

AMPHIPOD

(*Echinogammarus ischnus*)

**Oneida Lake Status:
Localized**



Echinogammarus ischnus
Colin van Overdijk



Gammarus fasciatus
Ron Neumeyer



Hyalella azteca
The Saskatchewan Aquatic Insects Page

- Discovered in Oneida Lake in 2002
- Belongs to the group commonly known as “scuds”
- Often found in association with zebra mussel colonies

Amphipods (“scuds”) are tiny relatives of crayfish; adults are about ¼ inch long. They live on or near the lake bottom, feeding on microscopic plants, animals, and debris. They hide from fish under plants, among rocks, and in the sediments. Zebra mussel clusters provide suitable refuge as well. Amphipods are excellent food for many Oneida Lake fish.

Like many recent invaders, *Echinogammarus* (top photo at left) is native to the Ponto-Caspian region (Black, Caspian, and Aral Seas) of eastern Europe and western Asia. They were first found in the Detroit River in 1995 and are believed to have been introduced in ballast water of transoceanic ships. They were first discovered in Oneida Lake in 2003 and currently occupy shallow water habitat.

There are two other species of scuds in Oneida Lake: the native *Hyalella azteca* and the non-native *Gammarus fasciatus* (see photos at left). *G. fasciatus* began replacing the native *Hyalella* in the 1960s and has been the most common amphipod in Oneida Lake since that time. *G. fasciatus* is native to the Chesapeake, Delaware, and Hudson River basins and was introduced to the Great Lakes sometime before 1940. Because it has become so widespread, it is now considered naturalized.

Prepared by:

Kristen Holeck and Ed Mills
Cornell Biological Field Station

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