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Lake George is a poor home for zebra mussels, study finds

Associated Press

LAKE GEORGE — One Adirondack lake could escape the scourge of zebra mussels.

There's not enough calcium in the water of Lake George for the pesky mollusks' larvae to develop properly there, new research found.

"It's great news," said Deanne Rehm, town supervisor of the lakeside community of Bolton. "We have enough threats to the quality of the lake without some new nuisance coming along."

While adult mussels survived in water from the much-visited lake, young larvae died, a study by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute showed.

Zebra mussels have appeared in nearly all New York's waters over the last ten years, having been brought here after attaching themselves on boats from Eastern Europe to the Great Lakes.

Three years ago, scientists found the microscopic larvae in Lake George. They have not discovered any adults yet. There are mussels in the connecting Lake Champlain, but there is a 200 foot drop from George down to the other lake, and mussels can't travel up the falls, biologists say there's no threat of them spreading.

Because there's virtually no limestone in the Lake George region, the water has very low calcium levels. That appears to be what's stopping the mussels from proliferating.

"Our findings continue to provide hope that Lake George will escape the devastating impact that other lakes have experienced when these menacing mussels take up residency," said Dr. Sandra Nierzwicki-Bauer, head of Rensselaer's biology



TIMES UNION

ZEBRA mussels attach themselves to a clam.

department.

However, she added, the mature mussels could produce offspring that adapt to the lake's conditions.