

Zebra Mussel Rumors at Melvern Unfounded

Written by Dave M

Thursday, 24 June 2010 03:34 - Last Updated Friday, 29 May 2015 14:34

For those who might have heard rumors about Zebra Mussels at Melvern, the following response was provided by Jason Goeckler of the KDWP. Thanks to Jason not only for his hard work on the Invasive Species problem, but also in taking the time to respond to my inquiry.

Thank you for contacting the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks for information about the zebra mussel. Zebra mussels pose a serious threat to our natural resources and way of life. With their negative effects on fisheries, water quality, public safety (sharp shells that cut skin), and the expense to control in water treatment facilities or power plants, every Kansans is impacted when zebra mussels are spread. You asked if the rumors you have heard about zebra mussels in Melvern are true. No, we have not found zebra mussels in Melvern Reservoir.

It seems that some may be confusing Melvern with Milford or Marion reservoirs (both with

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zebra mussels). As you probably know, Melvern receives traffic from zebra mussel infested waters and is considered high risk for invasion, but nothing has been discovered to date. The marina did have a boat brought to the shop that had zebra mussels attached, but the boat did not launch in Melvern until after all mussels were removed. We ran a press release recognizing the efforts of the marina back in 2008.

Whenever a lake is found to have zebra mussels we 1) run a statewide press release, 2) contact lake stakeholders directly by phone or email, 3) place alert signage at all public access points, 4) alert a national database that contacts interested parties and 5) update and maintain our website to indicate all infested waters. <http://kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Fishing/Aquatic-Nuisance-Species>. Even with all of this effort to inform the public, sometimes rumors are still spread.

How we check:

Beginning back in 2004 we placed zebra mussel settling structures in all KDWP waters to detect pioneering populations. These samplers are checked by our District Fisheries Biologists periodically throughout the summer. Additionally, Melvern was part of a KDWP/KSU fisheries research project in 2008 and 2009 that checked the lake each month during the summer for zebra mussel veligers (larvae) by collecting water samples. All of those samples were negative for zebra mussel veligers.

In 2009 water samples were collected by Leonard Jirak for analysis and they too were negative for zebra mussel veligers. And finally in 2010 we again collected water samples earlier this month looking for veligers as part of our statewide surveillance program. We have not yet processed those samples but will in the next 2 weeks. So, unless something shows up in those

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samples or if we discover something on the settling structures this summer, Melvern is presumably clean for zebra mussels. Of course every person that visits a lake should remember to follow our Clean, Drain, and Dry/Wash recommendations every time they visit any lake.

Thank you Dave for your efforts to help inform the angling community. Prevention of zebra mussels and other ANS is simple, we just need everyone to participate.

Newer things you may consider listing is that we are periodically doing boat inspections this summer for ANS. Our 1st event was at Hillsdale Reservoir last Saturday. We check every boat for ANS and then make sure they understand Clean, Drain, and Dry. There will be a press release sent out this week that you may post when it comes available. We also have a new online ANS education/certification course. It gives the basic information about zebra mussels and other ANS and then a brief scenario based quiz to help increase the understanding of what is required to protect our natural resources. The course is linked from our ANS webpage or directly at: <https://reserve.ksoutdoors.com/cert/Certifications/ANS-Certification> . FYI-This is the course that is required for anyone utilizing Council Grove City