netting
- Kayak surveying



New AIS Detections in Alberta

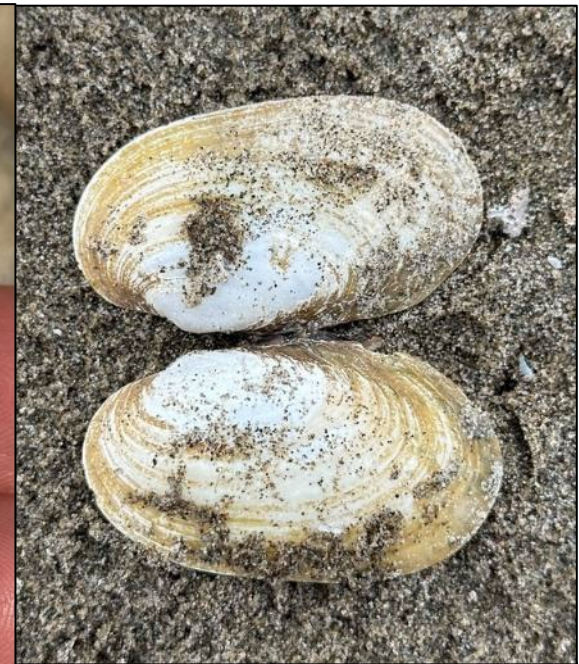
- Two non-native cattail species now present in AB.
- Curly Leaf Pondweed in Oldman river.
- Pale Yellow Iris re-detected in Lake Isle.
- Several new Phragmites locations.
- Rebounding Himalayan Balsam at Lac St. Anne and in Edmonton.
- A few Purple Loosestrife plants along the NSR in Edmonton.
- Reports of Crappie (fish)

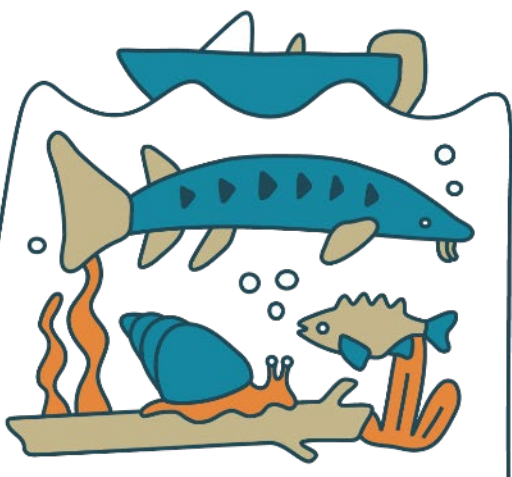


False Alarms

- Several mistaken reports of invasive mussels in Alberta.
- Alberta does have **NATIVE** mussels & clams →
- Native mussels/clams sit in the sediment and do NOT attach to hard surfaces.
- **ATTACHED mussels are INVASIVE mussels!**

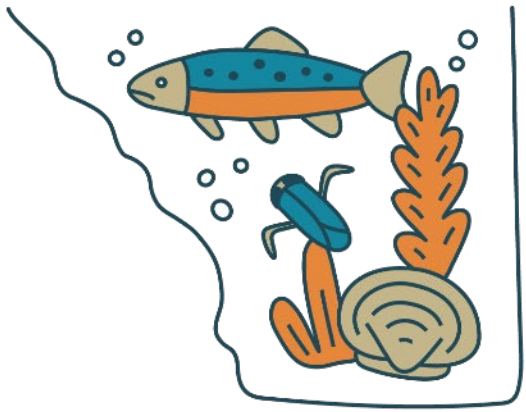
ALL eDNA samples collected in 2025 were negative for invasive mussels!





PROTECT our WATERS

STOP AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES



CD3 Units in the NSR

- Free-to-use units provide tools to help Clean, Drain, and Dry equipment and watercraft.

Usage statistics 2025

- Laurier (Edmonton): 509
- Cardiff (Sturgeon County): 622
- Riel (St. Albert): **858**
- Astotin (Elk Island): 588
- Trailer: 209



Trailer unit stationed at Wabamun Waterfront Park boat launch since late August!

Lake Isle Flowering Rush

- West end of lake heavily infested.
- Extremely low aquatic plant biodiversity in FR-infested areas.
- **Abundance of fully submerged FR poses a long-term management challenge.**
- FR biocontrol agent approved in Canada, long wait list.



