



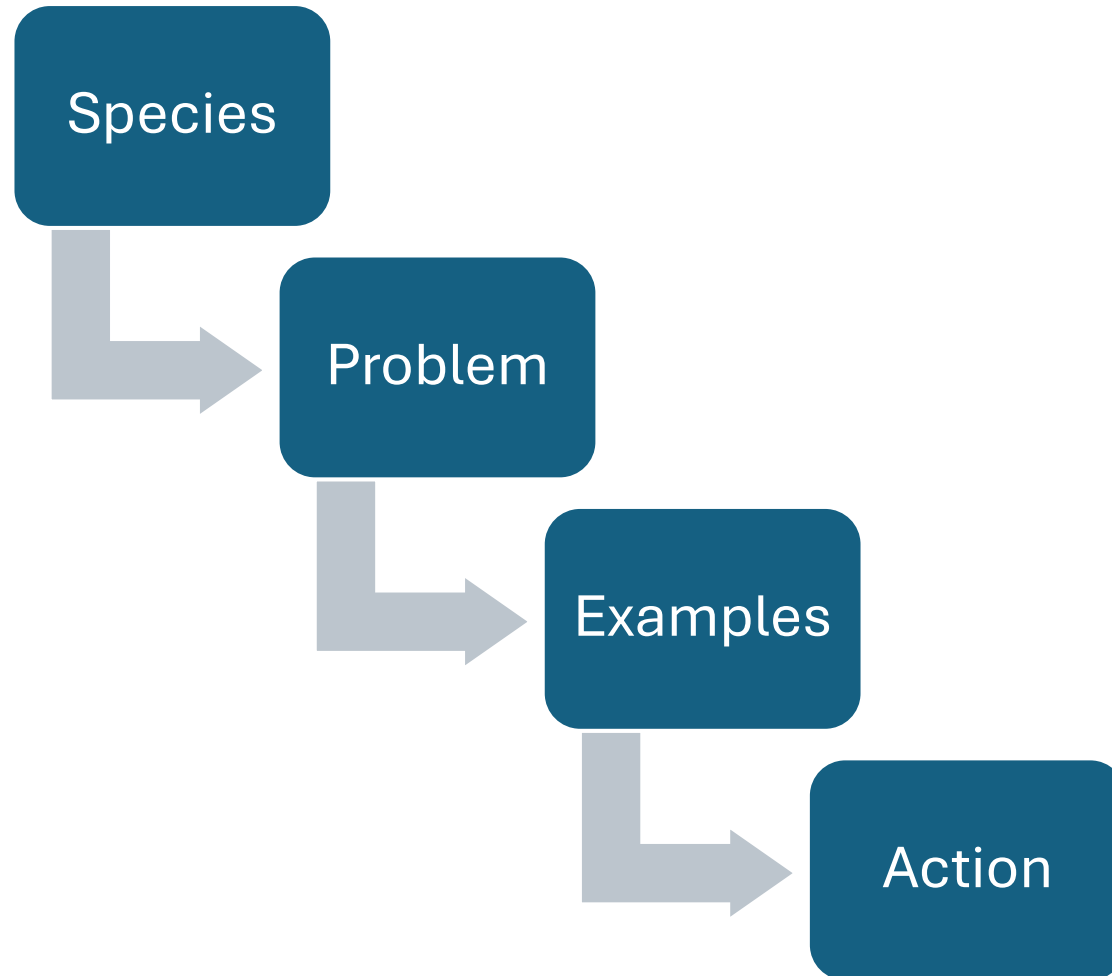
# Recent Observations of Unusual Shellfish in Connecticut Waters

Dr. Lydia M. Bienlien

22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gathering of Shellfish Commissions

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# Outline





# Local Species

- Eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*)
  - Fall Survey
- Bay scallop (*Argopecten irradians*)
- Hard clam/quahog (*Mercenaria mercenaria*)



