

## Important Facts on Whirling Disease You Need to Know

- Whirling disease is a parasitic condition affecting fish, primarily rainbow trout. Other species of trout and salmon are affected to lesser degrees. Warm-water fish such as bass, walleye and catfish are not affected.
- Whirling disease does not infect humans. People cannot contract the disease from eating or handling infected fish.
- Young fish are most susceptible because the parasite attacks their soft cartilage. Clinical signs of infection include skeletal deformities or whirling motions during swimming. Once trout reach three to four inches in length, cartilage forms into bone and fish are no longer susceptible.
- Larger infected fish generally don't die but are carriers of the disease. In the vast majority of cases, infected adult fish show no signs of the disease, exhibit regular behavior and go on to live normal lifespans.
- As yet, there is no practical cure to treat wild trout infected with the disease.
- The disease is present in many Colorado rivers and in a number of state hatcheries. Once the disease parasite is established in the wild, it can persist indefinitely, depending on environmental conditions. Efforts to reduce the parasite in hatcheries are proving successful.
- Current evidence suggests that stocking of hatchery trout exposed but not necessarily infected with the parasite into waters where whirling disease is known to exist does not increase the level of infectivity.
- The parasite's spores are very hardy and can easily reproduce in the wild, so it's likely that the parasite will continue to spread.
- The Colorado Division of Wildlife has developed strict policies and regulations to help control and prevent the spread of the disease in Colorado.

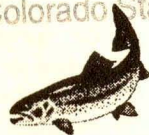
## How You Can Help

- Remember that the tubifex worm can hold the whirling disease parasite. Thoroughly wash off any mud from vehicles, boats, trailers, anchors, axles, waders, boots, fishing equipment and anything that can hold the spores or mud-dwelling worms.
- The parasite can persist in water. Drain boats, equipment, coolers, live bait wells and any holder of water. Make sure you don't inadvertently help spread whirling disease by cleaning all equipment after use in lakes or streams.
- Don't transport any fish from one body of water to another, which can help spread whirling disease. It is unlawful in Colorado to move and stock live fish without a special license.
- Don't dispose of fish entrails or other by-products into any body of water.
- Never transport aquatic plants. Make sure boats, engine props, anchors, trailers and wheels are cleared of weeds after every use.

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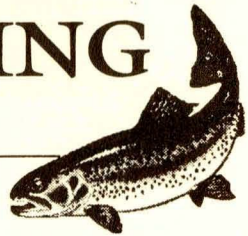
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Department of Natural Resources  
**DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**

6060 Broadway  
Denver, CO 80216  
Telephone: (303) 297-1192

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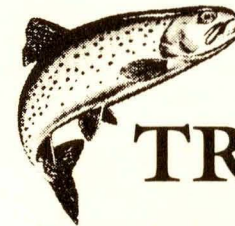
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# TROUT

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