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[www.sgnis.org](http://www.sgnis.org)

Florida Marine  
Research Institute  
[floridamarine.org](http://floridamarine.org)

University of Florida  
Department of Fisheries  
& Aquatic Sciences  
[greenmussel.ifas.ufl.edu](http://greenmussel.ifas.ufl.edu)



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Green mussel,  
*Perna viridis*



# GREEN MUSSEL ALERT

Invasive green mussels appeared in Florida in 1999. These bright green shellfish can grow densely on boats, buoys, piers, water intakes, aquaculture facilities, and other structures. They may become pests, and they can crowd out native oysters. Green mussels can be accidentally transported on boat hulls or with aquaculture and fishing gear.

## Identification

Green mussels have a green or brown shell with bright green edges. No other marine mussels in the US are this color. Green mussels can be over 4 inches (10 cm) long, but most are much smaller. Like native mussels, green mussels can form dense clusters attached to structures by tough *byssal* threads. They live in estuaries and coastal waters, but they do not survive in fresh water.

## What to Do

- Don't transport green mussels. Regular maintenance of boat hulls and gear is the best way to avoid moving green mussels. Leaving boats or gear out of water for several days will usually kill mussels, but they may survive longer in cool weather.
- Report green mussel sightings. Green mussels are known to be common from Tampa Bay to Charlotte Harbor, Florida, and sightings outside this range should be reported to the Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Program at:  
877-STOP-ANS, or on the Internet at [nas.er.usgs.gov](http://nas.er.usgs.gov).  
If possible, save samples of shells, but don't return green mussels to the water.