



# Making Waves



Volume 12, Issue 1 January 2014



## Shell Rock River Mussel Roundup

By Louise Mauldin



Two brisk mid-October days brought the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Floyd County Conservation Board together to gather mussels on the Shell Rock River in north-central Iowa as part of a regulatory requirement for removal of the Rockford Dam.

When the 170-ft wide dam is removed, water levels outside of the channel may drop and expose mussels lying near the surface of the gravel/sand substrate to freezing (lethal) air temperatures.



Rockford Dam

Mussels collected during the roundup were identified, measured, aged, and relocated to appropriate deep water areas in an effort to reduce mortality following dam removal. A 13-member team including two Iowa DNR malacologists and four FWS scuba divers from the La Crosse Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and Genoa National Fish Hatchery braved the chilly conditions here October 22-23.



Ninety-eight mussels representing eight species were collected upstream of Rockford Dam during the two-day period. Most common among these species was the white heelsplitter, accounting for 66 percent of the mussels collected. Other mussel species collected were the fat mucket,

lilliput, giant floater, mucket, and plain pocketbook, as well as the ellipse and the creeper, two state-threatened species.



White heelsplitters

Rockford Dam was originally constructed in 1872-1873 to power a flour mill, but the dam is now in poor structural condition and poses a significant public safety hazard. The 8-ft height of this dam impedes upstream/downstream movements of several native fish like smallmouth bass, walleye, and rock bass to needed seasonal habitats. Because the dam is a barrier to fish passage it has also impacted the presence and distribution of mussels upstream and downstream of the dam.

Funds from the FWS National Fish Passage Program, Iowa DNR Dam Safety Program, and the town of Rockford are being used to pay for removal of the barrier. Removing Rockford Dam will reconnect 60 miles of the Shell Rock River and the lower Winnebago River, a major tributary to the Shell Rock. Dam removal will improve natural river flows, river-floodplain connectivity, and the distribution, abundance, and diversity of fish and mussels throughout the Rockford reach of the Shell Rock River.



See the dam removed, live, @ <http://bridge.omnitel.biz/>

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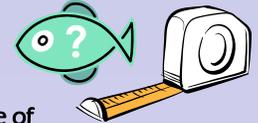


Turn-In Day Details Page 6



# Age & Growth Workshop

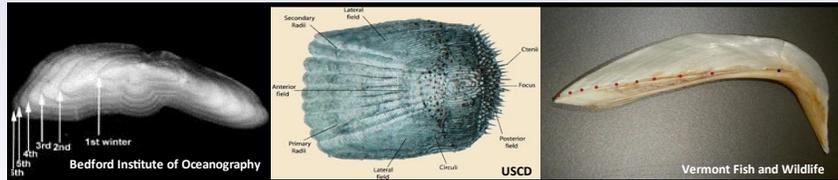
By Katie Jardine



I traveled with Trevor Cyphers to the University of Minnesota-St. Paul Campus on December 3rd to attend two short courses offered by the Minnesota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Both courses lasted ten hours and were designed to complement one another by offering training in data collection and analysis.

Dr. Daniel Isermann of the Cooperative Fishery Research Unit at UW-Stevens Point taught the first class: Estimating Age and Growth of Fish. Primary discussion topics included: purposes for estimating the age and growth rates of fish; sample size; selection, removal, and processing of calcified structures by both lethal and nonlethal means; and interpretation of annuli.

Fish scales, otoliths (ear bones), fin rays, and cleithra (a bone at the rear margin of the gill cavity) are commonly used for estimating age and growth rates.



Magnified cross-sectional views of an otolith (left), a scale (center), and a cleithrum (right)

Similar to annular growth rings found in trees, layers of calcium are deposited in the bony structures of fish at different rates throughout the year forming visible annuli (growth rings) that can reveal the approximate age of a fish. Methods for removing and processing a bony structure, as well as the reliability of a given structure to reveal the age of a fish, can vary among different species with some structures considered more dependable than others.

For example, a nonlethal method includes collecting a scale(s) or fin ray from the exterior of a fish. In contrast, otolith or cleithra

removal is lethal and requires knowledge of the size, location, and precise removal technique to avoid damaging the structure. Only in certain circumstances is the lethal method an option.

Stations were set up for instructor demonstrations and for the class to actively participate in locating, removing, processing, and aging various bony structures. I really enjoyed the hands on activities, as it gave me the chance to learn proper technique and the opportunity to ask Dr. Isermann specific questions.

Dr. Derek Ogle, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Resources at Northland College in Ashland (WI) taught the second class: Analyzing Age Data with *R*. Here we learned how to analyze

and interpret age and growth data by writing scripts and functions using the *R* software programming language.