Shoreline Vegetation Removal

- Removal of native shoreline plants: erosion, food and habitat for native species, illegal without permits.
- **Removing native plants creates space for aggressive invasive species.**
- Many anecdotes of large-scale unpermitted vegetation removal at lakes in NSR.
- Jurisdiction issue for Crown land, municipal reserves, and shoreline property owners.
- **AISC drafting letter** to AB Environment about proliferation of shoreline weeds after de-vegetation.



Reporting Invasive Species

- EDDMapS
- iNaturalist
- *EPA – AIS program
 - 1-855-336-BOAT (2628)
 - epa.ais@gov.ab.ca
- 311, County Connect, 310-FARM etc.
- Need help identifying a plant or aquatic species?

Email or text me anytime:

- ais@abinvasives.ca
- 780-830-6391

*Reporting of AIS to AB Gov is required by law!



EDDMapS
find • map • track



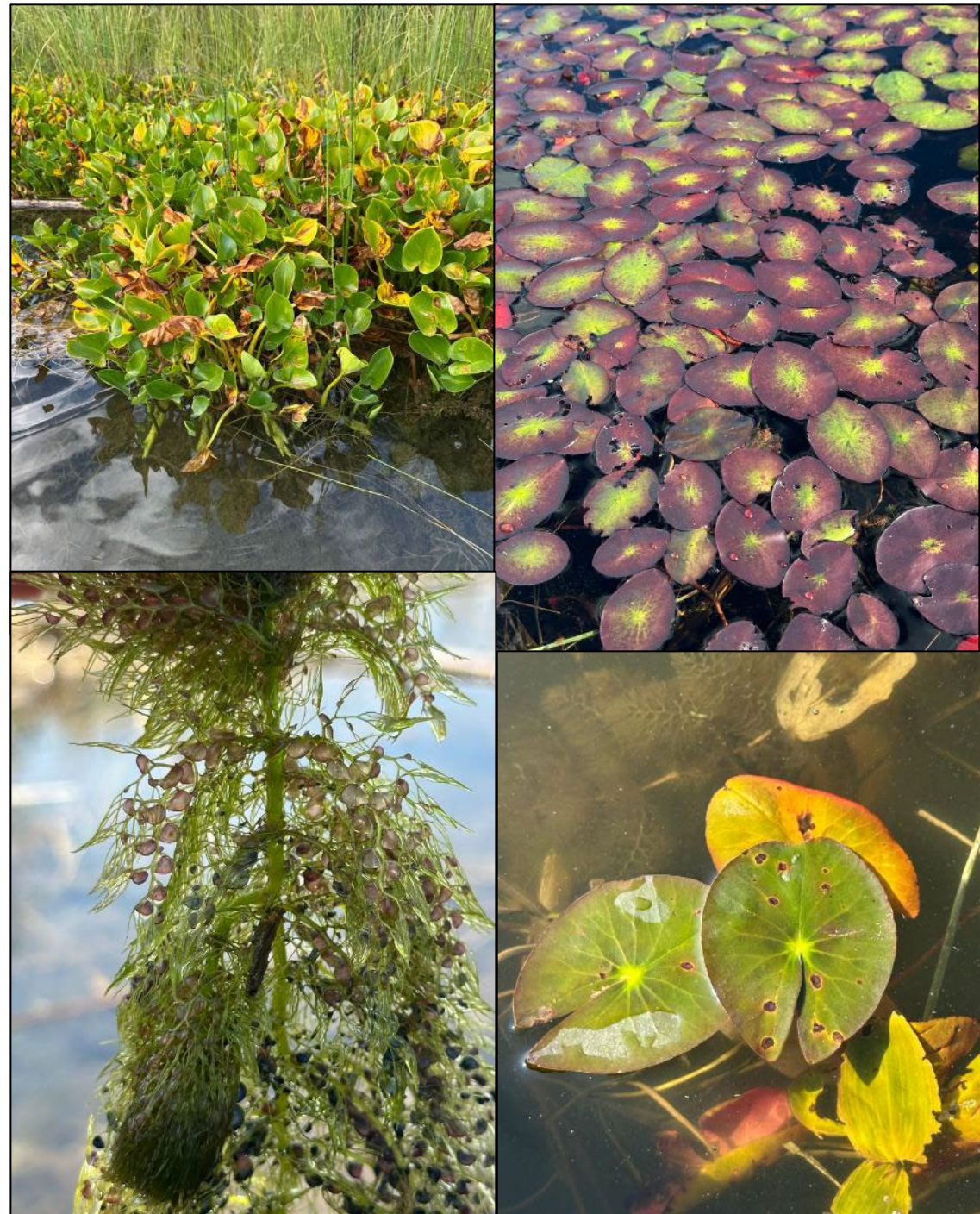
iNaturalist

Online Requests
Report 311 concerns
online 24 hours, 7 days a
week.

