



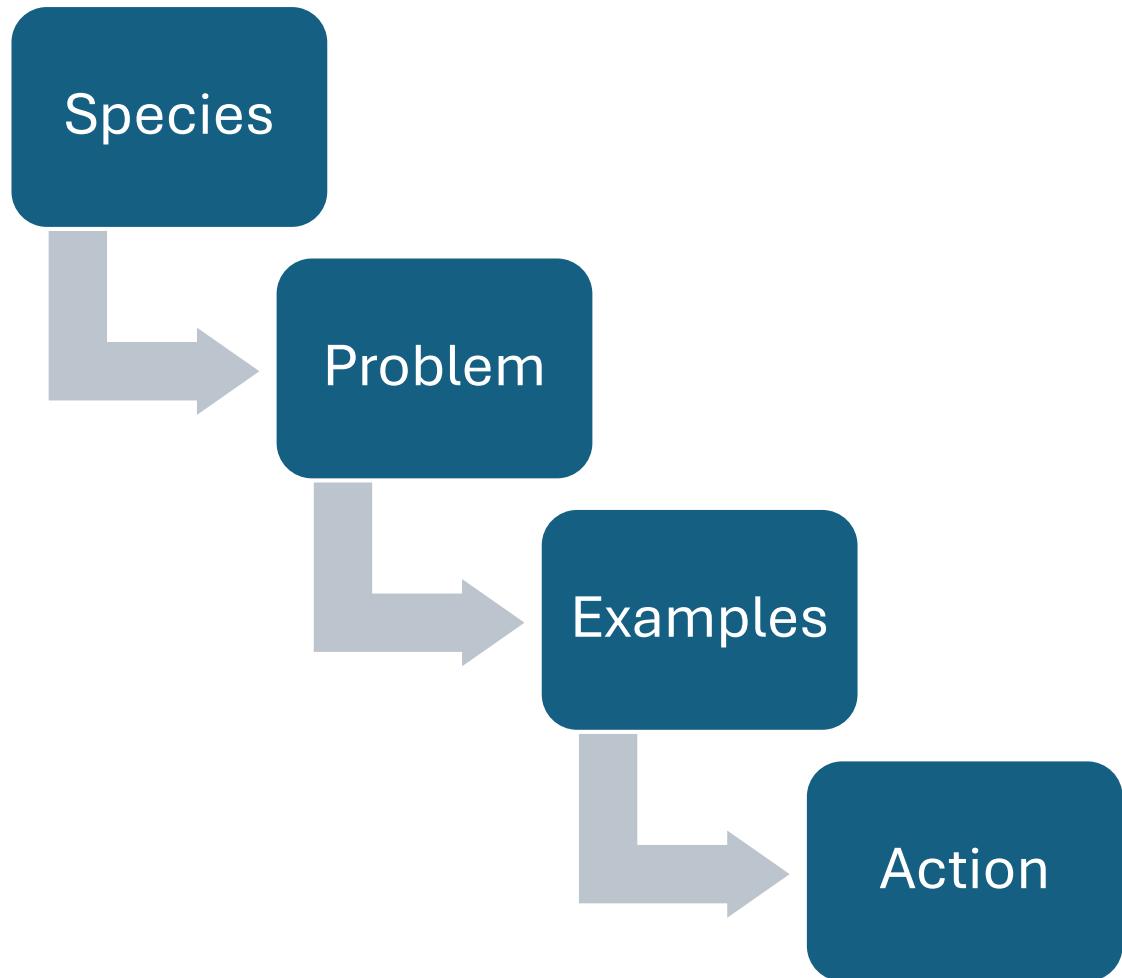
# Recent Observations of Unusual Shellfish in Connecticut Waters

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*)



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



NOAA Fisheries



NOAA Fisheries



# Non-native species

- “living or growing in a place that is not the location of its natural occurrence”

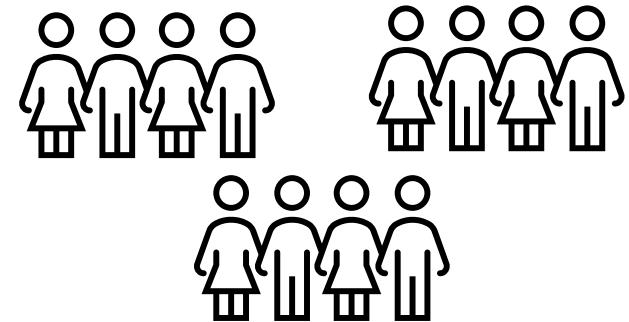
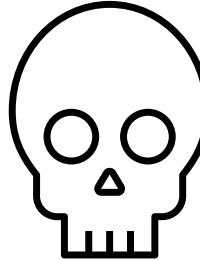
- Dispersal (How it got there)
  - Range expansion
  - Hitchhiking
    - Shipping
  - On purpose
  - Improper discard (eating, pets returned, etc.)





