

(March 6, 2007) Bloody Red Shrimp Is Latest Lake Invader

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John Cody Reporting

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CHICAGO (WBBM) -- Wildlife biologists - already trying to block the Big Head carp from Lake Michigan -- have found a new invasive species in the water near Muskegon, Michigan.

WBBM's John Cody reports the 1/2 inch-long Bloody Red Shrimp is believed to have hitched a ride to the Great Lakes in ballast water of a freighter from the Caspian sea.

Dr. Leon Carl from the Great Lakes Science Center says the newcomer is light averse and can be as a reddish cloud gathered in the shadow of boats in a sunny harbor.

He described the latest invasive species to a panel of four congressmen holding hearings Monday, on the State of the Great Lakes.

Republican Mark Kirk chaired the panel which included Dan Lipinski, Judy Biggert and Peter Roskam.

Dr Carl said it's too soon to tell whether the Bloody Red Shrimp will be a problem or an asset. He says it will certainly act as a food source for some fish, but also may crowd out some other small organisms that fish have already been eating.

Congressman Kirk also noted the Detroit is still dumping 13 billion gallons of raw sewage annually into the Great Lake, and that while Milwaukee has reduced its sewage contribution from 4 billion to 1 billion gallons, it's still too much.

Congressman Kirk says this may turn out be an environmentally active congress -- and may take action on global warming, invasive species and sewage pollution of the great lakes.

Kirk says the congress is considering a bill requiring inbound freighters to flush their ballast tanks with salt water to kill off as many water borne hitch hikers as possible, and says he's working with U.S. rep Dan Lipinski on a bill that would set a date certain, likely 20 years from now, for the end to any and all sewage discharges into the Great Lakes.