

## Didymo

Didymosphenia geminata is like fast food restaurants; it starts with just one restaurant and turns into millions, just like McDonald's did! Didymosphenia geminata is like the McDonald's of algae. Every time a plant lets a cell go it can travel down the river and start a whole new colony and soon it is everywhere.

Didymosphenia geminata a.k.a. "rocksnout" or "didymo" is a single celled fresh water algae that is very invasive. When a cell attaches to a rock, it starts growing into a stalk. Then it will start splitting up into more stalks. When the stalks are big enough, they will form 12 to 13 inch mats. It is capable of growing most of the year until winter, when it dies off. There is no way to prevent it "that's why it's so important to prevent the spread of Didymo," says Green Mountain Troutfitters.

One way to prevent it is to ban felt-soled waders because the cells can stick to the felt. The cells can last in the felt for 2 months before dying off. When the waders are used again, the didymo will be released into a different stream. The felt soled waders can be replaced with a new boot that has a sticky rubber sole. The sticky rubber will have the same effect as the felt but it will not carry Didymo cells.

Another way to stop the spread of didymo is a three step method. The three steps are; step one check; remove all clumps of visible clumps of algae off of boats, floaters, fishing gear, clothes etc... Step two; soak and scrub your gear in dish detergent, bleach or hot water for 20 minutes. Green products are natural but are not as strong and will not disinfect the algae. Step three; dry all items for at least 48 hours. Even a slightly moist environment will allow the cells to stay active so they would be able to travel to another river.

People are the ones that spread it the most. If we made washing stations and put them at every water hole, then people would not forget to use the method. They would realize how important it is to stop the spread of this nasty invader.

I think that we really need to prevent Didymo from spreading if we want to have any rivers or bodies of water to swim in. So we need to educate people about how to prevent it.

## Bibliography

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