

DIDYMO...

spread the word, not the algae

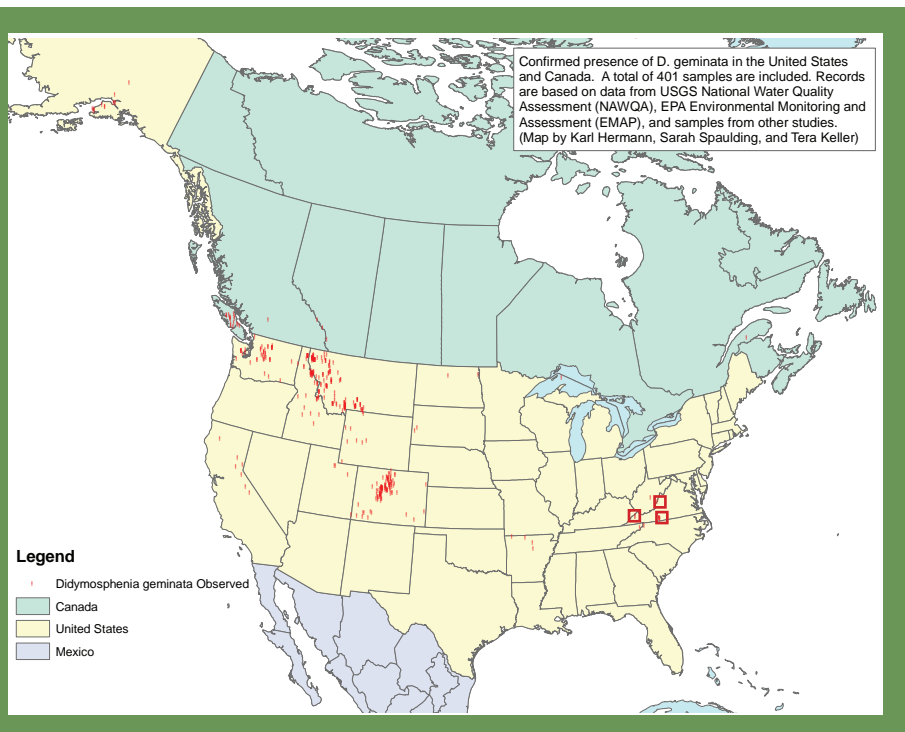
What is didymo?

Didymo is an **invasive freshwater alga** that can form massive blooms.

Didymo can smother streambeds and adversely affect freshwater fish, plants and invertebrate populations by depriving them of habitat. It can also impact recreational opportunities but is not considered a human health risk at this time. Didymo develops stalks to attach itself to the streambed. These stalks can form a thick brown mat, effectively covering the entire river channel. Didymo can entangle itself in streamside vegetation resembling wet tissue paper.



Single cell diatom
Didymosphenia geminata



Where is didymo?

Didymo was found **here in Virginia** in 2006.

To date, it has been identified in the Smith River below Philpott Dam, in the Jackson River below Gathright Dam, and in the Pound River below the Flannagan Dam. Didymo originated from the cold clear waters of northern Europe and North America. It is currently unknown how didymo was spread into the Commonwealth. It is thought to be spread by recreational equipment including boats, kayaks, life jackets and fishing gear (particularly waders). It only takes one cell or a fragment of a stalk to contaminate a new waterway.

Source: http://www.epa.gov/region8/water/didymosphenia/na_dis.map.pdf, 2007

How can you prevent the spread of didymo?

There are **four steps** you can take:

- CHECK:** Before leaving the river, look for strands of algae on your equipment. Remove them and leave them on site.
- CLEAN:** Soak and scrub all gear for at least one minute in a 2% solution of household bleach. Make sure that all surfaces of your equipment are thoroughly treated.
- DRY:** If cleaning is not practical, dry your equipment in the sun for at least 48 hours before using it in another stream.
- LEAVE:** Fish, plants, rocks and vegetation should not be moved between waterways.



For more information go to:
<http://www.epa.gov/region8/water/didymosphenia/>