



Fact Sheet



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine
and Inspection Service

Are you putting Australia's future on the line?

What is Didymo?

Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) is a freshwater alga that's causing serious problems around the world.

What can I do about it?

There's a significant risk that Didymo could enter, establish and spread in Australia on used watercraft or sporting or fishing equipment: it's believed this is how the pest arrived in New Zealand in 2001.

If you're planning to bring fishing rods and nets, waders, kayaks, paddles, life jackets or any other recreational freshwater equipment into Australia, you should:

- make sure all equipment is thoroughly cleaned and dry before you bring it to Australia — not wet or damp, and
- present all equipment (clean and unclean) to a Quarantine officer for inspection when you arrive. AQIS officers will inspect the equipment and may send them for treatment to make sure they're safe.

Go to www.aqis.gov.au/icon for more information and search for 'fresh water' to view Australia's import conditions and treatments.



The catastrophic impact of accidentally introduced Didymo on New Zealand's freshwater habitats. Image courtesy of Fish and Game New Zealand

Why is it regarded as a danger to Australia?

Didymo is a dangerous pest that is not currently in Australia but has invaded rivers and lakes in Europe, Asia, North America and recently in New Zealand, choking native waterways.

Didymo is made up of millions of microscopic cells that can't be seen until a large colony has formed — by which stage it's almost impossible to eradicate.

A single live cell is all that's required for Didymo to establish and spread.

What happens if your goods require treatment?

As Didymo treatment options are limited, the use of an external commercial treatment provider may be required. External treatment may take days or weeks and the commercial treatment rates will be charged to you.

Where treatment is not possible, goods may be re-exported or destroyed.



More information

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