

Asian clam

Corbicula fluminea

Invasive: High impact

Species profile

- Habitat:** Freshwater.
- Distribution in Ireland:** Localised to areas of the River Nore, River Barrow and recorded north and south of the River Shannon.
- Status:** Established.
- Family name:** Corbiculidae.
- Reproduction:** Capable of self-fertilization.

Identifying features

- Shell:** Yellow to olive green to brown shell, with concentric, evenly spaced ridges on the shell surface. Shell is white inside and glossy yellow when cleaned. Obvious external ligament seen near the central beak/umbo of the shell.
- Size:** Usually up to 25mm in length but larger specimens have been found growing up to 50-65mm.
- Not attached:** The species is not attached to the water bed, but rather lying half-buried.



Single Asian clam, showing its diverse colouring
© Roy Anderson



Asian clam underwater
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Collection of Asian clams © GBNNSS



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Threats

The species can compete with native species, which is particularly worrying for species which are already vulnerable or threatened.

It's population can reach high densities quickly (with adults producing up to 100,000 offspring in a life time).

Similar species

- No other similar species in Ireland, but expert verification of your sighting should be sought.
- Some bivalve shells may be mistaken for young Asian clam, especially Psidium.



Asian clam with mucous thread to aid dispersal
© D. Minchin



Young Asian clam individuals © D. Minchin

