Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*)

The Asian clam was first reported in the United States in Washington's Columbia River in the 1930s. It was likely introduced intentionally for harvest and consumption purposes. *Corbicula fluminea* spread mostly through human activities, such as bait bucket dumping, aquaria releases into streams or canals, and intentional releases by people who bought the clams at food markets. Asian clams may also have been introduced accidentally in shipments of imported aquaculture species. Another pathway for dispersal is the passive movement of larvae in water currents. Since the initial introduction, it has spread across the country, with the first reports in South Carolina from the Pee Dee River in the late 1960s or early 70s. From there it spread to the Savannah River, the Santee Rivers, and throughout the state. Ecological impacts of Asian clam infestations include the altering of benthic substrate and increased competition with native species for food and habitat resources. Periodic massive die offs of the Asian clam have been linked to mortality of native freshwater mussels, and the clam has been blamed for the decline and local extinctions of several native freshwater mussel species. Asian clams also serve as a food source for many species favored by fishermen, including largemouth bass and freshwater drum. But this benefit is probably outweighed by the economic burden borne by industries and municipalities that have to deal with biofouling of power plant water intakes and other municipal and industrial water intake and supply systems. In some parts of the United States, *Corbicula fluminea* also causes problems in irrigation canals and pipes.