

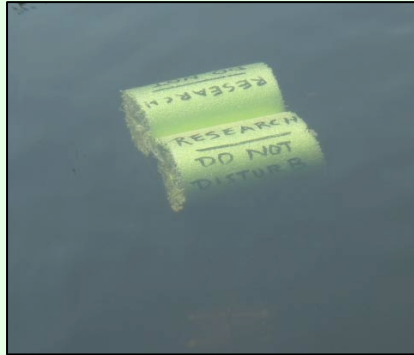


# ATTENTION PADDLERS



If you see brightly colored buoys on select rivers in Rhode Island:

**PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB THEM**



Each summer in July, RIDEM anchors several small artificial substrates in rivers to evaluate the water quality of the Blackstone, Branch, Pawcatuck, Pawtuxet, and Wood Rivers. These artificial substrates are marked by brightly colored buoy-floats (labeled: RESEARCH / DO NOT DISTURB) and remain in the same location on the river for six to eight weeks. During this time, aquatic bugs from the river will colonize the artificial substrates. To ensure bugs inhabit these traps it is very important that they are not bumped, disturbed or handled during this time. In September, RIDEM will retrieve the artificial substrates and study the insects collected. This important data will be analyzed to assess the health of the river, and characterize the conditions available for fish and wildlife. RIDEM has conducted this research annually since 1975, and has a long record of valuable data to monitor changes over time in each river. Please be considerate if you do encounter these floats, do not disturb or remove them.

**Thank you for your help and cooperation!**



Artificial substrates are buoyed by brightly colored floats (top, left and right pictures). They host many small aquatic bugs, which can be identified in a laboratory (middle picture) to assess water quality.



For questions or concerns, please contact:

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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