



## OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### WHAT'S IN A NAME? ROCK SNOT SAYS IT ALL

SALEM, Oregon—What looks like brown slime, feels like wet wool, and threatens to invasive Oregon's streams? The answer is a very descriptive name for a nasty aquatic invasive species—Rock Snot, the Oregon Invasive Species Council February 2009 Invasive Species of the Month featured online at [www.oregon.gov/OISC](http://www.oregon.gov/OISC).

Rock Snot is a freshwater algae that garners attention for its ability to form massive nuisance “blooms” that carpet stream beds and alter the biological and physical conditions of a water body. Under nuisance bloom conditions, rock snot attaches to rocks and plants, forming dense mats one to five inches thick that trail downstream. Rock snot mats look like shag carpeting or sewage spills with trailing fronds of toilet paper. Although its colorful common name suggests otherwise, rock snot is not slimy. In fact, native algae feel wet and slippery to the touch, whereas rock snot feels rough like wet cotton wool or felt.

Why should we be concerned about rock snot in Oregon streams? Although it may be a native to parts of North America, the amount and duration of nuisance blooms of rock snot have been increasing in different types of water bodies in other areas of the country. Rock snot has not been found in Oregon, but managers are concerned because of the potentially high economic impacts to Oregon rivers and streams. And once it becomes established, there are no control or eradication options.

Anglers, boaters, and the general public need to be aware of rock snot and other aquatic invasive species and take measures to clean their gear. Before leaving a water body, remove obvious clumps of algae. If you find algae later, don't wash it down the drain; dispose of the algae in a trash container. Clean and scrub all items in hot water or bleach/antiseptic solution. Boaters should drain water from live wells and always launch a clean boat to reduce the introduction and spread of this and other aquatic invasive species.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council is producing a calendar with an invasive species of the month to increase awareness of the threat of invasive species to Oregon's economy, environment, and quality of life.

The calendar, featured online at [www.oregon.gov/OISC](http://www.oregon.gov/OISC), provides information about each species, such as a physical description, where it is found, possible lookalike native species, and what should be done if the species is seen. In addition, Oregon teachers can benefit with species activities, an answer guide, and additional resources for further study and exploration.

Other features of the online calendar include a pest risk assessment for each species, so that Oregonians can understand the level of threat for species highlighted in the calendar. Potential for spread and establishment are rated as well as potential environmental, economic, and human health impacts.

And the calendar functions as a calendar of events for invasive species activities throughout the state, such as when gypsy moths hatch, when Japanese beetles are most commonly seen on plants, and when special invasive species events, such as weed pulls, are held.

The mission of the Oregon Invasive Species Council is to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon.

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