Dr. Ogle focused on

back-calculating past fish length, deriving and applying an age-length key, computing measures of precision, and producing growth models using *R* software. The class was able to follow along with Dr. Ogle as he explained each topic and complete provided exercises using our personal laptops.

As a Northland College alumnus and former student of Dr. Ogle, it felt as if I were back in college once again! It was great to see him again and have the opportunity to build on my past education, as well as apply that knowledge to my current profession.



## Cabin Fever Relievers - Mark Your Calendars Now!

Relieve your seasonal symptoms at one or more of these upcoming events

Friends of the Upper Mississippi & U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



### February 15th - Kids Ice Fishing Clinic - Genoa NFH

Equipment Available

8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Lunch Provided



Come to the Boat, Sports, Travel, RV and Hunting Show, Thursday through Sunday, February 6 - 9, at the La Crosse Center



Visit us at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service booth at the main entrance



Driftless Area Symposium  
February 4 - 5  
Radisson Hotel, La Crosse  
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Making Waves  
TOGETHER!



Unwanted Medication Collection  
February 15, 9 am - 12 pm  
County HHM - Hwy 16 La X  
Details on Page 6





## What Others Say ...

### — FDA: Anti-Bacterial Soaps May Not Curb Bacteria —



WASHINGTON (AP) After more than 40 years of study, the U.S. government says it has found no evidence that common anti-bacterial soaps prevent the spread of germs, and regulators want the makers of Dawn, Dial and other household staples to prove that their products do not pose health risks to consumers. Scientists at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced Monday that they are revisiting the safety of triclosan and other sanitizing agents found in soap in countless kitchens and bathrooms. Recent studies suggest triclosan and similar substances can interfere with hormone levels in lab animals and spur the growth of drug-resistant bacteria. The government's preliminary ruling lends new support to outside researchers who have long argued that the chemicals are, at best, ineffective and at worst, a threat to public health.

"The FDA is finally making a judgment call here and asking industry to show us that these products are better than soap and water, and the data don't substantiate that," said Stuart Levy of the Tufts University School of Medicine.

While the rule only applies to personal hygiene products, it has implications for a broader \$1 billion industry that includes thousands of anti-bacterial products, including kitchen knives, toys, pacifiers and toothpaste. Over the last 20 years, companies have added triclosan and other cleaners to thousands of household products, touting their germ-killing benefits. Under a proposed rule released Monday, the agency will require manufacturers to prove that anti-bacterial soaps are safe and more effective than plain soap and water. Products that are not shown to be safe and effective by late 2016 would have to be reformulated, relabeled or removed from the market.

"I suspect there are a lot of consumers who assume that by using an anti-bacterial soap product, they are protecting themselves from illness, protecting their families," said Sandra Kweder, deputy director in the FDA's drug center. "But we don't have any evidence that that is really the case over simple soap and water."

A spokesman for the cleaning product industry said the FDA already has "a wealth of data" showing the benefits of anti-bacterial products.

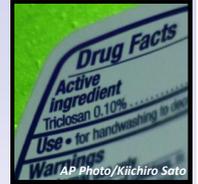
Monday's action affects virtually all soap products labeled anti-bacterial, including popular brands from CVS, Bath and Body Works, Ajax and many other companies. The rule does not apply to hand sanitizers, most of which use alcohol rather than anti-bacterial chemicals.

An FDA analysis estimates it will cost companies \$112.2 million to \$368.8 million to comply with the new regulations, including reformulating some products and removing marketing claims from others. The agency will accept data from companies and researchers for one year before beginning to finalize the rule.

The proposal comes more than four decades after the FDA began evaluating triclosan, triclocarban and similar ingredients.

The government only agreed to publish its findings after a three-year legal battle with the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental group that accused the FDA of delaying action on potentially dangerous chemicals.

Triclosan is found in an estimated 75% of anti-bacterial liquid soaps and body washes in the U.S. More than 93% of anti-bacterial bar soaps also contain triclosan or triclocarban, according to the FDA.



Some consumers said the FDA ruling would have little effect on their buying habits, since they already avoid anti-bacterial soaps and scrubs. "The regular soap works fine for me. And if I was to think about it, I would guess that those anti-bacterial soaps probably have more toxins," said Marco Cegarra, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Diane McLean, of Washington, D.C., thought the soaps always "seemed like a bad idea" because of concerns about creating drug-resistant bacteria.

The FDA was asked to investigate anti-bacterial chemicals in 1972 as part of a law designed to set guidelines for dozens of common cleaners. But the guidelines got bogged down in years of regulatory delays and missed deadlines. The agency published a preliminary draft of its findings in 1978, but never finalized the results until Monday.

Most of the research surrounding triclosan's safety involves laboratory animals, including studies in rats that showed changes in testosterone, estrogen and thyroid hormones. Some scientists worry that such changes in humans could raise the risk of infertility, early puberty and even cancer. FDA scientists stressed Monday that such studies are not necessarily applicable to humans, but the agency is reviewing their implications.