# Introduction

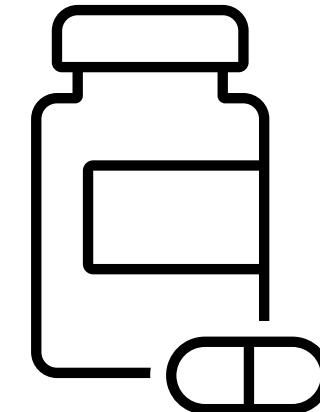
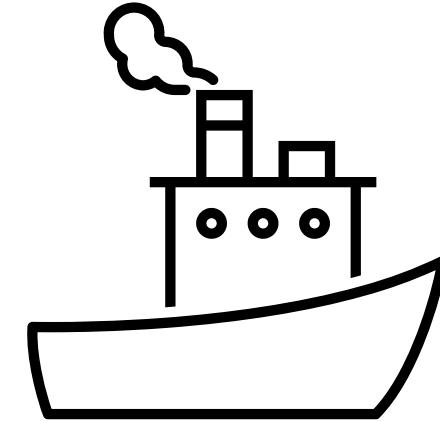
- Alive?
- Numbers?
- Reproducing?
- Location?





# Problems

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



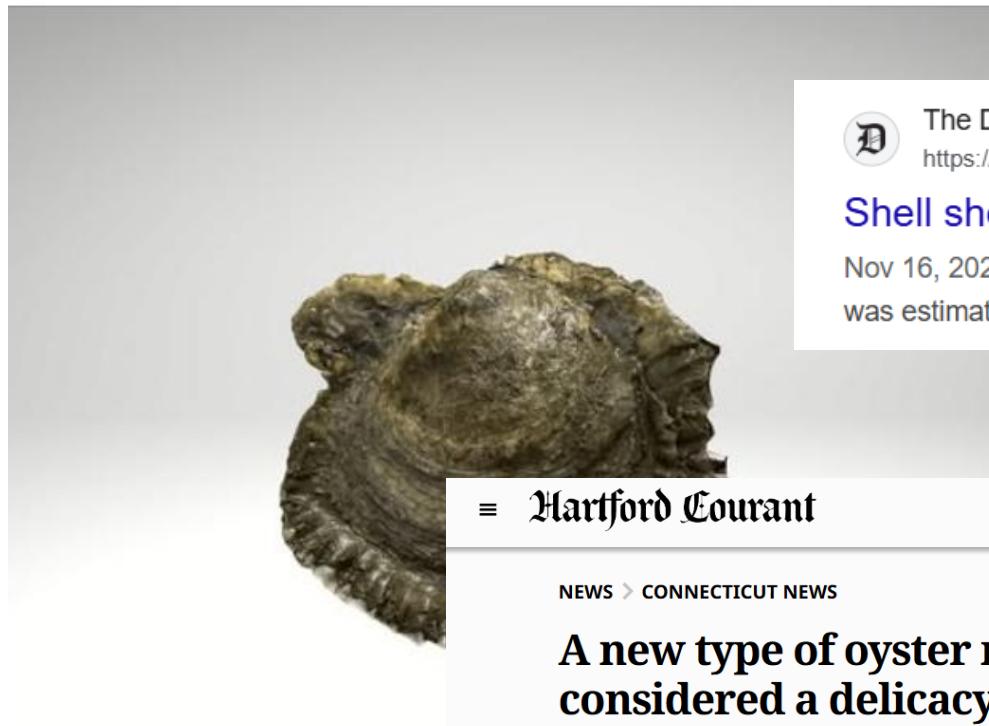
# Recent Example



## 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](#)



≡ Hartford Courant

NEWS > CONNECTICUT NEWS

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

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

[Instagram](#)

[Log In](#) [Sign Up](#)



thedayct

**theadayt** 8w  
Kristy 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 [theaday.com](http://theaday.com) (Photo by Dana Jensen/The Day)





# 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?



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](#)





## Recent Example

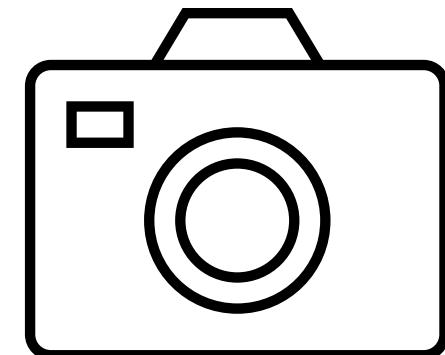
- Manila clam
  - *Ruditapes philippinarum*
- No Connecticut sightings





## What to do?

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



# Questions?

- Lydia.Bienlien@ct.gov
- 203-874-0696 ex:120
- 190 Rogers Ave, Milford, CT 06460