NOAA Fisheries



By Hectonichus - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=23602067>



NOAA Fisheries



# Non-native species

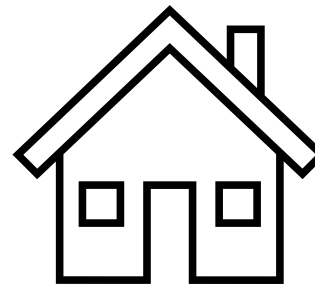
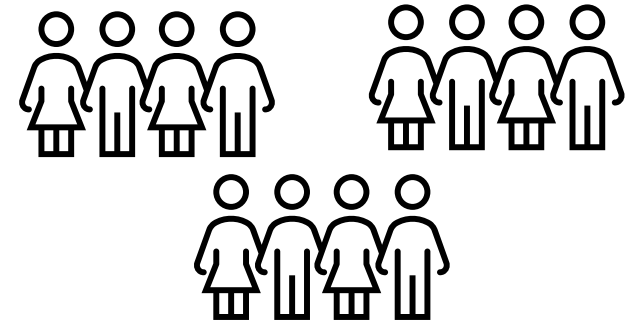
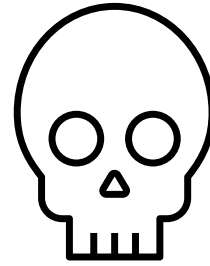
- “living or growing in a place that is not the location of its natural occurrence”
- Dispersal (How it got there)
  - Range expansion
  - Hitchhiking
    - Shipping
  - On purpose
  - Improper discard (eating, pets returned, etc.)





# Introduction

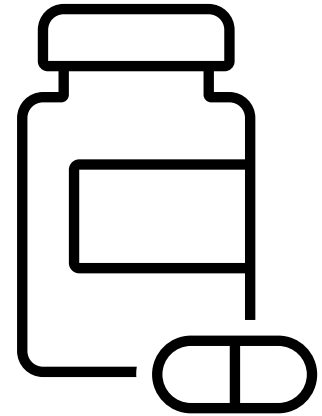
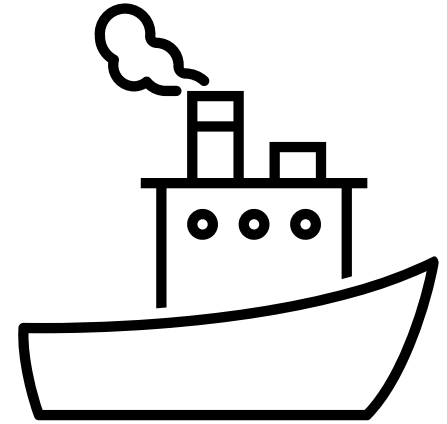
- Alive?
- Numbers?
- Reproducing?
- Location?





# Problems

- Outcompeting/displace
- Diseases
  - Other hitchhikers
- Indicator of disturbed ecosystem (biosecurity)



# Recent Example



National Shellfisheries Association

January 1 at 7:49 AM · 🌐

On November 2, 2025, a large, *Ostrea edulis* was discovered in Stonington Harbor in Connecticut, marking the first verified record of a live European flat oyster in Long... [See more](#)



The Day

<https://theday.com/news/shell-shocked-discovery-of-...>

## Shell shocked: Discovery of new oyster in Stonington ...

Nov 16, 2025 — Carlton, who ultimately was the one to identify the **new oyster**, said the **edible oyster** was estimated to be 4 to 5 years old and measured 5 ... [Read more](#)

≡ Hartford Courant

Connecticut News | A new type of oyster not verified here before...

NEWS > CONNECTICUT NEWS

## A new type of oyster not verified here before was found in CT. Yes, it's considered a delicacy

Instagram

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Krystal Rose, a local marine life enthusiast and curator of collections at Mystic Seaport Museum, was in Stonington Harbor on Nov. 2 when she spotted what she thought was a large scallop but was actually the first verified European flat oyster found in Connecticut waters.  
Read more about the discovery at theday.com (Photo by Dana Jensen/The Day)



nrpa\_8w





# Recent Example

- European flat oyster
  - *Ostrea edulis*
- Gulf of Maine
  - 1950s
- Potential sightings
  - 1982 – CT/RI
  - 1990-1992 – RI
  - 2002/2005 – Noank, CT
  - 2009/2010 – Mystic, CT
  - 2013-2025 – MA
  - **2025** – West Haven/Stonington/Mystic, CT
- Meaning?
  - Identification?
  - Reproducing?
  - Disease?



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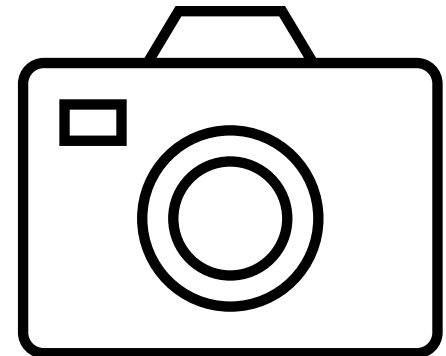
- Manila clam
  - *Ruditapes philippinarum*
- No Connecticut sightings





# What to do?

- Contact us
- Location
- Condition
- Date
- Picture!
- Do NOT throw back
  - Bring to the Bureau of Aquaculture
- Tell people





# Questions?



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