On a conference call with journalists, Kweder noted that the government's National Toxicology Program is already studying whether daily skin exposure to hormone-altering chemicals could lead to cancer. Other experts are concerned that routine use of anti-bacterial chemicals such as triclosan contributes to the emergence of drug-resistant germs, or superbugs, that render antibiotics ineffective.

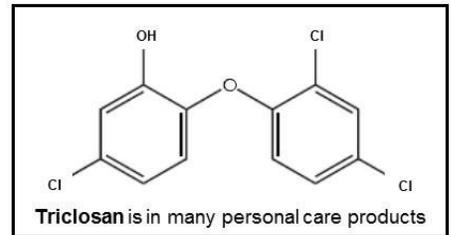
In March 2010, the European Union banned the chemical from all products that come into contact with food, such as containers and silverware. A spokesman for the American Cleaning Institute, a soap cleaning product trade organization, said the group will submit new data to regulators, including studies showing that company products do not lead to antibiotic resistance. "We are perplexed that the agency would suggest there is no evidence that anti-bacterial soaps are beneficial," said Brian Sansoni. "Our industry sent the FDA in-depth data in 2008 showing that anti-bacterial soaps are more effective in killing germs when compared with non-anti-bacterial soaps." The group represents manufacturers including Henkel, Unilever and Dow Chemical Co.

*Editor's note:* This news article and photo were originally published Tuesday, December 17, 2013, in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel; they are reprinted here with permission of the Associated Press 2014.



# What's in *My* Hand/Dish Soap?

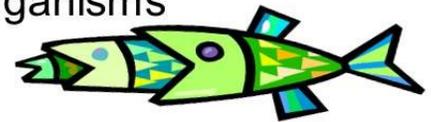
More than 660,000 pounds of **triclosan**, an anti-microbial agent added to many soaps, cosmetics, toothpastes, and other personal care products, are washed down drains to wastewater treatment plants each year.



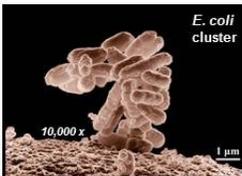
## Why Should *I* Care?



Treatment practices do not fully remove **triclosan**, which is continuously discharged with effluents into public waters like the Mississippi River. The chemical can be found here at levels toxic to organisms at the base of the aquatic food chain.



Sunlight can photo-chemically transform **triclosan** in rivers to form persistent, cancer causing compounds like dioxins.



Widespread use of **triclosan** products likewise promotes the growth of drug-resistant strains of *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and other human disease pathogens.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention report **triclosan** is present in most Americans: higher levels in older, wealthier individuals.



## What Can *I* Do?



- **Read product labels**
- **Limit your use of triclosan containing products**
- **Use plain soap and water to clean your hands**

# 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Driftless Area Symposium

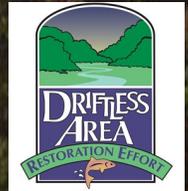
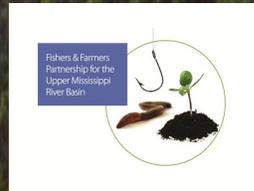
Register  
Now

Tuesday, February 4th and  
Wednesday, February 5th, 2014

Radisson Hotel  
200 Harborview Plaza  
La Crosse, WI

## Join Us!

This is a great opportunity to network, learn and connect! Two separate tracks will be offered. Breakout sessions covering: Watershed and Riparian Management



More information coming soon on registration & agenda to:

<http://www.darestoration.com/Symposium.html>

# Medication Drop Off



**Saturday,  
February 15, 2014  
9:00AM—12:00PM**

**Accepting ALL Medications  
Including Controlled Substances**

## **La Crosse County HHM**

6500 State Road 16, La Crosse

**ONE SITE ONLY**

### **YOU CAN BRING:**

- Prescription Medications
- Over-the-Counter Medications
- Tablets and Capsules
- Liquids
- Creams
- Ointments
- Inhalers, Patches
- Needles/Sharps

## **Also Accepting Household Hazardous Waste**

- Mercury Thermometers
- Fluorescent Lamps and Electronics
- Paint, Solvents, etc.
- Oil, Antifreeze, Oil Filters
- Aerosols
- Pesticides and Yard Chemicals
- Cleaners and Pool Chemicals

**Businesses Call 785-9999 for  
details regarding disposal of  
business wastes.**

**Next Drop Off Days  
Three more Drop Off Days  
will be scheduled in 2014.**

**Watch for times and  
locations.**

**Visit [www.lacrossecounty.org/HHM](http://www.lacrossecounty.org/HHM) or call 785-9999  
for more information and for future drop off dates.**