[Submit a Request](#)

BE CURIOUS!

- **Take interest in our waterways! Ask questions!** What species live here? What species belong here? What impacts do my actions have aquatic ecosystems?
- **Send me photos** of aquatic organisms!
- Unsure whether a species is native or invasive? Rare or common? Snap a photo anyways and upload to **iNaturalist!**



Acknowledgements

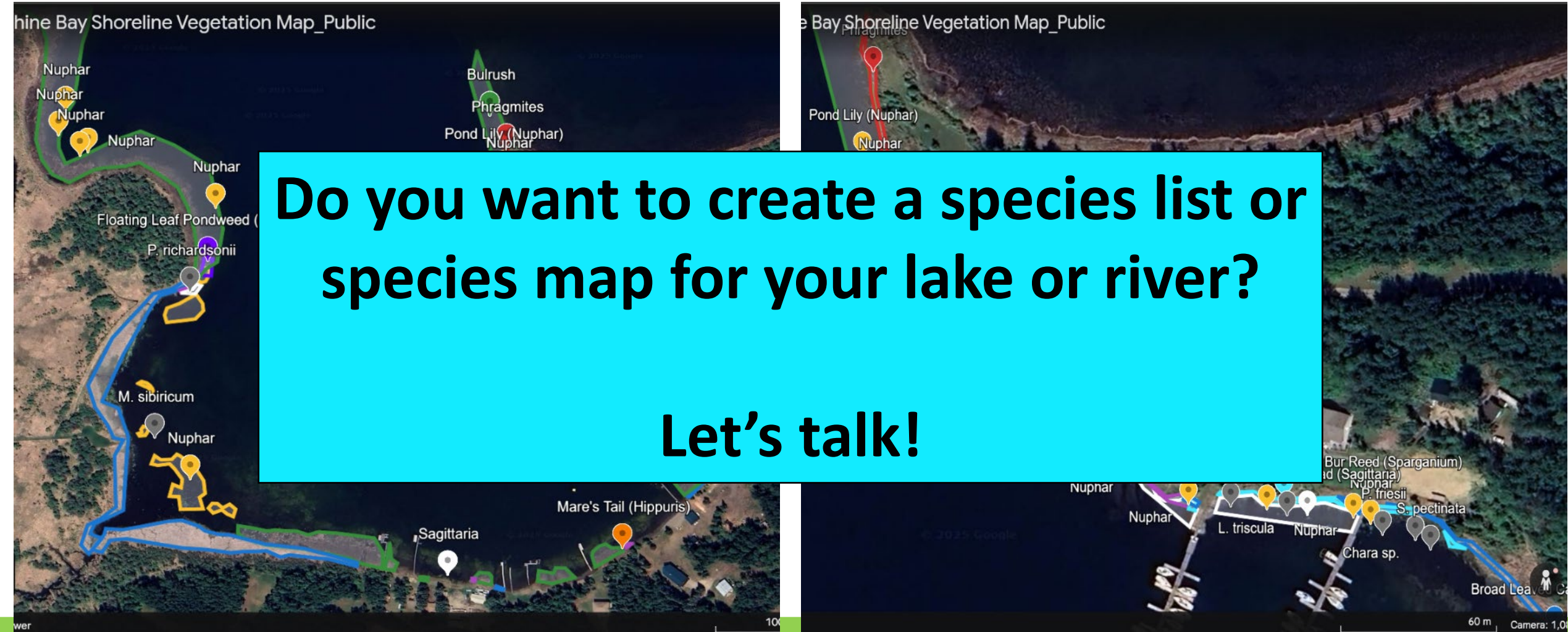
- Environment & Climate Change Canada
- Alberta Conservation Association
- Hanington Lab
- CD3 partners: City of Edmonton, City of St. Albert, Sturgeon County, Elk Island National Park, Parkland County.
- WWMC, LILSA, NSWA, and all other folks who joined weed pulls, invasive species workshops, eDNA sampling, etc!

Wabamun Lake – Sunshine Bay

Emergent & Floating Plant Survey

Do you want to create a species list or species map for your lake or river?

Let's talk!



Thanks for listening!

Questions?

- ais@abinvasives.ca
- kallummcdonald@gmail.com
- 780-830-6391

Ask me about portaging
my kayak through a fen
during a lightning storm!

