Whirling disease

Clinical signs of whirling disease in Rainbow Trout (RNTR) fry

Healthy RNTR fry:  Whirling disease impacted RNTR fry:

1. Spinal deformities can appear as a crooked spine or bent tail.
2. Black pigmentation can occur throughout the body, but typically occurs in the tail.
3. Edges of the operculum may appear shortened and frayed with gill filaments exposed.
4. Cranial deformities can include distortions of the jaw.
5. Other obvious cranial deformities can include bulging eyeballs and a shortened snout.

What can you do to help?

If you suspect you witnessed a fish with whirling disease, please email aep.whirl@gov.ab.ca. We ask that you do not disturb or remove any suspected fish – if possible, a photo, location, date, time and a few notes about what you saw (i.e. species, abnormalities, how many fish you saw) will help us better direct our surveillance program efforts.

Always remember to clean, drain and dry your watercraft and equipment between waterbodies:
- Clean your watercraft and equipment that has been in contact with water
- Drain all water onto dry land before leaving the shore – it is illegal to transport a watercraft with the drain plug still in place
- Dry your watercraft and equipment completely between trips

To report aquatic invasive species and diseases, please call our hotline at 1-855-336-BOAT (2628)